



GRACE HILL
CHURCH

BYLAWS

Approved by the members on:
May 5, 2024

Table of Contents

Articles of Incorporation	1	6.2 Selection and Term of Office	14
Bylaws	4	6.3 Removal	15
Article I. Doctrinal Authority	4	Article VII. Membership	15
1.1 Statement of Biblical Authority	4	7.1 Requirements for Membership	15
1.2 Statement of Basic Belief	4	7.2 Powers and Authority	16
1.3 Statement on Marriage and Sexuality	5	7.3 Voting and Quorum	16
Article II. Church Government	7	7.4 Meetings	17
2.1 Elder Led, Congregationally Ruled	7	7.5 Removal	17
2.2 Autonomy	7	Article VIII. Church Discipline	17
Article III. Church Elders	7	8.1 Offenses Addressed	17
3.1 Elders (Directors)	7	8.2 The Church Discipline Process	18
3.1.1 Definition and Powers	7	8.3 Transitioning from Informal to Formal	
3.1.2 Lay Elders and Vocational Elders	8	Church Discipline	18
3.1.3 Number.....	8	8.4 Formal Church Discipline	18
3.1.4 Qualifications	8	8.4.1 Admonition	18
3.1.5 Duties	9	8.4.2 Removal from Membership	19
3.1.6 Selection and Term of Office	9	8.4.3 Restoration	19
3.1.7 Removal	10	Article IX. Church Disruptions	19
3.1.8 Elder Meetings	11	Article X. Church Finances	19
3.1.9 Definition of Quorum and Passing		10.1 Fiscal Year.....	19
Vote	11	10.2 Annual Budget Approval	19
3.2 Officers	11	10.3 Budget Amendments	19
3.2.1 Description	11	10.4 Records	20
3.2.2 Election	11	Article XI. Affiliations	20
3.2.3 Removal of Officers	11	Article XII. Meetings	20
3.2.4 Duties	12	Article XIII. Biblical Counseling	20
3.3 The Benevolence Fund	12	13.1 Principles of Biblical Counseling	20
Article IV. Ordination and Licensure	12	13.2 Confidentiality in Counseling	20
4.1 Ordination	12	Appendices	22
4.2 Licensure	13	Appendix A. Statement of Faith	22
Article V. Church Staff	13	Appendix B. Pastor/Elder Covenant	33
5.1 Compensation	13	Appendix C. Benevolence Policy	34
5.2 Policies	13	Appendix D. Membership Covenant	43
5.3 Conflict of Interest Policy.....	14	Appendix E. Staff Policies and Procedures	48
Article VI. Deacons	14	Appendix F. Child Protection Policy	50
6.1 Definition and Duties	14		

Articles of Incorporation

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

THE UNDERSIGNED, each with the capacity to contract, hereby executes and acknowledges these Articles of Incorporation for the purpose of forming a corporation not for profit under and by virtue of the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Pursuant to Chapter 10 of Title 13.1 of the Code of Virginia; the undersigned corporation submits the following information:

ARTICLE I - NAME AND ADDRESS

The name of the corporation shall be Grace Hill Church, Inc.

The physical address of this corporation, in the Town of Herndon of the County of Fairfax, is:

1020 Elden Street
Suite 205
Herndon, VA 20170

ARTICLE II - SHARES

This is a non-stock corporation and is not authorized to issue stock.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

The specific purpose for which the corporation is initially organized is to establish and oversee places of worship, conduct the work of evangelism, create departments necessary to support missionary activities, to license, ordain and oversee ministers of the gospel and to also engage in activities which are necessary, suitable or convenient for the accomplishment of that purpose, or which are incidental thereto

or connected therewith which are consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE IV - QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS

The corporation shall have members. The eligibility, rights, and obligations of the members will be determined by the organization's bylaws.

ARTICLE V - TERM AND DISSOLUTION

No date of commencement or corporation existence shall be when these articles have been filed with the Commission and approved by it and the respective filing fee has been paid; the term for which the corporation is to exist shall be perpetual.

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the legal liabilities of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said

Articles of Incorporation

court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE VI - NON PROFIT CORPORATION

This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 6 hereof.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation 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. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, this corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation.

ARTICLE VII - INITIAL REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT

The street address of the corporation's Initial Registered Office, located in the Town of Herndon of the County of Fairfax, is:

1020 Elden Street
Suite 205
Herndon, VA 20170

The name of the Initial Registered Agent at that office is Allan McCullough, a resident of Virginia.

The Initial Registered Agent is an initial director of the corporation.

The initial registered office address of the corporation is identical to the business office of the initial registered agent.

ARTICLE VIII - DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall have the authority to make provision for reasonable compensation to its members for their services as directors and to fix the basis and conditions upon which this compensation shall be paid. Any director may also serve the corporation in any other capacity and receive compensation therefrom in any form.

The names and addresses of the initial board of directors are as follows:

Allan McCullough
Fairmount White McCullough, Sr.
Evan Snyder
Jason Noble
Justin Winthers
Steve Matson

Articles of Incorporation

ARTICLE IX - INCORPORATOR

The name and residence address of the subscriber to these articles is as follows:

Allan McCullough

ARTICLE X - BYLAWS

The first Bylaws of the corporation shall be adopted by the Board of Directors and may be amended, altered or rescinded by the Board of Directors in the manner provided by such Bylaws.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended in the manner provided by statute.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY¹

1.1 Statement of Biblical Authority

At the center of Christian faith and practice stands the belief that God has spoken to the world in the person and work of Jesus Christ, which is accurately and authoritatively revealed in the Christian Bible (“the Bible,” “Scripture” or “the Scriptures”). The Bible is the inspired, inerrant and sufficient Word of God and is thus the ultimate authority for life, faith and morals. Though the various theological statements of the Church reflect succinct summaries of biblical boundaries, it is the Bible itself to which we are in ultimate submission.

The Members of the church have the responsibility to affirm the Grace Hill Church Statement of Faith. However, membership carries with it the implicit understanding that the Elders shall function as the interpretive authority on biblical meaning and application for the purpose of Church doctrine, practice, policy and discipline.

1.2 Statement of Basic Belief

The following Statement of Basic Belief represents the core orthodox beliefs of the Church from a biblical and historical perspective. While Church Members are not required to fully understand or articulate all aspects of the Statement of Basic Belief, the

explicit rejection of any part of it disqualifies one from membership and leadership at Grace Hill Church. Revisions to the Statement of Basic Belief in order to more clearly align to Scripture shall be considered and recommended by the Elders of Grace Hill Church but ultimately brought to the members for final approval.

We believe...

- The Scriptures are true, authoritative and sufficient (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- There is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 46:9-10; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God. The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit. The Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 3: 13-17; Matthew 28:17-20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
- I am, along with all humanity (Christ excluded), by birth and action a sinner (Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:8, 12-21, 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3).
- The deserved penalty for sin is death, both physical and spiritual (Genesis 2:15-17; Genesis 3:19, Romans 5:12, 6:23; James 1:14-15).

¹ Grace Hill Church has adopted the language (with some amendments) of Article I from The Village Church. <http://www.thevillagechurch.net/about/beliefs/bylaws/>

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

- Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, was born of a virgin and is both fully God and fully human (Matthew 1:20; Luke 2:52; John 1:1-4, 14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3).
- Jesus Christ died as my substitute to pay the penalty for my sin (John 1:29, 10:1-18; Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18).
- Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 1:20-21:25; 1 Corinthians 15:12-34).
- Jesus Christ physically ascended into heaven and will one day physically return (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7).
- There will be a future physical resurrection of the dead. Those who trust in Jesus Christ alone will be raised to eternal reward. Those who have not trusted in Jesus Christ will be resurrected to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24-15).
- Only by trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone can I be reconciled to God and experience true life and joy (John 3:18, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6).

1.3 Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

It is the biblical position that marriage involves the union of one man and one woman in permanent sacred fidelity. Though various cultures and customs have evolving definitions of marriage, it is God alone who has ultimate authority to prescribe and describe the marital relationship (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:1-9; Mark 10:1-12).

Furthermore, sexual intimacy is only properly exercised and pursued within the confines of this marital relationship. Sexual immorality, defined as any sexual activity outside of the boundaries of the sacred marital relationship between one man and one woman, is clearly and expressly prohibited by the Lord (Matthew 15:19; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:4).

As a consequence, the Church regards any and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or even lustful intent toward such, as sinful and ultimately unsatisfying. Moreover, the Church also regards as sinful the intent or desire to surgically alter one's biological sex to a different sex. Since the body is a creation of God, the Church holds sexual identity to be biologically determined, and associated gender norms are to be observed as appropriate to biblical standards. Disagreement with one's biological sex only leads to spiritual confusion and emotional chaos (Genesis 1:27; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

In order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical example to the Church Members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity or united to the Church in membership should abide by and agree to this §1.3, "Statement on Marriage and Sexuality" and conduct themselves accordingly.

