

CONSTITUTION
of
Grace Baptist Church
Anaconda, Montana

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Grace Baptist Church of Anaconda, Montana, do hereby constitute and organize ourselves in accordance with the New Testament principles for a local church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We are a self-governing Body of believers who profess to having been born again. We have been immersed in water to declare our faith in and identity with, Jesus Christ as Savior from sin and Lord of our lives.

ARTICLE I - NAME

This church was organized on April 27, 1897, became an incorporated body under the laws of the State of Montana on September 28, 1934, and was originally known as "First Grace Regular Baptist Church of Anaconda, Montana." On February 2, 2003, under the incorporation laws of the State of Montana the official name was changed to "Grace Baptist Church" of Anaconda, Montana.

ARTICLE II - MISSION

Grace Baptist Church's Mission is to **"Know HIM and make HIM known."**
We will seek to realize this purpose through our commitment to three primary objectives. . .

Section 1. EXALTING GOD

Psalm 95:6; Psalm 97:9; Psalm 108:5; 1 Corinthians 10:31
As a people, we will first and foremost worship God.

Section 2. EQUIPPING THE BODY

Ephesians 4:11-1; Colossians 3:16
Our Body is made up of many members with different responsibilities. Each member has need for the others in the Body. As a church, we will minister to the Body by:

- A. Cultivating and practicing regular and fervent prayer, individually and corporately.
Luke 22:39-46; I Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:4-9
- B. Observing the ordinances of the New Testament:
Christian Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
Mark 16:16; I Corinthians 11:23-26
- C. Teaching and instructing the believers in accordance with the word of God and developing the believers into committed growing Christians.
Colossians 1:28; 3:16
- D. Encouraging Christian community and fellowship.
Hebrews 10:24-25
- E. Preparing God's people to penetrate our society through evangelism utilizing the demonstration of a Godly life-style. Matthew 5:16

- F. Assist each person to discover their spiritual gifting and help them find an area of service where they excel.
Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12

Section 3. EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15

- A. We are committed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ resulting in the salvation of the lost. Romans 1:16
- B. We are committed to promote missionary enterprises at home and abroad.
Acts 1:8
- C. We are committed to preparing God's people to penetrate our society through evangelism. Matthew 5:16

ARTICLE III - CHARACTER AND GOVERNANCE

Section 1. The governance of the church is vested in the Local Body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but will maintain fellowship with Converge Northwest and Converge Worldwide of America.

Section 2. The final authority shall be the Board of Elders.

Section 3. The Directors of the Corporation shall be known as Elders, and whenever used herein, the term "Elders" shall be deemed to include Directors and term "Directors" shall be deemed to include Elders.

Section 4. The fiscal year of the church shall begin on the first day of January and close on the last day of December.

ARTICLE IV - OUR CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Holy Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, and on confession of this faith, having been baptized in the name of the triune God, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully covenant with one another, as one Body in Christ, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, in all things giving Him the preeminence.

We promise by the aid of the Holy Spirit to forsake the ways of sin and to walk together in Christian love and in the paths of righteousness. With this in view, we engage to strive together for love, unity, peace and purity of this church; to sustain its worship and hold to its ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute, as faithful stewards, such time, talents and money, in the measure that God prospers each of us, that the responsibility for the work of the local church and the worldwide ministry of gospel witnessing may be effectively and faithfully discharged. We strive to maintain family and private devotions, to teach the Bible to our children; to commit ourselves to private and corporate prayer; to seek the salvation of our relatives and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings and faithful in our activities; to be exemplary in our behavior; to avoid unkind words and unrighteous anger; to combine zeal and knowledge in our efforts to advance the cause of our Savior; to make Christ first in all things, both spiritual and temporal.

We further agree to give and receive correction with meekness and love; to remember each other in prayer, and to aid each other in case of illness or distress; to cultivate sympathy and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the Scriptures, to seek it without delay; to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return.

