

**CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAWS OF
NEW COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH**
(A CALIFORNIA NON-PROFIT RELIGIOUS CORPORATION)

**ARTICLE I
NAME AND PRINCIPLE OFFICE**

The name of this Corporation is the **“NEW COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH OF GRASS VALLEY”**. This Corporation will be further referred to in the Bylaws as the “Church”. The Church maintains its principle office at 12582 Squirrel Creek Road, Grass Valley, California 95945. The members of the Church shall have full power and authority to change the principle office from one location to another. This will be done by amending this section of the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Church is to glorify God by fulfilling the Great Commandment (**Matthew 22:36-40**) and the Great Commission (**Matthew 28:18-20**).

1. **EVANGELISM / MISSIONS** – To share the good news of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our community and throughout the world”. (**Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:2, Peter 3:9**).
2. **EDUCATION** – “To help members develop toward full Christian maturity and train them for effective ministry. To promote personal spiritual growth and discipleship through Bible teaching”. (**Ephesians 4:11-13, Matthew 18:20, 2 Timothy 2:2**).
3. **WORSHIP** – “To participate in public worship services together and to maintain personal daily devotions”. (**John 4:24**).
4. **MINISTRY / SERVICE** – “To serve unselfishly, in Jesus’ name, meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those in our church, community and in the world”. (**1 Peter 4:10-11, Matthew 25:34-40, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Galatians 5:13**).
5. **FELLOWSHIP** – “To encourage, support and pray for each other as members of the Family of God. To share our lives together”. (**1 John 1:7, Acts 2:44-47, Hebrews 10:23-25, Romans 15:5-7, John 13:34-35**).

This Church seeks to benefit the people of this community providing opportunities for spiritual, physical, intellectual, social and cultural development. (**Luke 2:52**).

ARTICLE III STATEMENT OF FAITH

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God, and as the only basis for our beliefs. This Church accepts “The Baptist Faith and Message”, as stated by the Southern Baptist Convention, as a general statement of our faith and basic Christian beliefs.

Regarding marriage, we believe that marriage has been ordained by God. This Church defines “marriage” as the exclusive covenantal union of one man and one woman in which such union is a lifetime commitment. A civil government’s sanction of a union will be recognized as a legitimate marriage by the Church only to the extent that it is consistent with the definition of “marriage” found in these Articles.

Legitimate sexual relations are exercised solely within marriage. Hence, sexual activities outside of marriage (referred to in the New Testament as “porneia”) including but not limited to adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, and pedophilia are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible and the Church. Further, lascivious conduct, transgender behavior, and the creation and/or distribution and/or viewing of pornography, are incompatible with the Biblical witness.

ARTICLE IV AFFILIATION

This Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs independent of any devotional control. We recognize, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches in world missions. This Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state and local expressions.

ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: GENERAL

Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the requirements for membership, and have been approved by the congregation and are listed on the membership roll. Every member shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and behave in a manner that is consistent therewith.

SECTION 2: QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
2. Baptism by immersion as a testimony of salvation.

SECTION 3: DESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP

In an effort to properly reflect the membership of the Church, two rolls shall be maintained. These rolls shall be updated periodically.

1. Active / Resident Members: All members who reside within the Church’s ministry area or are currently active in the Church.

2. Non-resident Members: Members who have become inactive as a result of moving out of the Church's ministry area and have not joined another church.

SECTION 4: VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERSHIP

Every active / resident member shall have the right to vote on any election called by the Corporation Board. These elections consist of termination of membership, matters decided by an appointed group regarding the budget, election of Trustees, the disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church, the merger or dissolution of the Church, acquisition of real property and indebtedness, amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the Church, and calling or dismissal of ministerial staff. The calling or dismissal of ministerial staff requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Church.

SECTION 5: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Transfer of membership to another church.
3. By personal request of the member.
4. Dismissal by the congregation according to **Matthew 18:15-17**.

SECTION 6: RESTORATION OF MEMBERS

Members dismissed by the Church shall be restored by the vote of the Church according to the spirit of **2 Corinthians 2:7-8**.

