

The Constitution of Grace Doctrine Church



GRACE DOCTRINE CHURCH CONSTITUTION

(REVISED 02/15/2007)

ARTICLE I

NAME. The name of this church shall be Grace Doctrine Church, a Missouri corporation, having its principal place of worship at 1821 South River Road, City of St. Charles, County of St. Charles, State of Missouri, 63303-4124, hereinafter referred to as “this church.”

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE. The purpose of this church is to present isagogical, categorical, and exegetical Bible teaching, standing unequivocally for the fundamentals of the faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures; and through the teaching of the Word in this church, the sending out of missionaries, and the ordaining of pastor-teachers, present the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ both at home and abroad.

The thrust of this church is to communicate Bible doctrine to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, for the purpose of attainment of spiritual maturity.

This purpose and thrust is accomplished through the consistent teaching of the Word of God.

ARTICLE III

DOCTRINE AND TENETS

A. Statement of Doctrine - The following basic doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures are adopted:

1. The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God, authoritative, inerrant, and God breathed (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12, 13).

2. The Godhead

We believe in one triune God existing in three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—eternal in being, identical in nature, equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

3. The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God but that through Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became alienated from God, and is totally unable to personally rectify his lost condition (Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 3:22, 23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:12).

4. The Person and Work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man; that He accomplished our redemption through His spiritual death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice; that our redemption is made sure to us by His literal physical resurrection from the dead (John 1:1, 2, 14; Luke 1:35; Romans 3:24, 25; 4:25; 1 Peter 1:3-5); that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, exalted at the right hand of God, where, as the High Priest for His people, He fulfills the ministries of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Hebrews 9:24; 7:25;

Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1, 2).

5. The Personality and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, indwells all believers in the present age, baptizes them into the body of Christ, seals them unto the day of redemption, and that it is the duty of every believer to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:13, 14; 5:18).

6. Salvation

We believe that salvation in every dispensation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose efficacious death on the cross provided man's reconciliation to God (Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; John 1:12).

7. The Eternal Security of Believers

We believe that all believers are kept secure forever (Romans 8:1, 38, 39; John 10:27-30; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8).

8. The Church

We believe that the church, which is now the body and shall be the bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this age irrespective of their affiliation with Christian organizations (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14).

9. The Personality of Satan

We believe in the personality of Satan who is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Job 1:6, 7; Matthew 4:2-11; Isaiah 14:12-17).

10. The Blessed Hope

We believe that the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord Jesus in the air to receive to Himself the dead in Christ and believers who are alive at His coming, otherwise known as the Rapture, translation, or exit resurrection of the Church (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14).

11. The Tribulation

We believe that the Rapture of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Daniel's seventieth week, the latter half of which is the time of Jacob's trouble, the great Tribulation (Daniel 9:27; Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:15-21; Revelation 6-19).

12. The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the great Tribulation will be climaxed by the (premillennial) return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to set up His kingdom (Zechariah 14:4-11; Matthew 4:15-25; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:6).

13. The Eternal State

We believe that the soul and human spirit of those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming when soul, human spirit, and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the Millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6, 7; Revelation 20:11-15).

14. The Responsibility of Believers

To "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," to the end that his life is consistent with the Lord's plan, thus bringing both blessing to the believer and honor to the Lord (2 Peter 3:18).

15. Church Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper to be observed until His return (Matthew 28:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

16. Sovereignty

We believe that God, existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is sovereign and exercises supreme and absolute rule over all creation as a part of and consistent with the essence and attributes of Deity (1 Chronicles 29:11,12; Daniel 4:35; Psalms 24:1; Ephesians 1:11; 1 Timothy 6:15).

17. Spirituality

We believe that spirituality is an absolute condition in the life of a believer in this dispensation wherein he is filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit. We believe that spirituality is distinct from maturity, that a believer becomes carnal through any act of mental, verbal, or overt sin, and that spirituality is restored solely by personal confession of sins to God the Father (John 15:7, 8; 2 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:18; Romans 6:11-13; 1 John 1:5, 9; 2:2; 1 Corinthians 11:30, 31).

18. Spiritual Gifts

We believe that God the Holy Spirit in grace and apart from human merit sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts to believers in this dispensation. Some of the permanent spiritual gifts that exist today are pastor-teacher, evangelist, missionary and administrator. We further believe that the temporary spiritual gifts ceased with the completion of the canon of Scripture, and these were apostleship, prophecy, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, healing, and working of miracles (1 Corinthians 12, 13; Ephesians 4:7-12; Romans 12:4-8). Any member claiming to practice these temporary gifts shall be subject to immediate dismissal.

