

By-Laws of Grace Baptist Church Hudson, Massachusetts

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1.0 Membership

Members of the Church shall consist of all persons who have met the Requirements for Membership and been through the Membership Process described below. They are listed on the membership roll.

1.1 Requirements for Membership

- 1.1.1 A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- 1.1.2 Believer's Baptism as a testimony of salvation.
- 1.1.3 Completion of the Church's membership class and its requirements or equivalent. This will include written acceptance of the Church Member Covenant.
- 1.1.4 Agreement with the Statement of Faith and consent to abide by the Constitution and By-Laws.

1.2 Membership Process

- 1.2.1 Persons desiring to become a member may attend a membership class and then determine if they wish to put themselves forward for membership pursuant to the requirements of Section 1.1 of these By-Laws.
- 1.2.2 Upon completion of the membership class, candidates for membership shall meet with an Elder or Pastor who will confirm the candidate meets the requirements of Section 1.1 of these By-Laws.

1.3 Voting

Every Member who is 18 years old or older may vote and speak in Business Meetings.

1.4 Responsibilities of Membership

Members agree to actively participate in and support the commitments defined in the Church's Member Covenant.

1.5 Termination of Membership

- 1.5.1 Membership in the Church may be terminated when the Member fails to continue to act in proper conduct as described in the Member's Covenant.
- 1.5.2 If the whereabouts of the Member is unknown for a year or more such Member may be removed from Membership.
- 1.5.3 The process of Termination of Membership, is (a) that the Clerk may recommend to the Board of Elders that the Membership in the Church of a Member be terminated for non-involvement, or (b) the Board of Elders may act on its own when considering termination for moral or theological reasons. Upon the receipt of such recommendation, the Board of Elders shall vote upon the possible termination of Membership of such Member. Membership in the Church of any such Member shall be terminated upon a majority vote of the Board of Elders.
- 1.5.4 Membership in the Church shall be terminated upon the request of the Member.

- 1.5.5 Membership may be restored by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders after they have given due consideration to the reason for termination and assessed a person's repentance and reformation if required.

2.0 Board of Elders

The Board of Elders is composed of the Lead Pastor and the lay Elders. The number of lay Elders is intended to be approximately one percent (1%) of the average weekly worship service attendance for the prior calendar year up to a maximum of twelve (12).

2.1 Duties and Responsibilities

The spiritual affairs, business and property of the Church shall be managed by the Board of Elders who may exercise all the powers of the Church which are not expressly reserved to the Members by law, the Articles of Organization or these By-laws. The Board of Elders is responsible for managing the activities of the Church to ensure that the purpose of the Church as defined in the Constitution is being accomplished and that the Church remains in good standing with respect to Biblical and legal requirements.

Elders duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- 2.1.1 Devoting themselves to the Word of God and prayer for the Church.
- 2.1.2 Providing spiritual oversight of the Church vision, mission and plans, and the establishment of any related committees.
- 2.1.3 Proposing Church budgets to Members.
- 2.1.4 Determining after consultation with the Finance Committee, actions for addressing situations where giving materially exceeds or falls short of expenditure.
- 2.1.5 Manages any significant designated gifts to the Church.
- 2.1.6 Authorizing Church policies, or policies of official church committees.
- 2.1.7 The Chairman of the Board of Elders will coordinate an annual performance review for the Lead Pastor.
- 2.1.8 Encourage the Members to treat conflict pursuant to Matthew 18:15-17 and in accordance with the Church's Discipline and Restoration Policy. In the event there is no resolution the Board of Elder's may vote to terminate the individual's Membership with a two-thirds majority vote.