SECTION 7: VOTING LIMITATIONS

Each member present and 13 years and older is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

ARTICLE VI MEETING OF MEMBERS

Business meetings of the members shall be held at times and in the manner and purposes set forth below:

1. A scheduled Business Meeting of the members will be held in November of each year. The primary purpose of the Meeting will be in adopting of the next year budget, the election of Trustees, or any other business that affects the Church.
2. A Business Meeting shall be held during the month of April to conduct any mid-year issue.
3. A special Business Meeting of the Church may be called at any time by:
 - (a) The Pastor
 - (b) The President of the Corporation

4. Notification of members for the Business Meetings may be given by one of the following methods:
 - (a) Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a Sunday Service.
 - (b) Announcement of the meeting in the Church newsletter.
 - (c) Oral announcement to the congregation at a Sunday Service.
 - (d) By first-class letter to members.
5. A quorum shall consist of those members present and voting.
6. Members shall be notified no less than 13 days prior to a Business Meeting which considers any matters set forth in Article V, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII MARRIAGE CEREMONY

SECTION 1: DESCRIPTION

Marriage is a union ordained by God. It was first instituted by God in the early chapters of Genesis and codified in the Levitical law. The Old Testament prophets compared it to a relationship between God and his people, examples of it are in the historical narratives, and the wisdom literature discusses the unique unity of this relationship. Jesus explained the original intention and core elements of marriage, and several New Testament Epistles give explicit instructions on this union. Marriage is a typology of Christ and the Church. As such, the Church views marriage as a profound spiritual institution established by God. Due to the importance of marriage in the biblical witness, this Church adopts the following policy:

SECTION 2: CLERGY

1. Only duly ordained clergy shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on the Church property.
2. Clergy employed by the Church shall be subject to dismissal and/or loss of ordination for officiating a same gender marriage ceremony.

SECTION 3: APPLICANTS

1. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a member of the clergy employed by the Church, or to use the Church facilities, shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall receive a determined amount of hours of premarital counseling by clergy or counselors employed by the Church or other persons who, in the sole opinion of the Pastoral Staff of the Church, have appropriate training, experience, and spiritual understanding to provide such counseling.

SECTION 4: PREMISES

1. Any marriage performed on the Church premises shall be officiated by a member of the clergy.
2. Clergy officiating marriage ceremonies on Church premises, whether or not employed by the Church, shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
3. The clergy assigned to the Church to implement the procedures contained in the Marriage Policy may, in his or her sole discretion, decline to make Church facilities available for, and/or decline to officiate at, a ceremony when, in his or her judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.

ARTICLE VIII SENIOR PASTOR

SECTION 1

The senior pastor is responsible for leading and equipping the church to function as a New Testament church. He shall be especially concerned to provide leadership in the areas of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care. The senior pastor shall affirm his agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct himself in a manner that is consistent therewith.

SECTION 2

The senior pastor shall be the overseer of the work of the church. As such, he shall be the chief administrative officer of the church in all instances except those matters which are legally the concerns of the Board of Trustees. The senior pastor shall be guided by the instructions of the church in his capacity as chief administrative officer.

SECTION 3

A senior pastor shall be chosen and elected by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a special business meeting, according to the provisions of Article VI. 4 of these Bylaws.

SECTION 4

When the office of senior pastor is vacant, a pastor search committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable senior pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, a majority affirmative vote by those Active Members present and voting are necessary for a choice.

SECTION 5

The senior pastor's term of office shall be for an indefinite period. He shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his resignation or by the church's request.

SECTION 6

The senior pastor may relinquish the office of senior pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice at the time of his resignation.

SECTION 7

The senior pastor may be dismissed by a majority of those Active Members present and voting in a SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING. Such a vote shall be by ballot. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the dismissed senior pastor, the church will compensate the senior pastor with a sum equal to at least three months of his usual compensation. The termination shall be immediate, and the compensation shall be rendered in one sum paid not more than thirty (30) days from the church action, or in three equal installments paid at thirty (30) day intervals, beginning not more than thirty (30) days from the church action.