Though sinful sexual expression is egregious (as is all sin), the gospel provides redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 3:3-7).

Furthermore, there is a difference between temptation and unrepented sin. Jesus was tempted in all ways as we are, yet He never sinned. Members, employees, volunteers and attendees of the Church wrestling with all manner of sexual temptation will find a Church ready to point them to Jesus and join with them to fight for their obedience to Christ. Jesus called the weary and heavy-laden to Himself. As a church desiring to follow Christ fully, the Church will be a safe place for men and women fighting sexual temptations of all kinds. For those fighting temptation and repenting of sin, the Church will provide love, care and direction (Matthew 11:28-30; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:14-16).

The Church's Statement on Marriage and Sexuality does not provide grounds for bigotry, bullying or hate, as we fully believe that every person must be afforded

compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity, regardless of his or her lifestyle. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated as sinful and are not in accordance with the Scriptures nor the doctrines of the Church.

This §1.3 specifically gives the Elder board the right and authority to prohibit acts or omissions, including but not limited to (a) permitting any Church assets or property, whether real property, personal property, intangible property, or any property or asset of any kind that is subject to the direction or control of the Church, to be used in any manner that would be—or, in the sole determination of the Elders, could be perceived by any person to be—inconsistent with this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality; and (b) permitting any Church facilities to be used by any person, organization, corporation, or group that would or might use such facilities to convey, intentionally or by implication, what might be perceived as a favorable impression about any definition of marriage other than that contained in this §1.3.

The Church's Statement on Marriage and Sexuality is based upon God's will for human life as conveyed to us through the Scriptures, upon which this Church has been founded and anchored, and this §1.3 shall not be subject to change through popular vote; referendum; prevailing opinion of Members or the general public; influence of or interpretation by any government authority, agency, or official action; or legal developments on the local, state, or federal level.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

ARTICLE II. CHURCH GOVERNMENT

2.1 Elder Led, Congregationally Ruled

The government of this church shall be congregational in nature, and the final authority for the operation and management of the affairs of this corporation, spiritual and temporal, shall be vested in the membership of the corporation, which authority shall be exercised in the manner set forth in the Bylaws.

This church is specifically governed by an Elder led, congregationally ruled system. Stephen J. Wellum and Kirk Wellum give the following description: *“Final earthly authority goes to the church in a number of matters of judgment: church discipline, which ranges all the way from private admonition to excommunication (1 Cor 5:5; Gal 6:1; cf. Matt 16:19; 18:18); internal disputes (1 Cor 6:4); the selection of deacons and elders (Acts 6:3-6; 15:22; 1 Cor 16:3); the collection and distribution of monies for relief of the poor (1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8-9); the administration of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:20-26); setting apart and sending out specific people for certain responsibilities (Acts 11:19-24; 13:1-3; 14:24-28); the right preaching of the gospel (Gal 1:7-8; 2 Tim 4:3); and so on. But Christ also has ordained specific leaders to lead the church in concert with the congregation (e.g., Acts 14:23; 20:28; 1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:7; Heb 13:7, 17; 1 Pet 5:2-3). Put together, then, the New Testament presents a picture of congregational rule that is elder led. The elders lead and guide the church to fulfill and carry out its responsibilities as the church.”²*

2.2 Autonomy

This church is an independent, autonomous church with full and final authority to determine sole within itself all matters related to the life of this church including but not limited to its financial affairs, affiliations, ownership and uses of property, and pastoral leadership.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH ELDERS

3.1 Elders (Directors)

3.1.1 Definition and Powers

The overall policy, control, direction and management of the ministry, operations and finances of the Church shall be vested in the Elder body. The Elders are designated as the directors of this corporation as the term is defined and used in the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act. Subject to the provisions and limitations of the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act, any limitations in the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, all corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Elders. As used in this §3.1 and throughout these Bylaws, the terms “Elders,” “Elder body” and “Elder board” are used interchangeably to mean a quorum of Elders acting in accordance with §3.1.8 herein.

The Elder board shall consist of those nominated and elected in accordance with these Bylaws. The total number of Elders shall not be less than six (6).

² “The Biblical and Theological Case for Congregationalism,” in Baptist Foundations: Church Government for an Anti-Institutional Age, ed. Mark Dever, Jonathan Leeman, and James Leo Garrett (Nashville: B & H, 2015), 76.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

3.1.2 Lay Elders and Vocational Elders

Lay Elders are defined as those Elders who are not in the employ of the Church as a regular part-time or full-time staff member. Vocational Elders are defined as those Elders who are in the employ of the Church as a regular part-time or full-time staff member.

Lay Elders shall not receive compensation or salaries for their service. Vocational Elders may receive reasonable compensation for fulfilling their vocational responsibilities as employees of the Church. A Vocational Elder shall neither vote on nor determine his own personal salary or benefits or designate his personal housing allowance.

The Elder board will maintain a simple majority of Lay Elders. If for any reason the composition of the Elder body does not consist of a simple majority of Lay Elders, then the Elders will begin the process outlined in §3.1.5 below to restore the required composition.

All Vocational Elders who resign or are dismissed from their employment at Grace Hill Church will simultaneously cease to hold the office of Elder. If the Members wish for the former Elder to serve as a Lay Elder, the process outlined in 3.1.6 must be followed.

3.1.3 Number

The Elder board shall consist of those nominated and elected in accordance with these Bylaws. The Church shall appoint at minimum one (1) Elder per every 25 Member households with the total number of Elders shall not be less than six (6). A household is

defined as one family unit. If, for some reason, the church does not have the minimum number of Elders, efforts shall be made to seek out potential Elder candidates.

The Elder board will maintain a simple majority of Lay Elders. If for any reason the composition of the Elder body does not consist of a simple majority of Lay Elders, then the Elders will begin the process outlined in §3.1.6 below to restore the required composition.

3.1.4 Qualifications

The minimum qualifications for Elders shall not be less than those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, including without limitation the requirement that Elders be men. In addition to the minimum qualifications given in Scripture, Elders must be Members who fully subscribe to Grace Hill Church's Statement of Faith (Appendix A), have signed the Pastor/Elder Covenant (Appendix B). The Elders may at any time create, alter, amend, repeal or restate resolutions establishing additional qualifications outside of those listed in the above scriptures.

Both Appendix A and Appendix B provide additional explanation but shall not be incorporated into these Bylaws by reference, nor shall it replace the text of this §3.1.3. This resource may be amended by the Elder Board without the need to go through the process of amending the Bylaws. In the event of any disagreement of the above mentioned document with these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

3.1.5 Duties

The duties of the Elders shall include, but not be limited to, leading the Church to fulfill the purposes of the Church.

The Elder board, as a group, shall supervise all employees of the Church; the Vocational Elders, as individuals, shall supervise those employees reporting to them hierarchically within the Church staff. The Elders may delegate to Church employees any and all duties and responsibilities the Elders deem reasonable, subject to the rights, if any, of the person under contract of employment. The Elders of the Church may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions.

The Elders of the Church, subject to the will of the congregation, shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and I Peter 5:1-4, the Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

The Elders of the Church shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the Deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound

doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for local and global missions. All Church Elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

All Elders will be assigned specific Church Members to be under their care. The Elders are asked to make an attempt of contact with each of their assigned Church Members at least once per month and make an attempt to personally meet with the Church Member at least once per year.

3.1.6 Selection and Term of Office

The Elders shall appoint new Elders upon approval by the Members in accordance with §7.2.

Anyone who would be considered to be appointed as a Elder at the church must first be nominated by the Members of the Church.

Someone is considered officially "nominated" when at least two, unrelated Members of the Church submit in writing to the Elders an Elder candidates name with the approval of the Elder candidate as affirmation that this individual aspires to the office of Elder (1 Tim. 3:1). The Elder candidate must also sign the "Elder Nomination Agreement" to accept the nomination.

Once a candidate has been nominated by the Members, the Elders shall appoint a committee of Elders to vet and develop Elder

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

candidates and report its findings to the Elder body.

The Elder candidate will be brought before the Members for approval upon a passing vote by the Elder body to recommend the candidate to the Members for approval.

The proposed appointment of any Elder shall be communicated to the Church at the Member meeting that precedes the Member meeting where the members will be asked to vote on his appointment. During this time between Member meetings, Church Members shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders on a case-by-case basis. Confirmation of a new Elder shall be at the sole and final discretion of the Members and effectuated upon their passing vote.

