

GRACE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Elgin, Illinois

GRACE EVANGELICAL CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on confession of faith, having been baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body of which Christ is the head, we do now in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We, the members of Grace Evangelical Church, covenant, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel throughout all nations.

We shall seek to maintain family and private devotions; to educate our children in the knowledge of Christ; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; and as the Holy Spirit leads to avoid all activities such as might to bring reproach to our Lord or offense to a brother, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further covenant to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT **GRACE EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

ARTICLE I. "SCRIPTURE"

We believe in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writing, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:21)

ARTICLE II. "GODHEAD"

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; I Peter 1:2)

ARTICLE III. "PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST"

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. (Matthew 1:18-26; Colossians 1:15; Luke 3:21-38; Luke 2:4-21)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. (I John 1:7; Ephesians 1:7, 8; I Peter 2:21-24; John 14:6; John 3:16)

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His present life there for us as High Priest and Advocate. (Hebrews 7:25; Matthew 28; John 20:6-31; Hebrews 4:14; Acts 1:9-11)

ARTICLE IV. "PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person and proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is therefore eternal, and of the same essence, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son. We believe, therefore, that the Holy Spirit is truly God.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement; and that He is the supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body (church) of Christ, indwelling them, and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; II Corinthians 3:6; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13, 14)

We believe He is the divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (John 16:13; I John 2:20, 27; Ephesians 5:18)

We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, according to His will, on behalf of the sick and afflicted. (John 15:7; I John 5:14, 15; James 5:14, 15)

ARTICLE V. "SATAN"

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin, and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire. (Job 1:6, 7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

ARTICLE VI. "DEPRAVITY OF MAN"

We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned, and thereby incurred, not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word and deed. (Isaiah 53:6; Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 5:12; Romans 3:10; Romans 3:23)

ARTICLE VII. "SALVATION"

We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become Children of God. (I Peter 1:23; John 3:15, 16; John 17:3; John 3:1-7; II Corinthians 5:17; John 1:11, 12)

We believe that those born again possess two natures, and that the new nature may be victorious over the old nature through the power of the Holy Spirit, but that eradication of the old is unscriptural. (Ephesians 4:22-24; Romans 8:12, 13)

We believe that "those born again" are saved with an eternal salvation, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-39; John 10:28; Romans 8:38-39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; Philippians 1:6)

ARTICLE VIII. "SECOND COMING"

We believe in "that blessed hope," the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:11; John 14:3; Revelation 22:20; I Thessalonians 4:13-18)

ARTICLE IX. "ETERNAL STATE"

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost. (I Thessalonians 4:16-18; Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:25-29)

BY-LAWS

GRACE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

ARTICLE I. "THE NAME"

The name of the church shall be "Grace Evangelical Church of Elgin, Illinois."

ARTICLE II. "PURPOSE"

The purpose of this Church as an elect company of believers baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ is the salvation of souls, the edification of the Christians through the teaching of God's Word, the world-wide proclamation of God's saving grace expressed in the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of godly worship, the defense of "The Faith Once Delivered" (Jude 1:3), and cooperation with Christian activity functioning in harmony with God's Holy Word, the Bible, until He comes.

The establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; Galatians 1:2; Titus 1:5-11; Hebrews 10:23)

ARTICLE III. "COMPOSITES"

Doctrinal Statement, Covenant, Rules and Practice of By-Laws of Grace Evangelical Church are made a part of this Constitution.

ARTICLE IV. "MEMBERSHIP"

Section 1. All persons who have received Christ as their Savior, and give assurance of their willingness to abide by the Constitution and Covenant of this Church; and show evidence of a satisfactory attitude toward the doctrinal standards of this church and support the Doctrinal Statement of this Church, shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Persons can be received into membership upon confession of faith, restatement of faith, or by letter of transfer from fundamental churches of like faith, conditioned upon an examination satisfactory to the Board of Elders.

Section 3. Members are expected to conscientiously strive to live according to knowledge revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, through God's Word, and to wholeheartedly serve in and support the services and activities of the Church.

Section 4. The Board of Elders shall review the church membership annually. It shall be within their province to require an expression, individually from each member of the Church on the original basis of membership, that will indicate whether or not they desire to remain in the active fellowship of the Grace Evangelical Church. The names of the persons not so indicating their desire to remain in the fellowship of the Grace Evangelical Church shall be placed on an Inactive Roll and it shall be within the province of the Board of Elders to recommend that any person on the Inactive Roll be removed from the membership (reference Church membership policy).