B. Tenets

1. The church shall not at any time become a member, sanction, or support any denomination, association of churches, or religious organization of any kind without approval of the pastor and Board of Deacons.
2. This church shall not solicit anyone to become a member. Those who desire to affiliate with this church may do so by complying with the provisions of Article V.
3. This church shall not knowingly accept gifts from unbelievers nor make individual solicitation of funds or pledges among believers.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The leadership of this church is vested in the pastor, whose absolute authority is derived from the Scripture (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

The administration of the affairs of this church under the leadership of the pastor is vested in the church officers and the Board of Deacons.

A. Church Officers

The church officers shall include the chairman, the treasurer, and the secretary. A vice-chairman may be included at the discretion of the pastor. A member's qualifications to serve in the capacity of church officer shall be discerned and evaluated by the pastor.

1. Chairman

The chairman shall preside at all business meetings of the members and of the Board of Deacons, shall have general supervision of the administrative affairs of this church as provided in this constitution and/or as directed by the pastor, shall sign all instruments of the church where applicable, shall be an ex officio member of all committees, and shall perform all other duties incident to this office.

2. Vice Chairman

The vice-chairman shall assist the chairman as directed and perform the functions of the chairman during his absence.

3. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be responsible for the receipt, deposit, and disbursement of all funds and securities as authorized by the pastor and deacons; shall keep books of account, shall render a current financial statement at the annual meeting of the members and shall make such other reports which at the discretion of the treasurer are essential to proper financial reporting. The treasurer shall be responsible for the investment of surplus funds subject to the approval of the Board of Deacons. Approval is defined as a simple majority of the Board of Deacons present. The church accounting personnel shall be under the sole supervision of the treasurer.

4. Secretary

The secretary shall keep the minutes of the business meetings of the members and the deacons, shall receive and issue notice of all business meetings of the members and the deacons, shall be custodian of the corporate seal and records, shall keep a current roster of the members with addresses, shall maintain a record of attendance at deacons' meetings, shall sign instruments where required by law, and shall prepare the agenda of all business meetings of the members and deacons.

B. Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall consist of the pastor and deacons.

1. Appointment Procedure

The pastor shall prepare a list of appointees and submit them to the board for approval. Following approval, these names shall be submitted for ratification to the membership at the annual business meeting of members. An appointed Board of Deacons shall be ratified upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting.

2. Term of Office

Each deacon shall be appointed for a term determined by the pastor and approved by the Board of Deacons.

3. Qualifications

- a. A member who is a supported missionary, an employee, or the spouse of an employee of Grace Doctrine Church shall not serve as a deacon.
- b. An appointee for deacon must have been a member of Grace Doctrine Church for two years before being eligible to serve as deacon, unless this requirement is waived by the pastor in specific instances and approved by the Board of Deacons.

4. Vacancy

A vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the pastor and approved by the Board of Deacons. A deacon so appointed shall serve the unexpired term of his predecessor.

5. Regular Meetings

A regular meeting of the deacons shall be held not later than thirty (30) days after the annual meeting of the members. Other regular meetings shall be held at such times and places as the deacons may determine, but at least once a quarter.

6. Special Meetings

A special meeting of the deacons may be called at any time at the request of the pastor, the chairman, or two (2) deacons.

7. Quorum

A quorum shall be one half (1/2) of the total number of deacons and officers. The acts of the majority of the deacons present shall be the act of the deacons unless otherwise specifically required by this constitution.

8. Place and Notice of Meetings

All meetings of the deacons shall be held at the principal place of worship of the church unless otherwise specified in the notice of same. Notice of meetings shall be given in writing or by telephone at least three (3) days prior to such meeting, except in the case of special call meetings which can be called by the pastor or chairman at any time. The purpose of the meeting need not be stated in such notice.