Once a man is appointed to the Elder body as a Lay Elder, he is expected to serve in this capacity for a minimum of three years, and then will serve one year terms thereafter with no maximum number of years he may serve.

If the Elder body determines that an Elder needs an extended Sabbath because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness or tragedy), then such Elder may transition to being a nonactive Elder for a set period of time determined by the Elder body.

To resign from the Elder body, an Elder shall notify, in writing, the officers of the Church who are also members of the Elder body. Such officers shall determine the most fruitful and edifying way to notify the remaining Elders and the Church Members. A vacancy in the

Elder body because of death, resignation, removal or any other cause shall be filled only in the manners prescribed in these Bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

3.1.7 Removal

An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two Members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21. Any of the Elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the Members at any Member meeting of the church.

A written notice of proposed removal of any Elder shall be given to such Elder by the Secretary, or by a Elder appointed by the Chairman at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to recommend to the congregation such removal is to be taken, in order to ensure that the Elder is given reasonable opportunity to defend himself. The Elder shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on the recommendation of his removal. Such recommendation shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the Elders. The Elder under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

3.1.8 Elder Meetings

Regular meetings of the Elders shall be held in a location that the Elders deem from time to time.

Any meeting may be held by conference telephone or similar communication equipment, as long as all of the Elders participating in the meeting can hear one another. All Elders participating telephonically shall be deemed present at such meetings.

3.1.9 Definition of Quorum and Passing Vote

A proper quorum is defined as seventy-five percent (75%) of the Lay Elders and seventy-five percent (75%) of the Vocational Elders. A quorum is required for voting matters.

A passing vote must be equal to or greater than seventy-five percent (75%) of the Elders present. Voting by proxy is allowed with the exception of any votes in regards to church discipline.

The following items may not be approved within this church without the approval of the members in accordance with §7.2. However, the Elder Board has the responsibility to lead the church in providing the Members recommendations prior to their vote for the following items:

- (a) The Election/Removal of Members
- (b) The Election/Removal of Elders.

- (c) The Election/Removal of Deacons.
- (d) Statement of Faith
- (e) Annual Budget
- (f) Bylaw Amendments

3.2 Officers

3.2.1 Description

Officers of the Church shall be Members of the Elder body. The Officers shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers as deemed necessary by the Elders.

3.2.2 Election

The Officers of the Church shall be elected by a passing vote of the Elders and shall serve terms of at least one (1) year, as long as they remain a member of the Elder body. Officers may be re-elected.

3.2.3 Removal of Officers

Any Officer may be removed from office for valid cause. A written notice of proposed removal of any Officer shall be given to such Officer by the Secretary, or by a Elder appointed by the Chairman at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to effectuate such removal is to be taken, in order to ensure that the Officer is given reasonable opportunity to defend himself. The Officer shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

vote on his removal. Such removal shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the Elders. The Officer under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered.

Vacancies in the Officers of the Church by reason of death, resignation or otherwise, shall be filled by election of the Elders as soon as is reasonably possible. Until such time, a Elder may be appointed by the remaining Elders to serve in such a vacancy.

3.2.4 Duties

(a) Chairman

The Chairman shall perform such duties as are incumbent upon such Officer, including making certain that all orders and resolutions of the Elders are carried into effect. The Chairman shall have oversight of the Elder meetings as defined in §3.1.7. The Chairman's duties shall include, without limitation: establishing meetings, setting the agenda and presiding over the meetings.

(b) Secretary

The Secretary shall record or cause to be recorded in a minute book of the Church minutes of all meetings of the Elders and all votes taken at such meetings. He shall have charge of the official records and seal of the Church, and he shall perform such other duties as are applicable to the office of Secretary and as may be assigned by the Elders or the Chairman, under whose supervision the Secretary shall be.

(c) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall serve as the overseer of the financial operations of the Church. Paid Church staff members shall be accountable to the Treasurer for management of the financial aspects of the Church. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties and have other responsibilities as may be assigned to him from time to time by the Elders. The Treasurer must be a Lay Elder.

3.3 The Benevolence Fund

The Elders shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the Grace Hill Church Benevolence Policy (Appendix D).

Such resource provides additional explanation but shall not be incorporated into these Bylaws by reference, nor shall it replace the text of this §3.3. This resource may be amended by the Elder Board without the need to go through the process of amending the Bylaws. In the event of any disagreement of the above mentioned document with these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

ARTICLE IV. ORDINATION AND LICENSURE

4.1 Ordination³

We find no instruction in the New Testament concerning the common practice of ordination, but there are numerous texts which indicate a "setting apart," "anointing," "laying on of hands" and "sending out" (Acts 14:23; 1

³ Grace Hill Church has adopted some of the language from the Ordination Policy of The Village Church. <http://www.thevillagechurch.net/sermon/ordination-and-licensing-guidelines/>

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

Tim. 2:7; Titus 1:5; Acts 6:6, 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6).

Most, if not all, churches and denominations have a way to publicly recognize and confer authority to those God has entrusted to guide, equip and lead them. Although the call on a Pastor/Elders's life is wrought in the heart and is not contingent upon titles, ordination provides the opportunity for the church to affirm and recognize this calling.

Grace Hill Church recognizes the role of Elders to carry out these functions.

There are no direct instructions in the New Testament for ordination, nor is there any requirement by our denomination. Because of the historical tradition of ordination, we believe that Grace Hill Church can practice the ordination of its Elders.

In summary, all Elders at Grace Hill Church must be and will be ordained through the process outline in §3.2.4. Their ordination remains in effect as long as they are actively serving in the office of Elder.

4.2 Licensure

At Grace Hill Church, we view Licensure as the church's endorsement of specific staff or covenant members at Grace Hill Church to perform certain ministerial duties in the eyes of the state and certain organizations.

Again, there are no instructions in Scripture in regards to licensure. Therefore, since the state and certain organizations looks to the endorsement of a church to confer upon a person ministerial responsibilities, we will

endorse certain individuals on a case-by-case basis for certain duties that include but are not limited to: performing a wedding ceremony, conducting a funeral, visiting individuals at a hospital, accepting a missionary assignment, etc.

There are times where a person's Licensure may be a lifetime endorsement by Grace Hill Church depending on the laws and regulations that govern ministerial tasks on behalf of the state. The Elders of Grace Hill Church have the sole authority to choose or choose not to license an individual.

ARTICLE V. CHURCH STAFF

5.1 Compensation

Employees of the church shall receive proper compensation for their work. A compensation committee shall be organized by the Treasurer to review and adjust compensation levels on an annual basis.

Compensation levels for all employees must also be approved by the Elders and then ultimately approved by the Congregation by a passing vote of the annual budget.

5.2 Policies

All personnel employed by the Church shall act in accordance with the current Elder-approved *Staff Policies and Procedures* document (Appendix G), as it may be revised, amended or restated from time to time.

The Church will reserve employment for men and women who believe and confess essential

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

biblical convictions and act in accordance with such. Additionally, the Church reserves the right to terminate the employment of any existing employee who fails to meet this general standard of faith and practice.

5.3 Conflict of Interest Policy

If compensation levels are being decided upon by the Compensation Committee and the Elder Board for a staff member who has family relations with any member of the Compensation Committee and/or the Elder Board, that person who has family relations with the staff member whose compensation levels are being decided upon shall recuse him or herself from the decision-making process in total for that specific staff member.

ARTICLE VI. DEACONS

6.1 Definition and Duties

The office of Deacon is described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7. The purpose of deacons is to set apart qualified men and women in the church with particular gifts and skills to assist the Elders in the ministry of the church where needed.

6.2 Selection and Term of Office

Anyone who would be considered to be appointed as a Deacon at the church must first be recommended to the Church for such appointment by the Elders.

Once a candidate has been recommended by the Elders upon a passing vote, the Deacon

candidate will be brought before the Members for approval.

The proposed appointment of any Deacon shall be communicated to the Church at the Member meeting that precedes the Member meeting where the members will be asked to vote on his or her appointment. During this time between Member meetings, Church Members shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders on a case-by-case basis. Confirmation of a new Deacon shall be at the sole and final discretion of the Members and effectuated upon their passing vote.

Once a man or woman is appointed to serve as a Deacon, he or she is expected to serve in this capacity for a minimum of one year, and then will serve one year terms thereafter with no maximum number of years he or she may serve.

If the Elder body determines that a Deacon needs an extended Sabbath because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness or tragedy), then such Deacon may transition to being a nonactive Deacon for a set period of time determined by the Elder body.

