

**GRACE BIBLE CHURCH  
OF BATTLE GROUND**

**Constitution**

**And**

**By-Laws**

## **CONSTITUTION GRACE BIBLE CHURCH**

### **PREAMBLE**

We need to declare and establish this Constitution to assure that the Body at Grace Bible Church of Battle Ground shall be governed in an orderly and efficient manner consistent with the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this church shall be Grace Bible Church of Battle Ground, incorporated under the laws of the state of Washington as a nonprofit corporation.

### **ARTICLE II (A) - STATEMENT OF BELIEFS**

1. We believe in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scripture of God (all sixty-six books)-- that they are without error in their original documents, and that they are the believer's sole authority for faith in practice (1Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 11 Timothy 3:15-17; 11 Peter 1:20-21).
2. We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each one perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power (Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; Matthew 18:19; 1 Corinthians 8:4).
3. We believe that God the Father orders all things according to His own perfect plan. He concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of people, and He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (Psalms 145:8-9; Romans 8:14; 11:36; Ephesians 1:11; 4:6; 11 Corinthians 6:18).
4. We believe that Jesus Christ, God the Son, is both fully God and fully man (John 1:14; 10:30; 14:9). He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23,25), sinless in His life, and made atonement for the sins of the world by his death (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; II Corinthians:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24). We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension to His Father in heaven (John 5:26-29-14-19; Romans 1:4; 4:25, 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20,23), and His physical bodily return to earth for His church (John 14:3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20 ; Revelation 19:11).
5. We believe that the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father as promised by Christ, to oversee the

church and all who are in it. He indwells every believer, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, administers spiritual gifts to the church, and empowers believers for worship and service unto God (John 14:16-17;15:26;16:7-9; Acts 1:5;2:4; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

6. We believe that man was created innocent in the image of God. However, man sinned willfully, incurring the penalty of physical and spiritual death. All human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners in thought, word, and deed (Genesis 1:26-27;2:7, 15-25; Psalms 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18,23;5:10-12; James 3:9).

7. We believe that salvation is made possible solely through our Lord Jesus Christ's death upon the cross. All who confess and repent from their sin, believe in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord (**turning from all self righteousness and works and trusting in Him alone as Savior, and turning from self rule and self will and submitting their lives wholly to Him as His disciple and slave to be His follower**), are justified on the basis of his shed blood and resurrection from the dead. They become part of the family of God and are eternally secure in Christ (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; **Mark 8:34-38; Luke 14:26-33; Rom. 6:22; 1 Thes. 1:9**; 1 Peter 1:18-19, Lk. 24:46-47; Acts 20:20-21).

8. We believe that the true church is made up of all those who personally place their faith in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). It contains only born again believers who recognize Christ as their head (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:18). According to Scripture, the leaders of the church are Elders and Deacons. They are to function as servant leaders (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11). The local church is autonomous (Titus 1:5), is to be actively involved in building up believers in both faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), in reaching the lost with the gospel (Matthew 28:20; Acts 1:8), and is to practice obediently the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42; Acts 8:36-39).

9. We believe that angels are created beings. Some are holy, who worship and serve God. (Isaiah 6:1-4; Luke 2:9-19; Hebrews 1:6-7,14; Revelation 5:11-14;19:10;22:8-9). Others are fallen and rebellious, and serve their leader, Satan, in his attempts to confound the plan of God (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:7-12).

10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all mankind, the everlasting existence with God of the saved (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11,19-23; 11 Corinthians 4:14), and the everlasting separation from God of the unsaved (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15). We believe in a personal imminent return of Christ. At Christ's coming, Satan, his angels, and all the lost will be cast into the lake of fire forever (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelations 20:1-10). The saved will spend eternity in the presence of the Lord, sharing forever His glory and righteousness (John 17:3; Revelation 21,22).

## **STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE, AND SEXUALITY**

We teach that marriage was given by God as part of His common grace, and that it has no meaning other than as He has provided (Gen. 2:18-24). We teach that marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall but that believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can begin to experience peaceful, productive, and fulfilled marriage as intended by God (Gen. 3:16; 1 Peter 3:7).