ARTICLE V - AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Section 1. THE WORD OF GOD

We believe that the Bible, composed of sixty-six books, is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:19-21

Section 2. THE TRINITY

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons; that these are equal in divine nature, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of the creation, providence, and redemption.
Father: John 10:30; Trinity: Matthew 3:16-17; Son: Hebrews 1:8;
Oneness: Deuteronomy 6:4; Spirit: Acts 5:3-4

Section 3. GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He hears and answers prayer, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, and that He saves from sin and spiritual death for all that come to Him through Jesus Christ.
John 16:23-28; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 17:5

Section 4. JESUS CHRIST

We believe in God the Son, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His own people, and personal visible return to the earth.
John 1:1, 14; Colossians 1:13-23; Philippians 2:5-11

Section 5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in God the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, baptize, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, comforter, teacher and guide.
John 14:26; Romans 8:16; John 16:7-13

Section 6. THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is received by every believer at the moment he receives Christ; that the Holy Spirit gives leaders to the church to equip

believers for the individual ministries; and that every member is gifted by the Holy Spirit according to His will for the building up of the Body in love.
Romans 8:9, 26-27; I Corinthians 12; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-16

Section 7. SALVATION

We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by personal choice and therefore have a need to be saved from condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus by faith as their personal Lord and Savior are saved from condemnation, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, are declared righteous before God and are eternally secure by the grace and power of God. We also believe that those thus saved need no mediation other than Jesus Christ and can come directly to God through Jesus Christ. Romans 3:23-24; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 3:18

Section 8. SATAN

We believe that Satan is a spirit being, a fallen angel, the first created being to sin; he is the enemy of God and man and consciously strives to separate the two; and that he will suffer eternal, conscious punishment in the Lake of Fire.
Matthew 4:1-11; I John 3:8; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:10

Section 9. THE CHURCH

We believe in the universal church, a spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit of God. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.
Matthew 28:16-20; Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 12:27; Hebrews 10:24-25

Section 10. CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well being of his fellow men; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions, and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.
Matthew 5:16; Colossians 1:28; I Corinthians 15:58; Colossians 3:1-17

Section 11. THE ORDINANCES

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church; Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Biblical Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for the commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of Jesus Christ for His Church. Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 26:26-29; I Corinthians 11:20-34

Section 12. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that every human being is responsible to God alone in all matters in the practice of faith. Also, this church is independent and autonomous and will be subject to no other authority than God in its beliefs and practices of faith. We further believe that although church and state should be separate, the church shall always remain free to exercise its influence for Biblical morals and ethics.

Proverbs 14:34; Acts 4:19; Mark 12:17; Romans 13:1, 2

Section 13. CHURCH COOPERATION

We believe that local churches can promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperation with others of like faith. Such organizations exist and function by will of the church. Cooperation in any organization is voluntary and may be terminated at any time.
I Corinthians 12

Section 14. THE LAST THINGS

We believe in “that blessed assurance”, the personal and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His Church. We believe in the literal resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the everlasting joy of the righteous, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

John 14:1-3; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Acts 1:10, 11; Revelation 20

ARTICLE VI - STATEMENTS OF FAITH

A. Statement of Faith Regarding Marriage, Gender & Human Sexuality.

Because the Holy Bible speaks to the nature of human beings and their sexuality, it is imperative that we correctly understand and articulate what Holy Scripture teaches regarding these matters. As a Church, we are committed to the home and family as set forth in Holy Scripture, and it is our firm conviction that we should uphold the dignity of each individual as we embrace the unchanging and enduring principles of Scriptural truth. The Holy Bible sets forth specific home and family values, which include the distinct, but equally important, roles of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, and children.

Therefore, based on the infallible nature of the Holy Bible, the moral teaching of the Scriptures and the long-standing tenets of the Church as a body of Christ, we believe all of the following:

1. God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.
2. The Holy Scripture grants two life-enhancing options for human sexual behavior: (1) the conjugal “one-flesh” marital union of one man and one woman; and (2) celibacy. Either is a gift from God, given for His glory and for the good of those who receive and rejoice in His gift to them. Celibacy and faithfulness is to be celebrated and affirmed within the Church to the same extent as marriage (Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18, 21-24;

Matthew 19:4-6, 12; Mark 10:5-8; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9, 12:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; Hebrews 13:4).

3. The Church defines marriage as the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive and conjugal “one-flesh” union of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, with absolute marital fidelity, which was ordained by God as the basic family unit in furtherance of the moral, spiritual and public good, and which binds father, mother and child, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-9; Mark 10:5-9; Ephesians 5:31-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4).

4. God has commanded that sexual acts outside of a marriage between a man and a woman are prohibited as sinful. Therefore, we believe that any form of sexual immorality including, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, same-sex acts, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, polygamy, and the use of pornography, is sinful and offensive to God (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:7-23, 20:10-21; Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 15:18-20, 15:19; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:17-19; Colossians 3:5).

5. God created mankind in His image -- male and female, sexually different but with equal personal dignity. Consequently, Church members must affirm their biological sex and refrain from all attempts to physically change, alter or disagree with their predominant biological sex, including, but not limited to elective sex-reassignment, transvestite or transgender acts or conduct (Genesis 1:26-28; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

6. Church members must affirm the intrinsic sexual complimentary nature of man and woman and resist any and all same-sex sexual attractions and refrain from any and all same-sex sexual acts or conduct, which are intrinsically disordered (Genesis 1:27, 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:5-9; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-9, 21:2).