To resign from serving as a Deacon, a Deacon shall notify, in writing, the officers of the Church who are also members of the Elder body. Such officers shall determine the most fruitful and edifying way to notify the remaining Elders, Deacons, and the Church Members. A vacancy in the Deacon body because of death, resignation, removal or any other cause shall be filled only in the manners

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

prescribed in these Bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

6.3 Removal

A Deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two Members with reason to believe that a Deacon should be dismissed should express such concern to the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17. Any of the Deacons may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the Members at any Member meeting of the church.

A written notice of proposed removal of any Deacon shall be given to such Deacon by the Secretary, or by a Elder appointed by the Chairman at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to recommend to the congregation such removal is to be taken, in order to ensure that the Deacon is given reasonable opportunity to defend him or herself. The Deacon shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his or her accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on the recommendation of his or her removal. Such recommendation shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the Elders.

ARTICLE VII. MEMBERSHIP

7.1 Requirements for Membership

Only those who have been approved by the current members of Grace Hill Church in accordance with §7.3 may become members of Grace Hill Church. One is eligible to be

brought before the Grace Hill Church membership for a vote by fulfilling the following requirements:

- Demonstrated evidence that they have repented of their former life, believed upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord.
- Full agreement with the Statement of Basic Belief found in §1.2.
- Have experienced believer's baptism by immersion in water.
- Completed the Grace Hill Membership Class.
- Signed the Grace Hill Membership Covenant (Appendix E).
- Been recommended to the current membership for membership approval by the Elders as the Elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership.

Appendix E provides additional explanation but shall not be incorporated into these Bylaws by reference, nor shall it replace the text of this §7.1. This resource may be amended by the Elder Board without the need to go through the process of amending the Bylaws. In the event of any disagreement of the above mentioned document with these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

7.2 Powers and Authority

Under Christ the congregation of Grace Hill Church is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all member's meetings. The members have the responsibility to vote and approve the following measures:

- The admission and removal of members.
- The affirmation and removal of Elders and Deacons.
- The annual budget.
- Any changes to the annual budget that are above an annually set threshold. (The annually set threshold is approved by the members as a part of the approval of the annual budget)
- The contraction of any debt (with the exception of a line of credit or credit cards).
- Any real estate transactions.
- Amendments to the Statement of Faith.
- Amendments to the Bylaws or Membership Covenant.
- Any other matter within the church that is brought before the Elders at least 30 days prior to a member's meeting and agreed upon by at least three non-related members within the church.

7.3 Voting and Quorum

All voting will take place during regularly scheduled member's meetings via confidential paper ballots. Members may not vote via proxy.

A quorum of a simple majority of the members of Grace Hill Church is required in order to hold votes on the following measures:

- The affirmation of an Elder.
- The removal of a member, Elder, or Deacon.
- The annual budget.
- The contraction of any debt (with the exception of a line of credit or credit cards).
- Any real estate transactions.
- Amendments to the Statement of Faith.
- Amendments to the Bylaws or Membership Covenant.
- Any miscellaneous matter where the Elders decide a quorum is necessary.

A simple majority will constitute a passing vote on all matters with the exception of the removal of a member, Deacon, or Elder which requires a two-thirds vote of the members.

After a vote, the Elders have the power to table a vote until the next member's meeting where they will request a new vote if they feel that the congregation is especially divided on

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

a particular issue. A vote may not be tabled more than once.

7.4 Meetings

The members of Grace Hill Church will gather for member's meetings on a regular basis at a time and location as decided by the Elders.

The secretary of Grace Hill Church will ensure minutes of the member's meetings are recorded and archived.

7.5 Removal

Members can be removed through (a) voluntary resignation of membership by one in good standing, (b) death, or (c) a decision by the members as a result of the disciplinary process outlined in Article VIII. Members are prohibited from voluntarily resigning their membership while subject to the formal disciplinary process as outlined in Article VIII.

ARTICLE VIII. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Through God's grace, the fourfold purpose of church discipline is the means (1) to help conform us individually and corporately to Christ, in terms of the purity and unity of his church, for the glory of God (Col. 1:28; Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Cor. 10:31), (2) to help bring a wandering soul back to Christ (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 6:1-5), (3) to help deter others from sin (1 Tim. 5:20), and (4) to help protect the church from false teachers, wolves, and division (Acts 20:25-31; Titus 1:10-11).

Members of this church and all others who regularly attend the various church gatherings

who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Elders, shall be subject to appropriate church discipline which they have impliedly or expressly consented to honor prior to engaging in the conduct triggering the disciplinary action. Application of church discipline shall be consistent with the biblical approach outline in Matthew 18:15-20. As such, it is to be exercised against offenders who are members of Grace Hill Church. The Elders shall oversee the disciplinary process described below, however, the members of Grace Hill Church hold final authority to make the final decision in all disciplinary matters in accordance with §7.3.

8.1 Offenses Addressed

General categories of offenses in Scripture that may result in church discipline include:

- Divisiveness (Titus 3:9-11; Romans 16:17-18; Hebrews 13:17).
- Scandalous immorality (1 Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10; Exodus 20:12-17).
- Rejecting doctrines of the Christian faith (1 Timothy 1:19-20, 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11).

The methods described here also cover any and all disputes or claims arising from or related to church membership covenant, doctrine, policy, practice, counseling, and discipline, including claims based on civil statute or for personal injury.

By joining this church, all members agree that these church discipline methods shall provide

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

the sole remedy for any dispute arising against the church and its agents, and they waive their right to file any legal action against the church in a civil court or agency.

8.2 The Church Discipline Process

The process for church discipline outlined in Matthew 18:15-20 involves four progressive steps. The church discipline process is made up of both informal steps (steps 1-2) and formal steps (steps 3-4).

- Step 1: Privately seek reconciliation (Matt. 18:15).
- Step 2: If the person refuses to listen in the private confrontation, involve select others (Matt. 18:16).
- Step 3: If the person refuses to listen to these select others, tell it to the church (Matt. 18:17a).
- Step 4: If the person refuses to listen even to the church, treat the unrepentant person as an unbeliever (Matt. 18:17b).

8.3 Transitioning from Informal to Formal Church Discipline

If disciplinary steps 1 and 2 are unsuccessful, then those who sought the offender's repentance shall involve an Elder in the matter to provide pastoral guidance if this particular matter should be brought before the church and transitioned into formal church discipline. If deemed necessary, the involved Elder shall involve the other Elders of the church in investigating the particular offense. If the

charges are proven false, then appropriate exhortation will be given to the parties so that reconciliation can occur. If the charges are proven (whether by confession or by witnesses), the Elders will transition the case to formal church discipline.

8.4 Formal Church Discipline

Once a particular case is transitioned into formal church discipline, the Elders must provide a written admonition to the accused party and inform the members of the church of the individual under discipline and their offense. The Elders must also instruct the members on how they are to interact with the individual under discipline and how they may aid in their repentance.

8.4.1 Admonition

Admonition includes a written description of how the unacceptable behavior violated the Scriptures and what must replace it; a gathering of a select, intentional community to journey with and minister to the offender over a specified period of time; and a written warning that removal from membership could follow if repentance and subsequent changes in heart attitude and action does not result by God's grace. If repentance and satisfactory changes occur, the Elders may discontinue further disciplinary efforts. Other disciplinary measures, short of removal from membership, may include limitation of social associations and ministry opportunities.

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

8.4.2 Removal from Membership

If admonition and redemptive efforts fail to result in repentance, the Elders will recommend that the members vote to remove the individual under discipline from membership of the church in accordance with §7.3. The person removed from membership is to be treated as an unbeliever and is excluded from the privileges of membership. He or she is thus excluded from communion and from social meals, gatherings, and recreational activities with other church members.

If a member withdraws from membership while the subject of a pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-20 and begins attending another church, the Elders are obliged to inform the new church of the offender's status. If a member withdraws from membership while the subject of a pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-20, such withdrawal shall not cancel the Elder's authority to complete the appropriate disciplinary action.

8.4.3 Restoration

If and when the person removed from membership repents, restoration begins. Restoration is a process that restores an offender to the full privileges that were withdrawn during excommunication. This will only occur if the Elders are satisfied that full repentance is a reality and the members of the church have voted to reaffirm the individuals membership. If restoration is accomplished, the Elders will explain the duty of all members relative to the restored person (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

ARTICLE IX. CHURCH DISRUPTIONS

Any person deemed by a member of the Staff Team or an Elder to pose a physical or psychological threat to any person or to the Church, or to be causing, about to cause, or capable of causing disruption to the religious services and activities of the Church, shall be considered a trespasser on Church property and may be ejected summarily. No Church employee or Elder shall incur any liability for acting in good faith in the interests of the Church pursuant to this §9.

ARTICLE X. CHURCH FINANCES

10.1 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be October 1 - September 30.