We teach that the marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the church and the wife responding to her husband's loving leadership as the church responds to Christ (Eph. 5:18–33).

We teach that as believers' marriages are to illustrate Christ's relationship with His church, believers should choose to marry those who share their faith and regenerate life (2 Cor. 6:14).

We teach that the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in scripture (Gen. 2:23–24).

We teach that marriage is always a public, formal, and officially recognized covenant between a man and a woman. We teach that without such a covenant, which may include a "common law marriage," where valid in specific cases under pertinent law, prolonged conjugal cohabitation does not establish, and is not equivalent to, marriage (John 4:18). We teach that where no such covenant exists, or can be discerned, between a cohabiting couple prior to coming to faith in Christ, family units should be preserved to the extent possible and, if otherwise appropriate, solemnization encouraged. We teach that where a valid marriage has been established prior to coming to faith in Christ, the couple should remain married (1 Cor. 7:24).

We teach that God hates divorce, permitting it only where there has been unrepentant sexual sin (Mal. 2:14–16; Matt. 5:32, 19:9) or desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor. 7:12–15). We teach that remarriage is permitted to a faithful partner, but only when the divorce was on biblical grounds.

We teach that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We teach that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Heb. 13:4).

We teach that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, any attempt to change one's sex or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God (Lev. 18:1–30; Matt. 5:8; Rom. 1:26–29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1–8).

We teach that homosexuality, in particular, is subject to God's wrath of abandonment, is a matter of choice and not inherited status, and epitomizes man's ungrateful rebellion against God (Rom. 1:18–28).

We teach that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the church. We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is instead a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world (Matt. 28:16–20; 2 Cor. 5:11–20; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1–2).

We teach that God offers redemption and forgiveness to all who confess and forsake their sin, including sexual sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We teach that His for-

giveness is total and complete (Ps. 103:11–12, 130:3–4; Is. 43:25, 44:22; John 5:24; Col. 2:13–14) and that God imputes the full righteousness of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21) to the believing sinner. We teach that the forgiven sinner has been cleansed from the guilt of sin, set apart unto God, or made holy, and justified before Him (1 Cor. 6:9–11). We teach that any man or woman who has received that forgiveness is "in Christ" and is a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17).

## **ARTICLE II (B) - EXPANDED STATEMENT OF BELIEFS**

Grace Bible Church Expanded Statement of Beliefs forms a part of the constitution and is contained in a separate document and is available upon request.

At the direction of the Elders, the statement of faith is supplemented and clarified by 'What We Teach', The Elders Statement on Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage and Sexuality, the Doctrinal Distinctives issued by the Elders, and such other doctrinal statements as may be subsequently issued by the Elders.

## **ARTICLE III. PURPOSE**

Our purpose is to cultivate a Bible-based ministry which will equip the saints to glorify God by worshipping Him rightly, and to accomplish the great commission by making disciples who can, by the grace of God, lead others to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe the following are some of the mandates that are set forth in the New Testament for the local church:

A) To worship and glorify God (John 4:21-24; Acts 2:46-47; Ephesians 3:21, 1 Corinthians 10:31).  
B) To preach and teach the word of God (Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 3:15). C) To practice the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Acts 8:35-39).

D) To fellowship together in love and ministry (John 13:34-35; Hebrews 10:24-25).

E) To lead people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and then incorporate them into the local body of believers (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:47).

F) To equip believers to identify and exercise their spiritual gifts (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Ephesians 4:7-16).

G) To pray individually and as a gathered body (Acts 2:42; 12:5).

H) To strive to meet the spiritual, physical, financial, and emotional needs of those in the local Body of believers (Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 5:9-10).