7. In order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to in writing, and abide by, this Article VI, including this Statement of Faith on Marriage, Gender, and Human Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

8. As Scripture expressly teaches us, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and should seek redemption through confession, repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. As a result, the Church believes that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Therefore, we believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Consequently, Church members should welcome and treat with respect and compassion all who experience same-sex attractions or who confess sexually immoral acts but who are committed to resisting sexual temptation, refraining from sexual immorality and conforming their behavior to the Church’s Affirmation of Faith as set forth in Article V and the Church Covenant set forth in Article IV of this Constitution

(Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 2:17-18, 4:14-16).

B. Statement of Faith Regarding the Sanctity of Human Life.

Because the Holy Bible speaks directly to God's creative acts and to His creation of human life, it is imperative that we correctly understand and articulate what Holy Scripture teaches regarding these matters. As a Church, we believe that God has created mankind in His image and that human life begins at conception. God, in his infinite sovereignty, uniquely formed human beings and gave them a special dignity, personal freedom and individual accountability among all of the works of creation. Human beings have been made for a relationship with God and to be good and faithful stewards of God's creation. God created each person's "inmost being," knitting each person together in his or her mother's womb. As God's individualized and personal creation, each person is fearfully and wonderfully made. God has ordained all of the days of each person's life before they came into being (Psalm 139:13-16).

Therefore, based on the infallible nature of the Holy Bible, the moral teaching of the Scriptures and the long-standing tenets of the Church as a body of Christ, we believe all of the following:

1. From the very moment of conception/fertilization, every human life is sacred because every human life has been created by God, in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1, 9:5-6; Psalm 22:10, 100:3, 139:13-16; Isaiah 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41-44; John 1:1-5; Galatians 1:15).

2. From the moment of conception until death, every human life must be recognized, respected and protected as having the rights of a person and as having the inviolable right to life. Human life is of inestimable worth in all of its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition of life from conception through natural death. Therefore, we are called by Holy Scripture to defend, protect and value all human life. (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1, 9:5-6; Exodus 20:13, 21:12, 14; Psalm 22:10, 100:3, 127:3, 139:13-16; Proverbs 6:16-17; Isaiah 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5)

3. The right to life and the physical integrity of every unborn human being is inviolable and inalienable -- it is not a concession made by a society or by government, but is instead inherent to the unborn human by virtue of his or her creation in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1, 9:6; Psalm 100:3, 139:13-16).

4. Because human life begins at the very moment of conception, it is against the teaching of Holy Scripture and our religious and moral convictions to -- in any manner, directly or indirectly -- cooperate in the termination of human life (Genesis 4:8-16, 9:5-6; Exodus 20:13, 21:12, 14; Deuteronomy 5:17, 30:15-20; Proverbs 6:16-17; Jeremiah 7:30-32; Ezekiel 23:36-39).

5. We are committed to the preservation and defense of unborn human life which compels our religious, moral and ethical duty to defend unborn human life from destruction, whether by surgical abortion or the use of drugs, devices or services that are designed to terminate the life of an unborn human (Genesis 4:8-16, 9:5-6; Exodus

20:13, 21:12, 14; Deuteronomy 5:17, 30:15-20; Psalm 82:3-4; Proverbs 6:16-17, 24:11-12; Jeremiah 7:30-32; Ezekiel 23:36-39; Matthew 7:12; James 1:27; 1 John 11-15).

ARTICLE VII - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. ADMITTANCE TO MEMBERSHIP

Any person wishing to become a member of this body shall express a willingness to abide by the Constitution which includes the Church Covenant and shall meet at least one of the following qualifications:

- A. **BAPTISM**
Confession of Faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Baptism by immersion in water.
- B. **LETTER**
By letter from another church of like faith and order.
- C. **STATEMENT**
Anyone unable to provide a letter but who gives satisfactory evidence to the Board of Elders of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and of Baptism by immersion in water if that Baptism was not construed to be necessary to salvation.
- D. **RESTORATION**
Any person who has been excluded from the membership of this church may be restored to membership by confession of his or her sin.