10.2 Annual Budget Approval

The Elder Board shall seek approval of the annual budget from the members in accordance with §7.3 prior to the start off the fiscal year.

10.3 Budget Amendments

The budget may be amended by the Elder Board at any point during the fiscal year without the approval of the members if the total amount of the amendments is less than the established threshold approved by the members.

If the Elder Board desires to amend the budget above the established threshold, they

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

must seek approval from the members according to §7.3.

10.4 Records

The church shall keep correct and complete books and records of account under the oversight of the Treasurer.

ARTICLE XI. AFFILIATIONS

The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches in the fulfillment of its purposes, the Church may voluntarily affiliate with other churches and conventions by a passing vote of the Elders, as defined in §3.1.8.

ARTICLE XII. MEETINGS

Meetings for public worship shall be held at such times and places as may be provided for under the direction of the Elders. The Elders shall also have the authority to call a Church business meeting or special meetings as needed.

ARTICLE XIII. BIBLICAL COUNSELING

All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on our lives and our relationships (Romans 3:23, 7:7-25). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes or behaviors through private efforts, God desires that they seek assistance from other members, and especially from the Elders who have the responsibility of providing pastoral counseling and oversight (Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:1-2;

Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-5:2; Hebrews 10:24-25, 13:17; James 5:16). Therefore, this church encourages and enjoins its members to make confession to and seek counsel from each other and especially from pastoral counselors.

13.1 Principles of Biblical Counseling

Counseling at Grace Hill Church is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. The counselors of this church are not trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists.

The counselors of Grace Hill Church seek to apply biblical principles to all aspects of life. If a member or regular attendee of Grace Hill Church seeks help in legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, the counselor will apply scripture to the matter to the best of his ability. The counselor will seek to cooperate with professional advisors and help members or regular attendees consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

13.2 Confidentiality in Counseling

Confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible. However, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the Elders of this church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people. Typical circumstances include:

Bylaws of Grace Hill Church

- When an Elder is uncertain about how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other Elders (Proverbs 11:14, 13:10, 15:22, 19:20, 20:18; Matthew 18:15-17).
- When the person who disclosed the information, or any other person, is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Proverbs 24:11-12) where required by scripture or law.
- When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (Matthew 18:15-20 and Article VIII) or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (see Romans 3:1-5).
- When required by law to report suspected child abuse or other illegal activity.

The Baptist Faith & Message 2000

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are Pastors and Deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of Pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with

these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom

no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

The Grace Hill Church Pastor/Elder Covenant

An elected Pastor/Elder and his wife (if he is married) must read and sign this covenant before assuming their office at Grace Hill Church.

I recognize that the task of shepherding God's people is both a great privilege and serious responsibility. I also recognize that such leadership requires a higher degree of discipline and accountability than might be expected of other non-elder church members. I believe that my growth in spiritual maturity will be a direct result of my complete dependence upon God and my willingness to make only wise and obedient choices. In keeping with these convictions, I commit myself to live a life above reproach (1 Tim 3:1-13; Thus 1:5-9; Jam 3:1; Phil 2:12-13).

The details of such a lifestyle being enumerated as follows:

1. I do depend wholly upon Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection for my salvation, and I attest that I am not a recent convert. The highest priorities in my life are to know my Savior and Lord better, trust Him more fully, and obey Him more faithfully (1 Tim. 3:2).
2. I will hold firmly to the trustworthy truth of the Holy Scriptures, so that I can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. In order that I might shepherd well and be prepared to teach accurately God's Word, I will strive toward the discipline of daily personal study of God's Word (1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 4:2-4; Acts 20:28-35).
3. I will live in such a way that my life is characterized as temperate, respectable, gentle, self-controlled, upright, holy, disciplined and loving of what is good. I will abstain from any recreational use of illegal or prescription drugs as well as not partake of any substance to the point of intoxication. I will not live in a way that could be perceived as violent, quick tempered, overbearing, or quarrelsome. In these and in every other respect, I will seek to discipline my body, eyes, mind, and tongue so as to grow toward the character of Christ (1 Cor 6:12; Rom 16:21; Eph 5:18; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6-8).
4. I attest that I am the husband of one wife (if married), and I will strive to manage my own family well. I will make every effort to lovingly encourage and spiritually strengthen my spouse, children and parents, recognizing my family to be my most precious earthly responsibility (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6).
5. I will live in such a way so as not to be characterized as a lover of money, nor will I pursue dishonest gain. Rather, I will biblically steward my income, giving regularly and sacrificially back to the Lord through our local fellowship (1 Tim 3:2; 1 Pet 5:2; Titus 1:7; 2 Cor 8:9; Matt. 6:1-4, 19-24; 1 Cor. 16:2; 1 Tim. 6:17-19).

6. I will serve willingly and eagerly as a shepherd of God's flock at Grace Hill Church, not lording over my authority those entrusted to me, but as an example and a servant to the flock of God. I will regard prayer and ministry of God's Word as primary responsibilities and will regularly support the people of Grace Hill Church in prayer (Acts 6:2-4; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
7. I will strive to be hospitable and to maintain a good reputation with those outside the church. I will seek to live in such a way that, by my conduct at home, at work, and in the community, those around me may be able to see Jesus in my life and be drawn to Him. I will also actively share in Christ's concern for extending the Gospel to the world (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).
8. In all these things I willingly make myself accountable to my fellow Elders and Pastors as well as the membership of Grace Hill Church. I have prayerfully considered all of the above and pledge my faithfulness before God and the people of Grace Hill Church.

Wife's Covenant

I understand that, in my union and ministry partnership with my husband, my character is as important as his qualification for the leadership of God's people. I will hold to the above standards wherever they pertain to my own spiritual walk and growth. I attest that I know of no scriptural reason why my husband should not serve in leadership of God's people and affirm that he is qualified according to this covenant. I will support and encourage my husband as much as I am able, that he might grow in his relationship with Christ and might effectively carry out his responsibilities as an Elder/Pastor of Grace Hill Church.

The Grace Hill Church Benevolence Policy

The Benevolence Fund

- A. The Grace Hill Church Benevolence Fund (BF) is a fund owned by Grace Hill Church and is separate from the general fund.
- B. The BF is funded partially by the budget of Grace Hill Church and separate donations by Grace Hill Church members.
- C. The strength of the benevolence fund is dependent on the members of Grace Hill Church.

The Benevolence Team

I. What is the Benevolence Team?

- A. The Benevolence Team (BT) is a team of Deacons at Grace Hill Church who oversee the BF, review benevolence requests, and distribute funds.
- B. The BT should be comprised of four members with one acting as the chairman.
- C. The BT must be recognized Deacons in the church and elected by the members of Grace Hill Church.
- D. No member of the BT has check-writing authority. That authority to sign checks will reside with the Elders.

II. Team Member Responsibilities

- A. Chairman:
 - 1. Provides leadership to the BT including delegating tasks and setting the agenda for BT meetings.
 - 2. Submits a monthly Benevolence Report to the team members and the Elders.
 - 3. Meets regularly with the Treasurer.
- B. Team Members:
 - 1. Provides timely responses to benevolence requests and approval request.
 - 2. Follows all policies and procedures to properly administer the benevolence process.

3. Attends all meetings as required.

III. Decision-Making Process

- A. All benevolence requests will follow this process:
 1. Team member interviews someone seeking assistance (see Benevolence Policy) and completes the BT Interview Form.
 2. Team member emails the form to the entire BT for advice and approval.
 3. If the three of the four team members give approval, the team member should email a Benevolence Disbursement Request to the Treasurer.

IV. Decision-Making Authority

- A. Financial requests coming to the team need the following approval:
 1. Any team member can approve a request for \$50 or less without team consent according to the Benevolence Policy. The team member must still submit a BT Interview Form.
 2. The Chairman can approve a request for \$200 or less without team consent according to the Benevolence Policy. The team member must still submit a Benevolence Request Form.
 3. Requests for assistance for counseling sessions must be approved by a Grace Hill Elder.
 4. Requests to consider setting aside the written Benevolence Policy must have the approval of the full team and one Grace Hill Church Elder.
 5. Any other request must be approved by a majority of the team.

V. Record-Keeping

- A. Each case's BT Interview Form and a summary of the outcome of the request will be kept on file in the church office. These reports will be marked "confidential" and access will be limited to the BT and the Elders.