2.2 Qualifications

Elders shall be selected from men who are Members of the Church and meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

2.3 Selection of Elder Nominating Committee

The Elder Nominating Committee shall consist of five Members who will be appointed by the Board of Elders. These members shall be:

- Two members from the Board of Elders (one of whom shall be the Committee Chairman)
- Two Members (not Elders currently in office)
- Lead Pastor

2.4 Selection of Elders

- 2.4.1 Church Members will be asked for nominees for Elder.
- 2.4.2 The Elder Nominating Committee will receive all suggestions for nominees from the Members and assess their qualifications. They may also consider other potential qualified nominees.
- 2.4.3 The Elder Nominating Committee will then present their recommended nominees to the Members. Each candidate must be approved by a vote of the Church membership in a Business Meeting.
- 2.4.4 Each nominee must be approved by three-fourths of the Members present and eligible to vote; otherwise, the nominee shall be removed from consideration.
- 2.4.5 The Elders thus approved shall be appointed to office.

2.5 Organization

- 2.5.1 Elders shall serve a two-year term, renewable for two additional terms and take at least a one-year sabbatical following six consecutive years of service before being eligible for re-nomination to the Board of Elders.
- 2.5.2 The Board of Elders shall select a Chairman from among themselves annually by majority vote. The Chairman will also assume the Officer role of President of the legal entity that is the corporation known as Grace Baptist Church.
- 2.5.3 The Board of Elders shall set a schedule of meetings to fulfill their responsibilities.

2.6 Removal

Apart from resigning, any Elder who becomes unable to perform his ministry for whatever reason or who has violated the qualifications of Elder as presented in Section 2.2 of these By-Laws may be dismissed upon decision of the Board of Elders, as supported by a minimum two-thirds vote at a Board of Elders meeting called for that purpose. Members will be notified of this action within seven (7) days of such vote.

3.0 Lead Pastor

- 3.1 The Lead Pastor shall become a Member of the Church upon his confirmation by the Members.
- 3.2 The job description of the Lead Pastor will be approved or amended by the Board of Elders.
- 3.3 The Lead Pastor will be accountable to the Board of Elders, have overall operational responsibility and authority, and delegate such responsibilities to other staff members as appropriate.

3.4 The Lead Pastor selection will be made via the Search Committee process laid out in Section 6.3 of these By-Laws.

3.5 Appointment

3.5.1 After a candidate is confirmed by the Board of Elders, the Board of Elders shall present its candidate to the Members at a Business Meeting. A two-thirds vote of those Members present and voting shall be necessary for the confirmation of the Pastoral Search Committee nominee.

3.5.2 The duties and responsibilities, as well as salary and other compensation, of the Lead Pastor shall be set forth in an offer letter at the time of employment. The offer letter shall reflect terms and conditions agreed by the Board of Elders. The offer letter will be prepared by the Personnel Committee to verify conformance to applicable employment laws and signed by the President.

3.6 Resignation and Termination

3.6.1 The Lead Pastor shall serve under a continuing call until the pastoral relationship is dissolved at the request of the Lead Pastor or the Members.

3.6.2 If the Board of Elders, by a two-thirds vote, feels convinced that there is sufficient sentiment on the part of the Members and that it would be in the best interest of the Lead Pastor and the Church to consider dissolving the relationship:

- The Board of Elders shall call an Elder meeting for the purpose of discussing the matter and endeavoring to resolve the differences.
- If agreement cannot be reached, two-thirds of the Elders may call a Business Meeting in order to recommend to the Members that they vote on whether to terminate the pastoral relationship.
- If two-thirds of the Members present and voting at this meeting vote to terminate the relationship, the appointment shall end in either eight weeks or some other period that is mutually agreeable (see the GBC Personnel Policies for additional information.)

3.7 Interim Leadership

The Board of Elders and Pastors shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the Lead Pastor upon his effective resignation or termination or the Board of Elders may select an Interim Lead Pastor until a new Lead Pastor has assumed his duties.

4.0 Pastors, Ministry Directors and Other Staff (excluding Lead Pastor)

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The Church may employ as many pastors, ministry directors or other staff as it deems in the best interest of the ministry of the Church. Pastors are men who have been Ordained and have special spiritual and ministry oversight of the

Church. Ministry Directors are men or women called to minister in specific areas of the Church with specific abilities and spiritual gifts.