## **ARTICLE IV. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

A person it is eligible for membership in Grace Bible Church of Battle Ground who has received the Lord Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior and Lord. He/she must show evidence of a new life in Christ, have been baptized after professing faith in Jesus Christ, and must have participated in the Fundamentals of Membership Class of this church to become familiar with what this church

believes. He/she must be committed to this local body and its Statements of Beliefs and Responsibilities of Members (By-Laws, Article I, Section two) (Matthew 7:16-20; John 14:6;1:12; Acts 8:35-39;19:2; Romans 3:23;10:9-10; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 2:6).

## **ARTICLE, V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

Believing we have been led by God the Holy Spirit to become members of this local church, we commit ourselves to the following:

A) To assemble with the Church body on a regular basis, to worship and glorify God, to stimulate and encourage our own spiritual growth and that of other members of the body (Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:24-25).

B) To regularly read and study the Word of God and to purpose to live in close fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ and to submit to the control of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:14-21;1 John 1:5-10).

C) To preserve the unity of the body through consistent Christ-like love for one another (John 13:34-35;Ephesians 4:11-13).

D) To regard others in the Body as more important than ourselves, speaking well of fellow believers, serving one another through love, supporting each other in times of need, striving to resolve differences with tenderness, being slow to take offense and always ready to seek reconciliation (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 12:13; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 4:32; Philippians 2:3; Colossians 3:12-17; James 5:9).

E) To pray individually, in small groups, and as a gathered body (Acts 2:42; Romans 12:12).

F) To cheerfully give of our money, resources, talent and time for the work of the Lord (Acts 20:35; 11 Corinthians 9:7; Deuteronomy 16;17; Proverbs 19:17; 1Corinthians 16:2; John 15).

G) To seek to understand and to exercise our spiritual gifts as vital members of this body (Romans 12:4-8; 1Corinthians 12:1-31;1 Peter 4:10).

H) To teach God's word and godly principles in our homes, training our children to revere the Lord, and to seek His will for our lives through instruction, encouragement, and example (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11 Timothy 3:16-17).

I) Through our life, testimony and witness, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring the lost to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to baptized and teach them in obedience to the Scriptures (Matthew 28:18-20).

J) To respect, love and pray for our spiritual leaders and to submit to them (1Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17-18).

K) To walk uprightly in our world as Christian examples, abstaining from any practices which

would grieve and/or quench the Holy Spirit, and cause others to stumble (Romans 14:13; Ephesians 4:30; 1Thessalonians 5:19,21-22).

L) Be knowledgeable of this Constitution and By-Laws in order to actively participate in the spiritual and business affairs of this body.

#### **ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS**

The officers of this corporation will be as set forth in the By-Laws.

#### **ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS**

Meetings for worship, prayer, praise, edification, fellowship, business, and other purposes are as set forth in the By-Laws.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at a special meeting of the membership called for that purpose. Meeting and voting requirements are as set forth in the By-Laws.

#### **ARTICLE IX. GOVERNMENT**

With the Lord Jesus Christ as its head, Grace Bible Church of Battle Ground is autonomous, i.e., not subject in any way to the control of any other religious body, and believes the Bible to be its final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

#### **ARTICLE X. DISSOLUTION**

Section One:

Grace Bible Church of Battle Ground shall be perpetual. Members of this Body have no individual rights in the corporation and upon termination of membership they shall not be entitled to any interest in the assets of Grace Bible Church of Battle Ground. The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to Christian purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this organization shall ever accrue to the benefit of any officer or members thereof or of any private person.

Section Two:

Should it become necessary to dissolve this corporation, the Board of Elders must recommend such dissolution to the membership. Actual dissolution shall then be determined by a majority vote of members present at a specially called meeting. Notice of such a meeting shall be mailed to each active member and/or household, conspicuously posted on the church premises, and announced at regular church services at least two (2) weeks prior to such meetings (By-Laws, Article VI, Section three - Special Meetings).

### Section Three:

If this corporation should ever be dissolved, provisions shall be made for payment of all debts and liabilities. Any remaining assets shall be distributed to a Christian organization or organizations of like faith and practice which has tax exempt status with the United States Internal Revenue Service. The Board of Elders will choose such organization or organizations at the time of the dissolution.