ARTICLE IX ELDERS

SECTION 1: PRIORITIES OF AN ELDER

In the Bible there are two major emphases when Elders are mentioned. First, is the character and lifestyle of an Elder. An Elder's personal relationship with Jesus Christ, his growing in Christ-likeness, and his Godly lifestyle among all people are of priority concern in the Bible. Second, is the spirit of a servant. An Elder is a servant of Jesus Christ and Christ's body, the Church. A servant spirit is to characterize an Elder at all times. Elders are to care for the Church family in a way that shows genuine love for the Lord and all His people. The Elders shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS OF ELDERS

- A. Elders are to watch over the general welfare of the congregation. The Bible refers to an Elder as an overseer. Elders are overseers, and are to exercise broad and responsible oversight of all aspects of the Church's life and ministry.
- B. Elders are to pay attention to the large picture of the Church.
- C. Elders are to be active in helping to set the vision and direction of the Church.
- D. Elders are to be positive and godly leaders with a strong heart for God and His Church.
- E. Elders are to be active in planning and developing strategies for the Church so it can effectively fulfill Christ's Great Commission.
- F. Elders are to serve as the primary coordinating body of the Church. All other committees, task force groups and ministries will relate directly with the Elders. They serve as an arm of the Elders.
- G. All phases and ministries of the Church are to be grouped in a manner that will permit an Elder to oversee each group. The Elder will not do the work of these ministries. He will serve as a resource person, a friend, encourager and one who functions as a communicator between the Elders and the ministries under his oversight and from the ministries to the Elders.

- H. Elders will not exercise control over all details and decisions of the various ministries they oversee. They will serve as overseers for the larger good and effectiveness of the Church.

SECTION 3: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELDERS AND PASTOR

- A. The Pastor is the chief shepherd in the Church body, the Chief Elder.
- B. Elders are to stand with the Pastor, provide counsel, give encouragement, and assist him in providing the best leadership possible for the Church.
- C. The Pastor will serve as Chairman of the Elders.
- D. The Elders recognize the Pastor as the leader of the Church's ministry and life.
- E. The Pastor and Elders work together as a team and are to model the unity, trust, respect and love that is to characterize the Church family as the body of Christ.

SECTION 4: SELECTION OF ELDERS

- A. The number of Elders will be determined by the needs of the Church and the availability of spiritually qualified men.
- B. The Elders, Pastor(s), and two members at large from the congregation will serve as the Elder nominating task force.
- C. The two members at large will be appointed by the Elders.
- D. The nominating task force will recommend new Elders.
- E. Each person recommended to be an Elder must be a member and will be thoroughly and prayerfully evaluated to see if they meet all Biblical qualifications, if they are actively growing in the Christian faith, if they are actively serving the Lord in the Church, if they are willing to make themselves available to serve as an Elder, and if they possess the skills needed to function in a leadership position.
- F. Upon approval by the Pastor and all Elders, the new Elders will be presented to the Church to be set apart as Elders.
- G. An ordination service will be planned and conducted for those men who have not been ordained as an Elder.

SECTION 5: TERM OF ELDERS

- A. The call of God to be an Elder is a life-time call. While the Church sets the Elder apart to serve, it is God who calls a man to be an Elder, just as God calls a man to be a Pastor.
- B. An Elder shall serve on the Elder body for a period of three (3) years, and then he will rotate off the Elder body.
- C. After a period of one (1) year, an Elder is eligible to be selected for another three (3) years.
- D. During the one (1) year, an Elder is to remain active in ministry in the Church and may be called on by the Elder body for counsel and special service.

ARTICLE X DEACONS

SECTION 1

The church shall elect deacons by ballot at a regular or special business meeting of the church. The deacons shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.

SECTION 2

The number, method of nomination, and term of office shall be determined by the church in its policies and procedures manual. Should these matters not be addressed in such a manual, the church may make this determination by vote in a regular or special business meeting.

SECTION 3

In accordance with the meaning of the word “deacon” and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to assist the senior pastor in performing pastoral responsibilities.