- 4.1.2 All staff hires must be included in the approved budget for the operating year or approved in advance by the Board of Elders after considering recommendations from the Finance Committee.
- 4.1.3 Employees will have rights and responsibilities defined in the GBC Personnel Policies.
- 4.1.4 The Personnel Committee and hiring supervisor will work together to ensure the job description is compliant with relevant employment laws and determine salary and benefits within the approved budget and pursuant to the GBC Personnel Policies. Any disputes or exceptions will be referred to the Board of Elders for final decision.
- 4.1.5 For all positions an offer letter will be prepared to reflect terms and conditions agreed by the Lead Pastor or Board of Elders. The Personnel Committee will prepare the letter and verify conformance to applicable employment laws and the letter will be signed by the President.
- 4.1.6 Resignation or termination shall be handled as prescribed in the GBC Personnel Policies.

4.2 Appointment

4.2.1 Full-time Pastor Appointments (excluding Lead Pastor)

- 4.2.1.1 Job descriptions for new Pastor positions will be reviewed by the Personnel Committee for legal compliance and approved by the Board of Elders.
- 4.2.1.2 The Board of Elders may determine if a qualified candidate has been identified or if a Search Committee (see Section 6.3 of these By-Laws) is required.
- 4.2.1.3 Prior to recommending a Pastoral Candidate to Members the candidate must be supported by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Elders.
- 4.2.1.4 After a candidate is confirmed by the Board of Elders, he shall be recommended to Members at a Business Meeting. A two-thirds vote of those Members present and voting shall be necessary for the confirmation of the candidate.

4.2.2 Full-time, Part-time, Interim or Temporary Ministry Directors and Part-time, Interim or Temporary Pastors (excluding an Interim Lead Pastor)

These candidates will be recruited and interviewed under the oversight of the Lead Pastor. Once a qualified candidate has been identified, this candidate will be appointed to the open position when approved by two-thirds of the Board of Elders.

4.2.3 Other Staff

Other Staff includes all employees of the Church who primarily have operations, administrative or custodial roles or interns. The Lead Pastor shall have the authority to hire these staff members or delegate this authority to a supervisor if appropriate.

4.3 Termination (excluding the Lead Pastor)

- 4.3.1 Terminations shall be carried out in accordance with the GBC Personnel Policies, which shall include a Pastor or supervisor consulting with, and considering recommendations of, the Personnel Committee with respect to the termination process and legal compliance.
- 4.3.2 The Lead Pastor or Chairman of the Board of Elders shall recommend termination of a Pastor (excluding the Lead Pastor) to the Board of Elders who shall approve the termination by a two-thirds vote (including the Chairman and Lead Pastor's vote)
- 4.3.3 The Lead Pastor, having ensured appropriate processes have been followed, shall have the authority to dismiss all non-Pastor staff positions.

5.0 Officers (President, Treasurer, Clerk)

The Officers of the Church (formally referred to as Trustees) shall be the President, the Treasurer, and the Clerk. They shall execute any business of the Church when it acts as a corporation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Officers shall meet the spiritual and character requirements set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13 respectively. The Officers of the Church shall be responsible to the Members; however, they shall report directly to the Board of Elders.

5.1 General Responsibilities

- 5.1.1 Conduct the Corporate business of the Church and serve as legal representatives of the Church.
- 5.1.2 Hold in trust the title of all real (i.e. land and buildings) and personal Church properties, and execute such items as deeds, mortgages, notes, and other legal instruments.
- 5.1.3 For any such transactions over \$50,000, execution shall be by at least two Officers with signatory authority.
- 5.1.4 The Officers shall have no authority to buy, sell or encumber real property unless specifically authorized by majority vote at a properly called Business Meeting.
- 5.1.5 Be available to work with the Board of Elders, and the Finance and/or Personnel Committees as necessary, to resolve contractual and legal issues.
- 5.1.6 The Officers shall have signatory authority for contracts.
- 5.1.7 The following persons shall have signatory authority for checks: the Chairman of the Finance Committee, the Treasurer, one Pastor and one Church staff member recommended by the Lead Pastor and approved by the Finance Committee.