Benevolence Policy

I. Whom Do We Serve:

- A. *"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." -Galatians 6:10*
- B. Serving the Body
1. The BT was created primarily to consider the needs of members of the church. The team also works with regular attendees, along with neighbors and others being ministered to by church members. Ordinarily, the stronger one's association with the church, the stronger the BT's commitment to see that a particular primary need is met. When working with those who are not listed in the church database but who claim to be part of the church, BT members will ask enough questions to realistically discern the accuracy of the needs being presented. At the same time, members want to treat those seeking assistance with respect, erring on the side of generosity over suspicion.
- C. Serving our Neighbors
1. The BT aims to minister in such a way that Grace Hill will be known by those inside and outside our fellowship as a discerning, yet caring, compassionate, responsive congregation. We want to use the resources God has given us to attract the unsaved and to introduce them to the love of Christ.
- D. What are Primary Needs
1. Recognizing that God is the provider of all that we need, the team strives to handle God's resources within Grace Hill and the community to insure that the primary needs of every member are met. Primary needs are those necessary for physical, emotional, and spiritual survival: food, shelter, clothing, transportation, counseling, etc.
 2. The more primary the need, the probability of the BT considering the need will increase. Note that we generally include the resources that are needed to gain or hold employment as "primary." Very rarely will the team even consider assisting individuals with other types of financial needs.

II. Financial Assistance Policies:

- A. *"You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" -Act 20:34-35*
- B. When We Will Help Financially
1. Monetary help will normally be given for specific needs rather than for ongoing general needs.
 2. The BT will consider the following criteria in helping financially:
 - a) The individual has a relationship to Grace Hill. (This will be taken into account, but will not be the sole deciding factor in whether help will be extended.)
 - b) The individual has a demonstrated need.
 - c) The individual is unable to earn sufficient funds to support all his needs.
 - d) The individual's family resources are not available or sufficient.
 - e) Government assistance is not available or sufficient.
 - f) The individual has used his personal resources until they are relatively exhausted. (The BT may consider all reasonable factors in determining whether this factor is met. People should not be left totally destitute before they are eligible. For example, keeping a vehicle, medically necessary equipment, household furnishings, etc. would be acceptable. Other assets, including a reasonable personal financial "cushion," should be considered on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the BT.)
 - g) The individual has demonstrated that he can make thoughtful decisions about his resources. If not, Biblical financial counseling will be a prerequisite before receiving any financial help.
- C. Timeline for Financial Assistance
1. It is exceptionally rare for the BT to be contacted by an individual that does not feel their need requires urgent attention. Many are hoping to have a check in hand within hours. However, due to church procedures callers are told up front that they should generally not expect to hear how their request will be resolved for approximately 10 days.
- D. To Whom We Will Write Checks

1. For BT accountability, as well as the individual receiving assistance, benevolence checks will only be made out to the final recipient of the finances. That is to say, checks will be made out to meet the specific need, not to provide undesignated cash. They will not be made out to the individual requesting assistance. Individuals who pay for their primary needs using direct bill payment options must give written evidence of the direct bill payment before reimbursement will be directed to an individual's credit card or checking account. At times, we will reimburse Pastors, team members, or church members who provide help consistent with the policies of the BT, usually on an emergency basis. The team does not encourage this practice and the person providing the assistance will need to understand that these requests for reimbursement will not necessarily be approved.

E. Giving Gifts or Loans

1. The BT does not currently grant loans. When assistance is offered it is a gift and therefore without any expectation of repayment. Individuals wishing to reimburse the fund may do so at their own discretion.

F. Ongoing Financial Assistance

1. The BT should not be viewed as a means to meet an ongoing chronic financial need. The team is able to respond only to occasional needs. The team will work to counsel individuals on meeting ongoing long-term needs.

G. Assistance Outside an Urgent Need

1. Occasionally, the BT will become aware of a family whose primary income has been interrupted for a significant period of time, but whose financial stability is not immediately threatened. When that family, or others on their behalf, contacts the team to alert us to a possible future threat, the team will respond by praying with them, thanking them for their wise future planning, set up a schedule to check back at a future date to insure that they continue to do well financially, and consider giving a modest sized gift to bless and encourage them.

H. Payments Toward Debt

1. Entering into debt is a serious decision and individuals should heed Biblical warnings (Proverbs 22:7; Hebrews 13:5). The BT discourages most debt and normally avoids making payments on debt load, particularly credit card debt.

I. Bankruptcy

1. The BT does not recommend or encourage bankruptcy. We do, however, recognize that there may be very unusual circumstances that may require bankruptcy. In general, we treat bankruptcy payments like credit card payments and decline to contribute toward them.

J. Scholarships

1. Since scholarships do not generally meet the criterion of being a primary need, we encourage the various ministries to pursue scholarship money through other means. We recognize that at times the spiritual and emotional benefits of a particular event may fit a primary need, and then we may be willing to assist with meeting a part of that unusual need.

K. Counseling

1. Recommended counseling will be provided by the Elders of Grace Hill Church. Counseling will be required if:
 - a) The counseling is deemed critical by a Grace Hill Elder, and/or
 - b) The counselor is approved by a Grace Hill Pastor.
2. If the benevolence case requires specialized counseling beyond what is provided by Grace Hill's Elders, then to the extent that an individual is unable to do so himself, the BT will automatically cover the cost of an individual's first three counseling sessions. If the team does not cover the full cost of the first three sessions then we will consider paying a portion of each subsequent counseling appointment for a limited season of time.

L. Security Deposits

1. The BT does not provide money for a security deposit unless there is prior demonstration of financial ability to meet the payment terms of the lease agreement.

M. Adoption Assistance

1. Grace Hill Church has a separate fund designated for adoption assistance. Therefore, the BT will not be involved in any adoption assistance requests at Grace Hill Church.

N. Assistance Cap

1. The BT will not grant benevolence requests of more than 50% of the funds available in the BF.

III. The Process of Providing AssistanceA. Overview: What Might Help Look Like

1. *When church members approach the BT for assistance they will be:*
 - a) Welcomed, set at ease, and informed that the conversation is confidential.
 - b) Reminded that God is the provider of all that we need, and prayed with.
 - c) Told of the BT's purpose and approach.
 - d) Interviewed in such a way that the BT member can get a better understanding of the situation behind the obvious need presented.
 - e) Told that despite their desire for finding immediate resolution for a particular need, the BT's highest priority will be to uncover the root of the problem and to try to determine the best long-term solution. This could include spiritual or financial counseling, Elder intervention, ongoing accountability, job search or career training, as well as or instead of financial assistance.
 - f) Told that due to church procedures they should generally not expect to receive monetary assistance for ten days to two weeks, with possible exceptions for emergencies.
 - g) Urged to contact all creditors to give an honest update about their liabilities and their ability to pay, and to talk about resolution possibilities.
2. *While the church member is waiting to hear back from the team, the interviewer:*
 - a) Will be seeking discernment for how best to move forward.
 - b) Will email a BT Interview Form to the full team for input, and ultimately for Elder approval.
 - c) May begin pursuing the individual components which will make up the assistance offered, e.g. researching government assistance programs and church resources.
3. *Once a request has been approved by the BT, the team member will:*

- a) Email the Benevolence Disbursement Request to the Treasurer with a request for the check(s) to be cut, and clear instructions on how to handle the check(s) once it is cut.
 - b) Pursue any other means the team has determined might be helpful for the individual (e.g. pastoral counseling, financial counseling, job search assistance, accountability, etc.).
4. Church members may also contact the BT on behalf of others outside the church.

IV. Financial Counseling

A. As God supplies the resources, the BT will strive to provide appropriate financial counseling to any member of the church requesting such assistance or for whom we feel it is necessary. Counseling may vary from one or two meetings to a more ongoing relationship. Ongoing relationships should be reviewed on a six month basis to determine if the assistance is meeting the need and should continue to be offered.

B. Financial Counseling Philosophy

1. In brief, we counsel that:

- a) God owns everything and we are only stewards of the resources he has given to us (1 Chronicles 29:11-12).
- b) God gives and knows what's best for us (Matthew 7:11).
- c) Tithing serves only as the training wheels of giving and can be augmented by generous giving which yields eternal rewards (Malachi 3:7-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).
- d) Entering into debt is a serious decision and individuals should heed the Biblical warnings against it (Proverbs 22:7; Hebrews 13:5).
- e) Budgeting is a tool toward good stewardship.

C. Financial Counselors

1. The BT will thoroughly interview and test any individual showing a desire to assist the team by providing financial counseling to those needing such assistance. The full team must know and endorse an individual before his counseling ministry is underway. The criteria will include a view of biblical finances consistent with those of the team, a giftedness in financial counseling, and proper training (e.g., Crown Financial Ministries Bible Study).

D. Financial Accountability Partners

1. At times individuals show a need for ongoing, concerted accountability. At these times the BT will seek to provide, if possible, an accountability partner to work along side the financial counselor.