9. Duties of Deacons

Under the authority of the pastor, the deacons shall administer the affairs of this church that are not delegated or reserved to the pastor or others. The specific responsibilities of the deacons shall include:

- a. To make provision for the supply of the pulpit in the event of a vacancy in the office of pastor, or take full charge of all services for which the pulpit is not supplied during that vacancy.
- b. To cooperate with the pastor in the shepherding of the membership of this church, to reconcile so far as possible all differences, to keep order in the assemblies of the members, to act for the members in the reception and dismissal of members, and to supervise and administer the various activities of Grace Doctrine Church as indicated hereinafter by the standing and special committees.
- c. To assist the treasurer in the supervision and administration of all funds; to hire and discharge personnel, except where reserved to the pastor or specific officer; to determine salaries and missionary allowances; to hold title to all property in trust for the use and benefit of the members, but shall not acquire or dispose of real property which is intended for, or used as, a church facility, or contract for any loans on behalf of this church except upon prior specific written instruction and authority by the members at a duly called business meeting; to take all necessary measures for the protection, management, and upkeep of all property; to determine the use of the facilities of this church; to render a written report to the members at the annual meeting of the members, outlining therein the activities of the deacons for the past year and recommendations, if any, for the members; and to execute any special instructions of the members adopted in a resolution at a duly called meeting of the members.
- d. To interpret this constitution.

C. Committees

The committees may include but are not limited to the following:

1. The standing committees of this church shall be:
 - a. Finance Committee, chaired by the treasurer.
 - b. Church Office Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman and approved by the

- pastor.
- c. Prep School Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman and approved by the pastor.
 - d. Membership Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman and approved by the pastor.
 - e. Missionary Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman and approved by the pastor.
 - f. Nursery Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman, and approved by the pastor.
 - g. Property Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman and approved by the pastor.
 - h. Ushers Committee, chaired by an appointee of the chairman and approved by the pastor.
2. Each standing committee shall be chaired by a deacon and shall have as members those deacons and/or members of the congregation selected by its chairman and approved by the pastor.
 3. The specific duties of the standing committees are as follows:
 - a. Finance Committee shall be responsible, under the supervision of the treasurer, for the supervision and administration of all ways and means of receiving, conserving, and disbursing funds, and maintenance of proper insurance.
 - b. Church Office Committee shall be responsible for the operation and management of the church office, including office secretarial personnel and equipment, maintenance of church records, and custody of membership rolls.
 - c. Membership Committee shall examine the qualifications of applicants for membership and recommend qualified applicants to the Board of Deacons for approval, keep the deacons apprised of members who are sick or in need of financial assistance, and in general assist the pastor as he may direct in matters affecting the membership.
 - d. Missionary Committee shall be responsible for the administration of all missionary activities according to the policy approved by the deacons and pastor.
 - e. Nursery Committee shall be responsible for the administration and operation of the nursery facilities.
 - f. Prep School Committee shall be responsible for the approval of curriculum used in the Prep School operation, enlist and train faculty and administer the day-to-day functions of Prep School.
 - g. Property Committee shall be responsible for the operation, use, maintenance, and repair of all property not specifically delegated to others, including all buildings, grounds, parking areas, mechanical equipment, and all equipment/furniture and fixtures appurtenant to the church property. The cleaning and maintenance personnel shall be under the supervision of this committee.
 - h. Ushers Committee shall be responsible for the seating of the congregation at all public worship services, provision for tellers at business meetings of the members, and preparation and distribution of the elements of the Lord's Supper.
 4. Special Committees

Special committees, such as the Ordination Committee, may be appointed by the pastor or the chairman for the execution of special activities not within the scope of the standing committee.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

- A. A person shall qualify for membership who:
 1. Believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior;

2. Acknowledges and accepts the authority of the pastor as his or her right pastor-teacher.
 3. Subscribes to the doctrines and tenants of this church as cited in Article III of this constitution and the doctrinal statement of this church published under the title *Forty Proclamations: The Theology of Grace Doctrine Church*.
- B. An Associate Member shall be an individual who is associated with the church but not in the local congregation. Associate Members are not considered in determining a quorum at congregational meetings and thus may not vote in congregational elections.
- C. Receiving Members
- Any person desiring to become a member of this church who makes such request of the pastor or deacons and who meets the qualifications of this article shall upon approval of the deacons be received as a member into the fellowship of the church.
- D. Voting Member
- The voting members shall be limited to those members twenty (20) years old or older.
- E. Membership Roll
1. Periodic review of the membership roll with a view toward changing the status of individual members from "active" to "inactive" is the prerogative of the pastor. The pastor shall recommend such status changes to the Board of Deacons for their approval. Status may be changed from "inactive" to "active" by the same process.
 2. A member who is on the inactive membership list shall not be eligible to vote or hold office.
 3. A member may be removed and reinstated to the membership roll by action of the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE VI

WORSHIP SERVICES

Public worship services shall be held when and as often as the pastor determines or, in the event a vacancy in the office of pastor exists, as the deacons determine.