5.3 Removal of Officers shall follow the same procedure as for Elders (see Section 2.6 of these By-Laws).

5.4 President

5.4.1 General Duties

In addition to the responsibilities set forth in Section 5.1 above, the President shall, subject to the direction and control of the Board of Elders, have charge of the affairs of the Church. For purposes of clarity, the President shall not take any actions that are contrary to the direction of, or fail to take any actions that are mandated by, the majority of the Board of Elders. The President shall have such other powers and duties as are usually incident to that office and as may be vested in that office by these By-laws or by the Board of Elders.

5.4.2 Additional Duties

5.4.2.1 The President shall prepare and publish the agenda for all Business Meetings.

5.4.3 Selection and Term

The Elder elected as Chairman will automatically become President of the legal entity that is the corporation known as Grace Baptist Church. Such Elder's term as President shall run concurrently with his term as Chairman of the Board of Elders.

5.5 Treasurer

5.5.1 General Duties

In addition to the responsibilities set forth in Section 5.1 above, the Treasurer shall, subject to the direction and control of the Board of Elders, have general charge of the financial affairs of the Church and shall keep full and accurate books of account. The Treasurer shall maintain custody of all funds, securities and valuable documents of the Church unless these responsibilities are otherwise delegated by the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall have such other powers and duties as are usually incident to that office and as may be vested in that office by these By-laws or as the Board of Elders may designate for such office from time to time.

5.5.2 Selection and Term

The Treasurer shall be recommended by the Board of Elders and approved by the Members. The Treasurer will be elected at the annual Business Meeting for a term of three years. The incumbent Treasurer may be reelected. The Treasurer shall take a one-year sabbatical following six consecutive years of service before being re-eligible to serve in the Treasurer role.

5.5.3 Bonding

The Treasurer shall be bonded.

5.6 Clerk

5.6.1 General Duties

In addition to the responsibilities set forth in Section 5.1 above, the Clerk shall give such notice of meetings to the Members as required by these By-laws and shall keep a record of all Business Meetings. The Clerk shall have such other powers and duties as are usually incident of that officer and as may be vested in that office by these By-laws or by the Board of Elders. In the absence of the Clerk from any meeting of the Members, a temporary Clerk designated by the person presiding at the meeting shall perform the duties of the Clerk.

5.6.2 Additional Duties

5.6.2.1 The Clerk shall record and preserve minutes of Business Meetings.

5.6.2.2 The Clerk shall prepare an annual letter to be sent to the Baptist Convention of New England, and make this letter available to the Members if requested.

5.6.2.3 The Clerk shall maintain an accurate listing of the Members of the Church.

5.6.3 Selection and Term

The Clerk shall be recommended by the Board of Elders and approved by the Members. The Clerk will be elected at the annual Business Meeting for a term of two years. The incumbent Clerk may be reelected.

6.0 Committees (Finance, Personnel and Pastoral Search) and Ministry Leaders

Organizational Terms for the Finance Committee and Personnel Committee

a. The term of membership for each committee shall be two-years and renewable for two additional terms. Committee members shall take a one-year sabbatical following six consecutive years of service before being eligible for service on the same committee.

b. The Chairman and committee members for each committee shall be approved by the Board of Elders. The Chairman of one committee may not serve as Chairman of one of the other committees.

c. Removal of a committee member shall be the same as that for removal of Elders in Section 2.6 of these By-Laws.

6.1 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be a standing committee reporting and making recommendations to the Board of Elders for final decision unless otherwise delegated by the Board of Elders.

6.1.1 Members of the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall consist of four to six members. These members shall be:

- Chairman of the Finance Committee
- Treasurer
- An Elder, as determined by the Board of Elders,
- Member(s)-at-Large.

6.1.2 Responsibilities

- 6.1.2.1 Serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Elders and Members in financial matters.
- 6.1.2.2 Work with the Church Staff to prepare an annual budget for presentation to the Church for discussion and adoption at the annual Business Meeting.
- 6.1.2.3 Prepare a monthly report for Board of Elders reflecting the financial situation of the Church.
- 6.1.2.4 Ensure that Church financial records have an external review at least once every three years.
- 6.1.2.5 Provide oversight of compliance with procedures for disbursement of funds.
- 6.1.2.6 Annually review all insurance coverage for the Church and make necessary changes.
- 6.1.2.7 Work with Church Staff to report contributions to each Member or person providing financial support to the Church.
- 6.1.2.8 Determine the allocation of the Church's monies in bank accounts and available investment vehicles that are consistent with the daily operational needs of the Church and shall provide periodic reports on said allocation to the Board of Elders on a regular basis.