The Grace Hill Church Membership Covenant

THE GRACE HILL PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

At Grace Hill Church, we believe that our existence as a church is not dependent on our ability to perform Sunday morning worship services. Rather, our existence as a church is found in the covenant that our members make with one another. We are agreeing to live our lives glorifying God, loving one another and our neighbors, and making disciples together. At Grace Hill Church, the health of our church is dependent on the health of our members. Our members are the ones who decide who will or will not be members. Our members are the ones who decide how our resources will be utilized. Our members are the ones who will delegate authority to Pastors and Elders. Our members are the ones who will enforce our Statement of Faith. Our members are the ones who are responsible for each others growth, maturity, joy, and unity.

Therefore, as a member of Grace Hill Church, I wholeheartedly and without any hesitation embrace this vision for church membership, gospel unity, and Christ-like love. I gladly accept the responsibility of being a member of Grace Hill Church.

Initial: _____

STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEF

I am in full agreement with the Grace Hill Church Statement of Basic Belief which is as follows:

- The Scriptures are true, authoritative and sufficient (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- There is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 46:9-10; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God. The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit. The Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:17-20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
- I am, along with all humanity (Christ excluded), by birth and action a sinner (Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23, 5:8, 12-21, 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3).
- The deserved penalty for sin is death, both physical and spiritual (Genesis 2:15-17, 3:19; Romans 5:12, 6:23; James 1:14-15).
- Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, was born of a virgin and is both fully God and fully human (Matthew 1:20; Luke 2:52; John 1:1-4, 14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3).

- Jesus Christ died as my substitute to pay the penalty for my sin (John 1:29, 10:1-18; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18).
- Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 1:20-21:25; 1 Corinthians 15:12-34).
- Jesus Christ physically ascended into heaven and will one day physically return (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7).
- There will be a future physical resurrection of the dead. Those who trust in Jesus Christ alone will be raised to eternal reward. Those who have not trusted in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24-15).
- Only by trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone can I be reconciled to God and experience true life and joy (John 3:18, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2: 5-6).

While the doctrines expressed in the “Statement of Basic Belief” are those that are recognized to be universal and primary within the Church, there are a number of secondary beliefs that the leadership of Grace Hill Church hold and are committed to. Complete agreement is not required for the sake of membership, but it should be known that Grace Hill Church will preach, teach and counsel in accordance with these theological convictions.

I understand and commit to submitting to the leadership of Grace Hill Church in regard to the doctrine of the church as stated in the Bylaws and will not be divisive to its teaching for the unity of the church.

I also have read and understand the Grace Hill Church Statement on Marriage and Sexuality (Article I, Section 3 of the Constitution & Bylaws) and agree to not be divisive to its teaching for the unity of the church.

Initial: _____

BIBLICAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE ELDERS

As shepherds and overseers of a local church, Elders are entrusted with protecting, leading, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The following is a rather extensive overview of the requirements for Elders as spelled out within the Scriptures.

The Elders covenant...

- to recommend Elders and Deacons, including staff members who serve in these of offices, according to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- to prayerfully seek God's will for our church community and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and following of the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- to care for the church and seek her growth in grace, truth and love (Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 1:28; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture (Acts 20:27-28; 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 2:1).
- to equip the members of the church for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- to be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).
- to lovingly exercise discipline when necessary, for the glory of God, the good of the one disciplined and the health of the church as a whole (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).
- to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated below (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3).

Initial: _____

BIBLICAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE MEMBERS

The members of Grace Hill Church covenant together and mutually agree to live according the following obligations for the good of the church and the integrity of our witness.

I covenant...

- to take ownership of Grace Hill Church as an expression of the Bride of Christ and to seek its welfare by taking the role and function of a church member seriously (Matthew 18:17; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 1).
- to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
- to pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).
- to follow the command and example of Jesus by participating in the ordinances prescribed to His Church:

-by being baptized after my conversion.

-by regularly remembering and celebrating the person and work of Christ through communion.

- to regularly participate in the life of Grace Hill Church by attending weekly services, attending member's meetings, engaging in community and serving those within and outside of this church (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14).
- to steward the resources God has given me, including time, talents, spiritual gifts and finances. This includes regular financial giving, service and participation in community that is sacrificial, cheerful and voluntary (Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
- by God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk in holiness in all areas of life as an act of worship to Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13-16, 4:1-3). Believers should strive to put certain attitudes and actions to death while stirring and stimulating love and good deeds through the Spirit. Below are a few examples of actions addressed in the Scriptures:

-I will practice complete chastity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Complete chastity and fidelity means, among other things, that regardless of my marital status, I will pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as adultery, homosexuality, premarital sex and pornography (Romans 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

-I will seek to preserve the gift of marriage and agree to walk through the steps of marriage reconciliation at Grace Hill Church before pursuing divorce from my spouse (Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11; for the role of the church in the process of divorce, see Paul's concern for the resolution of legal matters within the assembly of the church in 1 Corinthians 6).

-I will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, gossip and other sinful behavior as the Bible dictates (Romans 1:28-32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; James 3:3-18).

- to refrain from such activities that the Scriptures would deem foolish (Romans 14:14-23) and to take seriously the responsibility of Christian freedom, especially actions or situations that could present a stumbling block to another (1 Corinthians 8:1-13).
- to submit to the discipline of God through His Holy Spirit by:

-following the biblical procedures for church discipline where sin is evident in another—the hope of such discipline being repentance and restoration.

-receiving righteous and loving discipline when approached biblically by fellow believers (Psalm 141:5; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Hebrews 12:5-11).

- to do the following when I sin: confess my sin to God and to fellow believers, repent, and seek help to put my sin to death (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5; James 5:16; 1 John 1:6-10).

- to submit to the Elders and other appointed leaders of the church and diligently strive for unity and peace within the church (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5).
- to do the following should I leave the church for righteous reasons: notify the Elders and to seek another church with which I can carry out my biblical responsibilities as a believer.

Signed

Print Name

Date

Grace Hill Church Staff Policies and Procedures

Since Grace Hill Church is a new organization, this Staff Policies and Procedures Document will be added to and amended frequently.

At-Will Employment

Employment at Grace Hill Church is at will. This means that staff are free to quit at any time, for any reason, just as Grace Hill Church is free to terminate any person’s employment at any time, for any reason (with or without notice or cause).

Work Eligibility

Within three business days of a new hire’s first day of work, the newly hired employee must complete Federal Form I-9 and show documentation proving their identity and eligibility to work in the United States.

Church Membership

All employees of Grace Hill Church are required to be members of Grace Hill Church which includes signing and living according to the Grace Hill Membership Covenant.

Vacation, Comp Time, and Leave

Vacation Leave

	Days Per Year	Rollover Limit (Hours)	Sundays Per Year
Full-Time Pastor	15	40	3

Holidays & Inclement Weather

The Grace Hill Church offices will be closed on all federal holidays and will follow the lead of the OPM of the Federal Government in regards to inclement weather.

Comp-Time

Staff members of churches typically work odd hours and unpredictable schedules. Therefore, staff members are encouraged to ensure they are taking proper comp-time to ensure they are not working an inappropriate number of hours. Employees should inform their supervisor if comp-time is needed.

Paternity Leave

Staff members who are bringing home a child for the first time via birth or adoption are strongly encouraged to take two weeks leave from when the child arrives at home.

Other Leave

Staff members may request leave for reasons not listed above. These requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

Grace Hill Church Child Protection Policy

Grace Hill Kids Volunteers

All volunteers who serve in Grace Hill Kids to care for your children have gone through an application process to be approved by the leadership of the church. This application process also contains a criminal background check. If a potential volunteer has a criminal background, the Elders of Grace Hill Church will determine if the potential volunteer can serve in Grace Hill Kids. If anyone has been convicted of child abuse or is listed on the National Sex Offender Registry, they will not be able to serve in Grace Hill Kids with no exceptions.

Within Grace Hill Kids we have teachers and class assistants. We only allow members of Grace Hill Church to teach at Grace Hill Kids, although the class assistants may simply be approved regular attendees and not necessarily members.

Every volunteer in Grace Hill Kids will be wearing a lanyard identifying them as an approved volunteer.

Secure Check-In

Every child that comes to Grace Hill Kids is checked-in with our secure check-in system. The first time your child attends Grace Hill Kids, we will enter your child's information into our system including emergency contact information and any allergies your child may have. We then will print out a coded name-tag for your child and a name-tag for the parent with a matching code. Once your child has been checked-in, our volunteers are trained to not release your child to anyone unless they have the proper matching coded tag. There will NEVER be a circumstance in which we will release your child without being presented the matching tag (even if the volunteers recognize the parent). This is for your child's security so please be sure to have your tag with you when picking up your child. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy.