Section 5. Persons on the Inactive Roll shall not be entitled to hold office or vote in church matters.

Section 6. Persons on the Inactive Roll may be restored to full membership standing by action of the Board of Elders.

Section 7. The name of any person removed from the roll of the church shall be reported at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Section 8. Letters transferring membership to other churches will only be granted those who desire to unite with fundamental churches of like faith.

ARTICLE V. "ORDINANCES"

Section 1. We believe that the Christian Believer's baptism is the immersion in water "in the name of the father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12; Acts 8:35-39)

Section 2. We believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial service and is setting forth in a sacred and symbolic manner the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon our behalf. The emblems of the communion service are not literally the body and blood of Christ, nor do they contain His flesh and blood. The service is for believers only and to partake has value only as it is mingled with faith and repentance upon the part of the communicant. (I Corinthians 11:23-24)

The Lord's Supper shall be commemorated the first Sunday morning worship of each month unless otherwise designated by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VI. "GOVERNMENT"

Section 1. The government of this Church is vested in its membership executed through the Church Board.

Section 2. The Church Board shall be the executive of the congregation in its dealing with Pastor, employees, affiliated organizations, their officers and branch works and any outside persons, denominations and organizations. The Church Board shall have supervision over the general work of the church, its organizations and branch works. See ARTICLE VII, Section 1.

Section 3. The Church Board shall not incur with loan, transfer, sell or purchase any real estate for the Church except by express authorization conveyed through a vote of the membership present at a constitutionally called business meeting.

Section 4. The Church Board shall have authority to appoint individuals or committees for the transaction of its business.

Section 5. The Church Board shall have authority to call Congregational meetings for the purpose of recommending such actions as call for a vote of the membership and for the purpose of receiving advice or instruction from the Congregation.

Section 6. The Church Board shall handle and consider suggestions and recommendations upon the part of any member or organization affiliated with the Church.

Section 7. The Church Board shall perform such other duties as may be defined by this Constitution and shall at all times be subject to vote of the membership unless further qualified specifically in this Constitution.

Section 8. The Church Board, Elder Board, and Deacon Board shall endeavor to reach consensus in all decisions. If a vote is necessary, the deciding factor in a Church Board meeting, Elder meeting, or Deacon meeting shall exceed 80% of its members present and voting.

Section 9. The candidates for elective offices shall be selected by a Nominating Committee, approved by the Board of Elders, and elected by a vote of the membership.

Section 10. The Nominating Committee shall be elected by the membership present and shall consist of the following: two elders remaining in office (i.e., those men whose terms do not expire), two Deacons remaining in office, one Deaconess remaining in office, and one man and one woman from the membership at large. The congregation at large nominees will be proposed by the Elder Board prior to the meeting. Members are encouraged to suggest candidates to the Elders for service on the Nominating Committee. The senior pastor is a non-elected member of this committee. The

Deacons	3 years
Church Secretary(Clerk)	3 years
Treasurer	3 years
Deaconess	3 years

The Nominating Committee or Board of Elders may shorten an elected term of office, at its discretion, prior to a congregational vote, for means of filling a vacated office, or for other Elder Board approved reasons.

Each officer that has served six consecutive years must take one year's leave of absence before being considered as a candidate for any elective office. No member shall be elected to a term of office that would place them beyond the six year limit. No one person shall hold more than one elective office concurrently.

Section 4. Any Pastor's or officer's service may be terminated for cause at any time majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called in accordance with Section 4 of ARTICLE X or Section 5 of ARTICLE VI - after fair and impartial hearing conducted under the supervision of the Board of Elders.

Section 5. A Pastor or any Assistant or Associate Pastor may be called, upon the approval of the congregation, after recommendation of:

- 1.a committee appointed by the Church Board, and
- 2.approval by the Board of Elders. (see ARTICLE X, Section 10.)

Pastors shall serve until their pastorate is terminated by resignation or by request of the Congregation. Pastors shall endeavor to give a minimum of thirty days notice before termination of their services. In the event the membership votes the Pastor's or any Assistant or Associate Pastor's, service be terminated immediately, the church shall endeavor to continue the remuneration involved for thirty days.

ARTICLE VIII. "DUTIES OF PASTORS AND OFFICERS"

Section 1. The Senior Pastor shall have general oversight of the spiritual life of the Church, regular services and ministration of the ordinances of the church. He shall serve as a member of the Elder and Church Boards and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees connected with the Church or any of its organizations, shall conscientiously perform such duties as may be arranged between the Church Board and himself. If at any time his moral, personal beliefs, preaching or teaching shall not be in full accord with the Doctrinal Statement and By-Laws of this Church, his services as Pastor shall be terminated. (See Section 5 of ARTICLE VII)

Section 2. Any Pastor, Assistant or Associate Pastors, officers or any employee of this church shall perform such duties as may be designated by the Church Board or the authorized representative.