6.2 Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall be a standing committee reporting to and making recommendations to the Board of Elders for final decisions unless otherwise delegated by the Board of Elders.

6.2.1 Members of the Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall consist of three to five members. These members shall be:

- Chairman of the Personnel Committee
- An Elder, as determined by the Board of Elders
- Member(s)-at-Large.

6.2.2 Responsibilities

- 6.2.2.1 Formulate and maintain the GBC Personnel Policies and ensure that it is approved by the Board of Elders.
- 6.2.2.2 Make recommendations to the Board of Elders and Lead Pastor related to employment laws, and employee compensation.
- 6.2.2.3 Prepare Offer Letters reflecting the terms and conditions determined pursuant to authority given in Section 3 or 4 above, and to ensure compliance with relevant employment law and these By-laws.
- 6.2.2.4 Support the Board of Elders, Lead Pastor and Church staff in an advisory Human Resources-type function when requested.

6.3 Pastoral Search Committee(s)

6.3.1 The Pastoral Search Committee shall report to and make recommendations to the Board of Elders for final decisions unless otherwise delegated by the Board of Elders.

6.3.2 A Search Committee will always be formed for the selection of a Lead Pastor and may be formed for selection of other Pastoral positions if a suitable candidate has not been identified by the Board of Elders pursuant to Section 4.2.1.2 of these By-Laws.

6.3.3 Selection of Members of the Pastoral Search Committee

6.3.3.1 For a Lead Pastor search, the Chairman of the Search Committee will be an Elder and the Board of Elders have the responsibility of recommending a proposed hire to the Members.

6.3.3.2 For other Pastoral positions the Board of Elders will select a Chairman. All search committees will have one Elder and one Pastor among its members.

6.3.3.3 The Board of Elders shall appoint other Members to comprise the Search Committee and recommend a person to fill a vacant position if applicable.

6.3.4 Responsibilities

Identify and recommend a candidate to the Board of Elders, and when approved by the Board of Elders introduce the candidate to the Members in advance of the Business Meeting.

6.4 Ministry Leaders

In addition to the Finance, Personnel and Pastoral Search Committees discussed above, the Board of Elders may in its discretion establish Committees or appoint Ministry Leaders to support the Church Staff and/or Board of Elders with their spiritual, oversight and operational responsibilities. Any such Committee members/chairmen and/or Ministry Leaders shall be

Members and meet the spiritual and character requirements set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13 respectively.

7.0 Business Meetings

Purpose and Procedures

7.1 Business Meetings shall be held at least annually (to meet the requirement of Section 7.4 of these By-Laws) and as necessary and appropriate pursuant to these by-laws. The date, time, and agenda of each meeting shall be communicated at least two weeks advance notice, except in a matter of extreme urgency, in which a shorter timeframe may be provided with the approval of the Board of Elders.

7.2 Business Meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor, the Board of Elders, or by the President on behalf of Members constituting at least ten percent (10%) of the Members making a written request to the President for such a meeting. Notice provisions of Section 7.1 of these By-Laws will apply.

7.3 Matters to be presented for consideration at a Business Meeting must be included in an agenda. This agenda shall be published by the President in its entirety at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting, except in a matter of extreme urgency, in which a shorter time frame may be provided with the approval of the Board of Elders.