The pastor shall be the final authority in the regulation of all aspects of these services.

ARTICLE VII

BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS

- A. Place
- All business meetings of the members shall be held at the principal place of worship of this church, unless otherwise specified in the notice.
- B. Notice
- The date, time, place, and agenda of all meetings will be published in the church bulletin and announced from the pulpit at least fourteen (14) days prior to such meeting(s).
- C. Agenda
- Items of business for consideration in business meetings will be restricted to the agenda stipulated in the notice of meeting. Issues and questions from the floor that depart from the agenda will not be considered or voted upon.
- D. Annual Business Meeting
- There shall be an annual business meeting of the members within six (6) weeks of the end of the fiscal year, the exact date of same to be determined by the deacons; and the meeting shall be called by the

secretary by notice as hereinbefore stipulated.

E. Special Business Meetings

The secretary upon notice from the pastor or the deacons shall call a special business meeting of the members. The date, time, and purpose of said meeting will be announced in the church bulletin. A quorum for special business meetings shall be defined as fifty-one percent (51%) of the active voting members present for said meeting.

F. Quorum and Conduct of Business

1. A quorum for the transaction of regular business shall be thirty-three percent (33%) of the voting members. The majority vote of such members present and voting shall prevail unless the vote of a greater number is required by this constitution.
2. In all business meetings the chairman of the deacons shall preside, and in his absence the vice chairman. If both are absent the deacons shall appoint a chairman.
3. In the transaction of business the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)* shall be used in all cases not covered by this constitution.

G. Voting

The chairman of the meeting shall determine the method of voting, except the following shall be by secret ballot: the ratification of appointed deacons; purchase, sale, or transfer of real property; the calling of a pastor.

ARTICLE VIII

PASTOR

A. Call

1. In the event of a vacancy in the office of pastor, the chairman of the Board of Deacons shall appoint a Pulpit Committee, subject to approval of the board. This committee shall be responsible for locating acceptable candidates and presenting them to the board for consideration.
2. A candidate for pastor shall be considered only after he has subscribed in writing to the doctrinal statement and constitution of this church. He shall be recommended to the members in a duly called business meeting by at least a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board of Deacons.

B. Terminating a Pastor's Services

The pastor may be recommended for dismissal by an affirmative vote of at least two thirds (2/3) of the total number of deacons. Voting shall be in a duly called meeting of the deacons. At least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting, the pastor under consideration shall be notified in writing of the reason(s) for the recommended dismissal, and at his option may be represented by two members, introduce evidence, present, and cross-examine witnesses. If the vote is for dismissal, recommendation shall be made by the deacons to the members, and the services of the pastor may then be terminated by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present in a duly called special business meeting by a roll-call vote.

ARTICLE IX

MISSIONARIES

A. Support

Support of duly qualified missionaries or mission entities may be initiated by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the deacons present in a duly called meeting of the deacons.

Such support may be terminated by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the deacons

present in a duly called meeting of the deacons.

B. Doctrinal Position

A missionary or missionary entity shall subscribe to and abide by the doctrinal statement of this church before any support shall be approved or continued.

ARTICLE X

LICENSING AND ORDINATION

A. License

A license to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ may be issued in the name of this church to any man who in the judgment of the pastor and deacons is called of God to the work of the ministry, by an affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the total number of the deacons. The issuance of such a license shall not bind this church to a future ordination of the licensee.

B. Ordination

A commission to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ may be granted in the name of this church to any man by an affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the examining council administered by the Ordination Committee. The examining council will be composed of the pastor and deacons. The examining council shall thoroughly examine all such applicants as to personal salvation, spiritual gifts, doctrine, ministry, education, and character.

C. Revocation

A license or ordination granted by this church may be revoked upon recommendation by the Ordination Committee and an affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the total number of the deacons.

ARTICLE XI

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of this church shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December each year.

ARTICLE XII

SEAL

The deacons shall provide a corporate seal, which shall be in the form of a circle and shall have inscribed thereon the name of this church.

ARTICLE XIII

AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the members present at a duly called special business meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been approved by the Board of Deacons.