Section 3. The Elders shall be responsible with the Pastor for the spiritual welfare of the Church; they shall assist in ministering the ordinances of the Church and shall make necessary provisions for the same. The Board of Elders shall direct the examination and reception of applicants for Church membership and pass upon their fitness. They shall be expected to visit the sick and sorrowing of the membership, investigate delinquents and endeavor to remedy any spiritual weakness in the lives of its members. They shall handle grievances upon the part of any member or organization affiliated with the Church. They shall faithfully perform all other duties designated by this Constitution or pertaining to their office. They shall endeavor by God's grace to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in this Constitution for their particular office, and especially as found in the Word of God. (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)

The Elders shall oversee church discipline to correct disorder, maintain sound faith, build up and restore believers. Discipline shall be administered in a spirit of mourning, gentleness, love, and humility. The reasons for discipline include: unrepentant sinful behavior (e.g. sexual immorality, covetousness, idolatry, abusive language, drunkenness, swindling, and others), lack of submission, and doctrinal deviation or heresy. The methods of discipline can include: restriction of ministry privileges, restriction from communion, reproof, admonishment, and separation or removal from the church (as a final step). (consistent with Gal. 6:1, Matt. 18:15-20, and I Cor. 5:1-13)

Section 4. The Deacons, in cooperation with the Church Board, shall have the care of the physical properties and finances of the Church and shall hold themselves in readiness to assist in guiding the spiritual life of the Church, ministering its ordinances, and perform any necessary calling. They shall by God's grace endeavor to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in this Constitution and especially found in the Word of God. (I Timothy 3:8-13)

The Deacons shall have authority to pay all bills such as salaries, wages, utilities, supplies, maintenance and repairs. Non-budgeted, unusual expenses over one percent of the total Church Budget shall be referred to the Church Membership at a duly-called Congregation Meeting. Any expenditure exceeding \$500.00, budgeted or non-budgeted, must be approved by the Deacon Board prior to purchase. The Deacons shall prepare and submit to the Congregation for approval an annual budget. (They shall publish the budget, for membership review, at least one week prior to the budget meeting).

The Deacons shall, with the help of the Treasurer and such other assistants as may be authorized by the Church Board, arrange for the receiving, counting, and crediting in their proper form, all the offerings and money received by the church. The Deacons shall deposit such funds with reasonable promptness in the financial institution as designated by the Church Board.

Section 5. The Church Secretary shall be responsible for keeping of a record of the Church membership, admissions, transfers, removals, death, dedications, baptisms, and ordination services, and shall keep an accurate record of all congregational

business meetings and any other meetings designated by the Congregation or Church Board upon request of either body. He shall custody of the the church seal, shall carry on and maintain a complete record of all correspondence and such other records that may pertain to his office. He shall also have custody of the legal papers pertaining to the property and finances of the Church, such as deeds, abstracts, insurance policies, bonds, notes, etc., which shall be kept in a depository designated by the Church Board; and any access he may have to this depository shall be made under the direction of the Church Board.

He shall have in custody, papers, records, or other documents, as directed by the congregation or Church Board.

Section 6. The Treasurer shall, arrange for the crediting in their proper form in books or electronic files, provided for this purpose, all offerings and money received by the Church. The Treasurer shall, when requested, furnish receipts in satisfactory form to those on whose behalf the funds are being received. The Treasurer shall draw checks against these funds as directed by the Board of Deacons, and as outlined in ARTICLE VIII, Section 4, paragraph two. there shall be kept under the Treasurer's administration records showing the cash account of all funds and a balance taken at the close of each month. There shall also be prepared in approved form, under the Treasurer's direction, each month, a financial statement showing the true status of the various funds in this account, to be approved by, the Deacon Board and the Church Board.

The Treasurer shall also have prepared in approved form, a financial statement showing the true status of all funds for the fiscal year of the Church, for presentation at the Annual Meetings. The Treasurer shall be encouraged to personally present a report at all monthly Deacons and Church Board meetings.

In the event the Treasurer is unable to perform the required duties, or there is a vacancy in this office, the duties of the Treasurer may be taken care of by any person authorized by the Church Board until action taken by such Board in supplying a substitute. In the event of a change in the Treasurer, an audit shall be taken before the new Treasurer shall assume responsibility.