SECTION 4

Deacons shall serve as counsel to both the senior pastor and to the church. However, deacons shall exercise no authority that is not vested in them by the church or by these Bylaws.

SECTION 5

The deacons shall elect their own officers and shall be organized to assist the senior pastor, and for the consideration of issues related to their work. They shall give particular attention to the areas of baptism, the Lord’s Supper, benevolence, and guarding the good fellowship and spiritual ministry of the church.

ARTICLE XI TREASURER

SECTION 1

The church shall appoint a treasurer to be its financial officer. The treasurer shall affirm his/her agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct himself/herself in a manner that is consistent therewith.

SECTION 2

The treasurer shall receive, preserve, and pay out all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Expenditures shall be authorized in the budget as adopted by the church, or by specific action of the church, and shall conform to such system of authorization as the church may employ, whether by voucher or otherwise.

SECTION 3

The treasurer shall render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding period since the last business meeting.

SECTION 4

The church may delegate some of the financial responsibilities to a financial secretary.

ARTICLE XII FINANCE TEAM (DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION)

SECTION 1

The members of the Finance Team will consist of members chosen from the Church body. The Pastor, President of the Trustees (President of the Corporation) and Treasurer shall serve as ex-officio members of the Finance Team. The Finance Team will be responsible for the formatting of the next year's budget. The Finance Team will also be formed to handle any emergency financial situation that will assist the Treasurer in his/her duties. Each member shall be an active/resident member of the Church. The Pastor will serve as Chairman of the Finance Team. In his absence, the President of the Corporation will serve as Chairman of the Finance Team. The Finance Team will be disbanded at the conclusion of the Business Meeting or financial emergency.

SECTION 2

The President of the Corporation shall serve as Moderator of the Church.

SECTION 3

The Finance Team members, during the time active, are hereby designated as the Directors of the Corporation as the term is defined in the California Nonprofit Corporation Code.

SECTION 4

All Administrative matters not specifically addressed in this Constitution and Bylaws shall be the responsibility of the President of the Corporation and the current Finance Team.

SECTION 5

- (a) The Board of Trustees shall consist of a President and a Secretary.
- (b) It shall be the duty of the Trustees to act as legal representatives of the Church, and to take such actions and execute any documents necessary to accomplish the purpose of any matter authorized by the members which concern any real, personal or intangible property of the Church.

- (c) The Trustees shall also act as the President and the Secretary of the Corporation, respectively.
- (d) The Trustees shall be nominated by the Church membership for a period of time, and the Trustees will hold that office, as long as they feel “called” to serve, or any disciplinary action occurs.

ARTICLE XIII VOLUNTEERS

SECTION 1

All volunteers should meet the requirements of Church membership, and adhere to the rules of the Church and all biblical teachings.

SECTION 2

All volunteers who will be working with children up to the age of 18 years will be asked to submit a Volunteer Application for the Church records, and also submit to Live Scan Fingerprinting.

SECTION 3

The application and fingerprinting results will be maintained by the Church in a locked, secure place maintained by the Coordinator. The application and fingerprinting is for the protection of the Church and the youth that participate in Youth functions in and associated with the Church. Information in the application and fingerprinting will not be discussed with anyone in the Church, unless a specific incident occurs regarding the protection of youth. The Coordinator and the Pastor will then deal with the specific incident according to applicable laws and Biblical teachings.

ARTICLE XIV RECORDS AND REPORTS

The Church will maintain the following records and reports:

1. Adequate and correct books, records and reports: (financial records).
2. Minutes of the proceedings of its members and Business Meetings.
3. The Trustees shall also act as the President and Secretary of the Corporation, respectively.
4. Contribution statements for contributors.

ARTICLE XV
AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS

SECTION 1

Changes in these Bylaws may be made at a duly held meeting of the membership according to the provisions of Article VI. 4 of these Bylaws.

SECTION 2

Amendments to the Bylaws shall receive at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Members for Corporations Code Purposes who are present and voting in the exceptional business meeting.

SECTION 3

Amendments to the Bylaws shall take effect immediately upon approval unless provided otherwise at the time of the church vote on the amendment.