7.4 An annual meeting shall be held during the calendar quarter prior to the beginning of the Fiscal Year. Standing items for approval at this meeting will include:

7.4.1 Annual budget

7.4.2 Elder nominations (for vacancies only)

7.4.3 Officer nominations (for vacancies only)

7.5 Additional meetings may be held for:

7.5.1 Other items requiring Member approval, as defined in these By-laws.

7.5.2 Substantive matters, such as, but not limited to:

a) Buying or selling property

b) Changes in the Constitution and By-Laws

c) Borrowing money for placing a mortgage

7.6 Formal Meeting Procedures

7.6.1 For each Business Meeting, the Board of Elders shall appoint a Moderator who shall preside over that meeting.

7.6.2 Business Meetings shall be in accordance with the purpose and procedures described in 7.1 to 7.5 above.

7.6.3 In addition the Moderator will ensure an orderly meeting. The Moderator will explain the agenda, allow discussion without allowing the meeting to be

dominated by an individual or small group, and then oversee a vote on proposals made in the meeting agenda.

7.7 Quorum

A Business Meeting quorum for voting items shall be 10% of the Members. Both Members in attendance at the Business Meeting and absentee ballots shall count towards meeting the quorum requirement.

7.8 Voting

Only Members eligible to vote in accordance with Section 1.3 above may vote or speak in Business Meetings. Voting may not be done by Proxy. Absentee ballots may be used but must be received by the Clerk and accounted for prior to the beginning of a Business Meeting. Unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws, item approval will be represented by a majority positive vote.

8.0 Ordinances

8.1 Baptism administered by the Church shall be by immersion in water, except in unusual or extenuating circumstances. The Pastors, or whomever they shall authorize, shall administer baptism.

8.2 The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least once each quarter. All who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will be invited to participate. The Pastors, or whomever they shall authorize, shall administer the Lord's Supper.

9.0 Ordination

In the event the Church is requested to ordain a Member who possesses the Scriptural qualifications for full ordination, the following procedure shall be followed:

9.1 A council will be called by the Board of Elders to examine the candidate concerning his fitness for the ministry.

9.2 If this council is in support of the candidate's ordination, and with unanimous approval by the Board of Elders, the Church shall proceed with the ordination.

10.0 Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of the Church for any reason, the assets will be distributed as follows:

10.1 All real and personal property owned by the Church will be sold.

- 10.2 All debts will be paid to the extent possible.
- 10.3 All Church employees will be given three (3) months' salary. If the remaining funds are insufficient for this, they will be split proportionately, based on salary, between Church employees.
- 10.4 All remaining assets and funds will be given to one or more organization which have a purpose consistent with the Church Constitution and which qualify exempt under applicable tax laws, as determined by majority approval by the Board of Elders.

11.0 Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended if supported by the Board of Elders and then by a two-thirds vote of the Members present and eligible to vote at any properly called Business Meeting.

12.0 Asseveration

Any contradictions or unaddressed issues in these By-Laws may not be used to invalidate this document or its intent. Any contradiction or unaddressed issue shall be resolved as best fits the intent of this document.

13.0 Definition of Terms

The following are definitions of terms that are used in this document.

Business Meeting – A meeting of Members pursuant to Section 7.0 of these By-Laws.

By-Laws – Rules and procedures which augment and enable the Constitution to be put into practice.

Church – Grace Baptist Church, Hudson, MA

Constitution – The legal document which incorporates the Church and lays the foundation of its beliefs, structure, and purpose.

Elders are those who have been selected by the process in Section 2.4 of these By-Laws to serve on the Board of Elders.

Fiscal Year – The twelve-month period upon which the Church financial budget is based.

GBC Personnel Policies – The Employee Policies of Grace Baptist Church, which is written and maintained by the Personnel Committee, and other policies adopted by the Personnel Committee, all of which are reviewed and approved by the Board of Elders.

Member Covenant – That agreement provided for new potential Members defining the basic responsibilities of a Church Member.

Member – an individual who has completed the process for membership in Section 1.1 of these By-Laws and continue in good standing.

Moderator – Appointed by the Board of Elders to preside over a Business Meeting.

Ordination – The process whereby a person is examined, approved, and installed in a ministry. The person is then Ordained.

Proxy – Having someone else represent you in your absence.

Quorum – The minimum number of members of the Church needed in attendance at a Business Meeting before the meeting can proceed.

Statement of Faith – The statement of the key beliefs of Grace Baptist Church found in the Constitution. Persons must subscribe to this statement in order to become Members.