The Treasurer's books shall at all times be available to the Board of Deacons or the Church Board and must be submitted to audit at least once a year as directed by the Church Board.

Section 7. The Deaconess' shall oversee the functioning of the women's ministries and are accountable to the Elder Board. The Deaconess' shall ensure the women's ministries are meeting the spiritual, physical, emotional, and friendship needs of women in the church.

ARTICLE IX. "STANDING COMMITTEES"

Section 1. The Church Board shall annually approve the Chairperson(s) for the following standing committees: Missionary, Music, Ushers, Publicity, Fellowship, Christian Education, and any other committees necessary either permanently or temporarily, upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and approval of the Board of Elders. The Committees' duties shall be defined in writing by the Church Board.

Section 2. The Committee Members shall be recommended by the appointed Chairperson for annual approval by the Church Board. Committee members names are encouraged to be submitted for approval, to the Church Board, within two months of the chairpersons approval.

Section 3. The Missionary Committee shall submit to the Congregation for approval, after prior approval by the Church Board, the names of proposed missionaries the Church shall support on a regular basis. Approval of the membership present is necessary for Church support. (See ARTICLE X., Section 10.)

ARTICLE X. "MEETINGS"

Section 1. The Annual Meeting shall be held during the last three weeks of January. A Congregational meeting to select a Nominating Committee shall be held during the month of October. A meeting to approve a budget shall be held during the month of November or December, (preferably the first week of December). The dates of the above meetings are to be determined by the Church Board and announced to the Congregation at least two weeks preceding the said meeting. The fiscal year of this Church shall begin on January 1st and end on the 31st day of December.

Section 2. All officers and committee chairmen shall serve until their successor is elected or appointed.

Section 3. At the Annual Meeting, all committees, boards and officers shall render annual reports to the Congregation.

Organized classes or other groups shall be encouraged to submit written annual reports. The Nominating Committee shall submit its report to the membership for action. Also, such other business as may be necessary shall be transacted.

Section 4. Any regular or called meeting of the Congregation may be constituted a meeting for the transaction of business, provided announcement of said meeting be given at all regularly scheduled services at least one week prior to said meeting.

Section 5. The Board shall call a special Congregational business meeting upon the written request of twenty-five percent of all members with power to vote, said meeting and its purpose to be announced as provided in SEction 4 of ARTICLE X, and convened within two weeks after filing request with the Church Board.

Section 6. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be the members present.

Section 7. The minimum voting age shall be 18 years.

Section 8. All voting shall be by secret ballot unless waived.

Section 9. In the conduct of business meetings any parliamentary question not covered by this Constitution shall be decided by the latest edition of the “Robert’s Rules of Order.”

Section 10. Congregational approval during business meetings must exceed the following criteria (members present and voting):

Election of pastoral staff - 90%

Election of church officers - 75%

All other decisions - 75%

ARTICLE XI. “ORDINATION”

When in the judgement of the Church Board a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Church Board to call and conduct a council for ordination, provided such authority is granted by vote of the Church. The Ordaining Council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character,, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service.

The following shall not be ordained to the ministry: (1) One who has not served six months as Pastor, Assistant Pastor, or in definite Christian work in such manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God’s call to the ministry. (2) On who is addicted to the use of intoxicating liquor, drugs or tobacco in any form; or who belongs to a secret society; or brings disrepute upon his ministry through worldly practices and associations. (James 4:4; Romans 12:1, 2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I John 2:15)

It shall be within the province of the Church Board to discipline, even to revoking the ordination credentials of any minister ordained under this Constitution, if the said, minister is found guilty of any of the above practices after an impartial hearing conducted in the ministry of I Corinthians, chapter 13.

ARTICLE XII. “DISSOLUTION”

If, in the Providence of God, the Grace Evangelical Church of Elgin, Illinois, a non-profit Corporation, is dissolved for any reason, the assets of the corporation, real, personal and mixed, shall be divided by the official Board at the time of such dissolution in consonance with the voting membership of the corporation, among the non-profit faith missions to which this church is contributing at the time of dissolution.

ARTICLE XIII. "AMENDMENTS"

This Constitution may be amended by a vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting, providing proper previous notice has been given the membership of the subject matter of the proposed amendment. Such notice shall entail the posting and circulation of copies of the proposal in person or by mail three weeks in advance. All amendments must be approved by the Elder Board and Church Board prior to presentation to the congregation. Such Amendments must be reviewed for at least three months by a Constitutional Review Committee. This committee is to be recommended by the Elder Board and approved by the Church Board.