

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Section 4 – Council of Elders

Composition – The Council of Elders shall be composed of men. There shall be at least three members with a maximum number of fifteen, with the number of Elders at any time being determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder with the chief responsibility of teaching and preaching. His term of Elder shall coincide with his employment by the church as Senior Pastor. No other staff member shall be a member of the Elder Council. The call, affirmation, and term of the Elder shall be as stipulated in Section 3 of the By-Laws of Grace Fellowship.

Qualifications – Elders and nominees for Elder shall be qualified for the office as specified in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

Responsibilities – The fundamental responsibilities of the Elders are to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. The Elders are responsible for governing the Church, teaching the Word, and tending the flock of God in this Church.

The responsibilities of the Elders shall include: determining and communicating the vision of the Church to the congregation; examining Candidates for Membership, acquainting them with the Constitution and By-Laws, and conducting the *Beginning with Grace* new member classes; overseeing the process of church discipline; examining prospective candidates for office and for the positions of Deacon; scheduling business meetings; annually appointing a church moderator; providing for reporting and recording of official church business; overseeing the work of the Deacons; appointing church agents, coordinators, teachers, ministry leaders, and teams; conducting worship services; administering the ordinances of the Gospel; equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry; teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally; correcting error; coordinating and promoting the ministries of the Church; and mobilizing the Church for its world mission.

Organization – The Council of Elders shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. The Elders must meet at least once per month and the meeting may be held at any location. A quorum for meetings shall be defined as at least one-half of the Elders present. The Council shall annually select a Chairman and a Secretary from among its lay Elders.

As you pray and seek God's will, please carefully consider the character and qualifications of an Elder outlined in the following verses:

1 Timothy 3:1-7

¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-9

⁶if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

[Verses are from the English Standard Version]