Discipline

The effective spiritual formation of all our children requires a stable environment. The role of Grace Hill Kids is to support and supplement parental training by upholding high standards of behavior, respect and discipline. Some of the expectations we have for your child include:

- Every child participates with a willing heart, eager to learn and obey. The attitude should be respectful to authority.
- The child is to avoid being disruptive or distracting to the mission and purpose of the children's ministry.

- Disrespect (whether verbally, by gesture, in attitude, or by action) is unacceptable.
- Misbehavior (including, but not limited to, persistent talking, distracting others, not following instructions, ignoring instructions or directions, or interacting inappropriately with others in the class) is unacceptable.

If your child is being disruptive or unruly, volunteers are trained to give the child verbal warnings and to place the child in “timeout” if disobedience persists. If these measures do not resolve the issue, we will call you and ask you to remove your child from the room.

Since our goal is to assist you in the effective training and instruction of your child, volunteers will talk with you about any consistent behavioral problems we are experiencing with your child. Sometimes kids will be kids, and we’re okay with that! But Scripture does teach that proper training and expectations are crucial to raising godly children (Proverbs 22:6). A major goal during all disciplinary situations is to help children see that they have sinned against God and their neighbor and to encourage asking for and extending forgiveness.

No child in Grace Hill Kids will be subject to: corporal punishment (including, but not limited to, rough handling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, hitting, and spanking); emotional abuse (including, but not limited to, name calling, shaming, threatening, humiliation, or yelling); or the use of physical restraint (unless restraint is necessary to protect others from harm). If any volunteer or staff is guilty of inappropriate action toward a child, he or she may be subject to removal and/or discipline by the church. Furthermore, he or she may be subject to criminal and/or civil assault charges under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Sickness Policy

If your child is sick, please respect others by keeping him or her with you. If your child shows signs of sickness (including, but not limited to, high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe coughing, colored nasal drainage, pink eye, head lice, undiagnosed rash, open skin lesions, and any infectious disease), we reserve the right to ask you to remove him or her from the classroom.

We define an infectious disease as any disease that spreads from one person to another person. We believe that God has called us to minister to all people and will, therefore, strive to provide a safe environment that is safe and accepting of everyone.

Children who appear, or become, ill at church will be isolated from the other children, and the parent/guardian will be summoned immediately.

Parents are asked to contact a member of the Grace Hill Kids team if their child contracts an infectious disease after attending a Grace Hill Kids gathering.

The medical condition of any child or Grace Hill Kids volunteer will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risk to the person and others. Grace Hill's Elders and the Grace Hill Kids team will be provided with the appropriate information concerning any special precaution that may be necessary. Except as set forth above, Grace Hill Kids will not disclose the health status of any individual without the express written consent and permission of that individual, or in the case of a child, their parent or guardian.

Food Policies

Feeding young children is a serious responsibility. Children should be fed before coming to church. Infants will be given formula, milk, juice, or water when parents provide these items and written instructions. Time and circumstances do not allow for spoon-feeding.

If there are any special feeding instructions for your child, please put this information in writing. A snack of water or juice and crackers (e.g. Goldfish, animal crackers, Ritz, Saltines, Cheerios, etc.) will be served to children one year old and up. If your child has a specific allergy, please be sure this is listed in our check-in system and noted on your child's name label.

Restroom and Diaper Policy

Adult staff volunteers may accompany children to the restroom and stand outside while the child uses the restroom. If children need assistance or supervision while in the restroom, more than one adult must always be present. No adult will ever be alone with a child.

It is the policy of Grace Hill Kids that all diaper changes and toilet assistance will be done in the presence of two adults. To protect children and adults, male volunteers will not change diapers.

Sanitation and Hygiene Policies

The very nature of childhood behavior can create an environment that has the potential to spread infection. Therefore, it is our commitment to try and maintain the safest and cleanest atmosphere possible to ensure the health and welfare of all children.

Strict hand washing with soap and water is of utmost importance in preventing the spread of infection. All Grace Hill Kids personnel will be instructed on proper hand washing techniques and appropriate times to wash their hands.

All linens will be laundered after each individual use. They are not shared among different children during one session.

Mattresses, toys, and furniture will be washed with disinfectant solution after each use.

Reporting of Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Under Virginia law, certain types of persons, who, in their professional or official capacity, have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, must report the matter immediately to the local department of public welfare or social services of the county or city in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred, or call the Virginia DSS's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.

In addition, under Virginia law, any person, whether or not legally required to report, who has reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child may file a complaint concerning such child with the local department of public welfare or social services of the county or city in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or call the Virginia DSS's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.

In light of the existing Virginia law, and as set forth more fully below, Grace Hill Church requires that in any instance in which a Grace Hill Church member, in the context of Church-related activities or relationships, comes into possession of information that suggests child abuse and/or child neglect, he or she must report the matter to an Elder immediately.

Policy

1. Church-related Activities. Whenever, in the context of Church-related activities, a Church member comes into possession of information that (i) suggests that a child may be an abused or neglected child, or (ii) causes the member to conclude that it may be appropriate to make a report to the civil authorities regarding possible child abuse or neglect, the member shall immediately contact an Elder of the Church who serves as a Pastor or, if no appropriate Pastor is available, another Elder, to disclose the information that suggests the possibility of abuse or neglect.

2. Church-related Relationships. Whenever, in the context of Church-related relationships but outside the scope of Church-related activities, a Church member comes into possession of information that (i) suggests that another Church member may have committed child abuse or neglect, or (ii) causes the member to conclude that it may be appropriate to make a report to the civil authorities regarding possible child abuse or neglect by another Church member, the member shall immediately contact an Elder to disclose the information that suggests the possibility of abuse or neglect.

3. Consultation. The Elder(s) contacted pursuant to paragraph 1 or 2 above will consult with the other Elders and (if appropriate) the Church's legal counsel to help determine whether a report must or should be made to appropriate civil authorities in light of the applicable laws, biblical standards, and the relevant facts.

4. Imminent Danger. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, in any instance covered by paragraph 1 or 2 above in which such member personally witnesses an act of abuse or in good faith believes that a child is in imminent danger, the member should immediately take appropriate actions (including if necessary contacting law enforcement or other civil authorities) to protect the child from significant injury, before the member attempts to contact an Elder. In the absence of such imminent danger, the steps set forth in paragraph 3 above should be followed first to assist the Elders and the member in determining promptly whether a report should or must be made to appropriate civil authorities.
5. Notification of Status. Any Church member who believes himself or herself to be a mandatory reporter of child abuse or neglect in the context of Church-related activities or relationships shall notify the Elders of that fact promptly upon becoming a member or a mandatory reporter.
6. Responsibility. At all times, each person is ultimately and solely responsible for his or her own compliance with any applicable laws.

Security and Emergency Action Plans

First Aid

Although we strive to maintain the safest environment possible, it is known that the nature of children's activities occasionally leads to accidents. A fully-equipped first aid kit is accessible in the children's areas per the discretion of the Grace Hill Kids team.

It is the policy of Grace Hill Kids to first notify the child's parents in the event of a medical incident. In the event that the parents are not immediately available, childcare workers will administer appropriate treatment measures such as applying pressure or a bandage to a bleeding wound. No pharmacological treatment, oral or topical, will be administered. Life threatening situations will, of course, be handled as emergencies with appropriate treatment measures being immediately instituted. 911 and parents will be notified immediately. Grace Hill Church will not be responsible for any "Good Samaritan" assistance offered by any of its members.

Suspicious Persons and/or Security Breach

In the event that a suspicious person enters into the facility that poses a threat, the first person to notice the threat will initiate our emergency lock-down plan. The Grace Hill Kids volunteers will close and lock the doors of the kid's rooms, move a heavy object in front of the door, turn off the lights, and gather the children together in an area of the room not visible by any windows. They will stay in this position until further instructions are provided through the radio.

Fire

In the event of a fire, personnel have been trained to remain calm, count all children in the room and lead the children out of the room in an organized, quick fashion. Immediate evacuations will be carried out in the event that the fire alarm is triggered, a Grace Hill Kids volunteer sees fire or smoke.

Power Outage

If a power outage were to occur, children will be entertained and kept secure until their parents arrive. Parents will still need their matching label to pick-up their children.

Tornadoes, Storms, and Severe Weather

Children will be calmly escorted to an enclosed part of the building, such as an inside hallway or the lowest section of the building. They will be taught how to sit with their back against the wall, knees tucked under their chins, arms wrapped around the knees, and head bent down. All children will be accounted for, and efforts will be made to calm and entertain the children.

Earthquakes

Personnel have been taught to keep children away from heavy hanging objects, tall or heavy furniture, ruptured hot water heaters, gas lines, flammable liquids, and electrical wires. Children will be gathered under a supported doorway or sturdy table and kept calm and secure.