Section 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS (GOALS)

Members shall strive to live in accordance to the Church Covenant (see Article IV). The members of the church shall also strive to, among other things:

1. Attend regularly (Hebrews 10:24-25, Acts 2:42);
2. Pray consistently (Thessalonians 5:17, Romans 12:12, Colossians 4:2);
3. Live in community (1 Corinthians 12:12-31);
4. Submit humbly (Hebrews 13:17);
5. Preserve unity (John 13:35, Proverbs 19:11, Colossians 3:12-14);
6. Give generously (1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Cor. 9:7);
7. Serve faithfully (Romans 12:1, Ephesians 4:11-13); and
8. Pursue holiness (Romans 12:2).

Section 3. MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING

Members in good standing are those who strive to live in conformity with the Church Covenant, attends regularly the worship services of the church if physically able and contributes to the financial support of the Church as God has prospered them.

Section 4. RELEASE FROM MEMBERSHIP

All privileges and responsibilities of membership shall be retained by every member until membership is terminated in one of the following ways:

- A. Any member desiring to unite with another evangelical church may, upon request, be granted a letter of membership termination. All such letters shall be addressed and sent to a specific church.
- B. Members who assume a new permanent residence which makes fellowship with the church impractical shall have their names removed from the membership or transferred to associate member status upon decision of the Board of Elders.
- C. Members who desire to be released from membership shall present a written request for removal to the Board of Elders.
- D. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to ensure that an effort is made to contact members who have been absent from church for a period of one year, without manifesting interest by communication or contribution. After the Board of Elders has determined that these persons are no longer interested in the ministry of our church, these persons will be automatically dropped from the Membership Rolls. Members thus dropped will be listed by the Board of Elders at a regular church information meeting.
- E. Members who die will have their names removed from the church rolls by the Leadership Team.
- F. Members who fail to respond correctly to church discipline will be removed from membership, as outlined by Article VII, Section 5.

Section 5. DISCIPLINE

The procedure outlined by Christ in Matthew 18:15-20 shall be encouraged in all cases when one member detects sin in the life of another member. In summary, when sin is observed, a private meeting shall be arranged as soon as possible to lovingly confront the other member and to clarify the facts (Proverbs 18:17). If the other member refuses to listen, then one or two witnesses should be taken along to confirm the facts. At least one of these witnesses should be an Elder. Our desire is to keep the process of restoration in as limited a circle as possible, and to provide good counsel to the troubled member(s). All parties concerned shall express a spirit of gentleness and a desire to bear the burdens of the troubled members (Galatians 6:1, 2). If the accused member refuses to listen to the two or three, then the Board of Elders shall be informed. When all avenues of reconciliation have been exhausted, and no resolution has been reached, and the offending member is still unsatisfied, the offended member may request the Board of Elder to call a special meeting of the church members. The nature of this meeting is to allow the offended member(s) to speak and clarify their complaint. All members of the church are encouraged to attend this meeting and have the opportunity to speak as they feel led during the meeting. If the offended member fails to appear before the membership, the Board of Elders shall determine the action to be taken without their presence. The goal of this process is reconciliation and restoration. The Board of Elders shall determine any action to be taken against an offending member, which may include removal from church membership. Remember the goal is reconciliation and restoration (measured by a Biblical change of behavior) of all members involved. We are to pray for Gods wisdom and His solution to any conflict in our fellowship. Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:11-13; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; Titus 3:10-11.

Dismissed members may visit the church (unless there are extenuating circumstances involved) following the same rules as any non-member. They will in no way be considered a member of this fellowship until repentance is expressed to the Body.

Following reconciliation with all parties concerned, the individual may request membership in the church in accordance with Article VII, Section 1.

Section 6. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

A. RIGHTS

All members of the church, eighteen years of age or older, shall constitute the voting body of the church. Members of this church shall have no property rights and upon termination of membership, they shall be entitled to no interest in any of the church assets.

B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate membership status shall be available upon application for those retaining membership in other evangelical churches, but presently attending our church (i.e., missionaries and students). Associate members shall meet all qualifications for regular membership and shall have all the privileges and duties of regular members including consideration for Sunday school teaching and staff positions (interns, short-term missionary appointments, etc.), except they shall not have the right to be a candidate for Leadership or to vote in congregational votes.

ARTICLE VIII - ORGANIZATION

Section 1. PRINCIPLES

The work of this church shall be carried on by the members, led and equipped for ministry by the Pastoral Staff and Church Officers according to the pattern set forth in the New Testament.

Section 2. SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor shall fill the office of Pastor-Teacher as indicated in Ephesians 4:11-16.

Section 3. ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Associate Pastors may be called by the church to assist the Senior Pastor and will be accountable for the discharge of their pastoral duties to the Senior Pastor.

Section 4. CHURCH BOARD

The Board of Elders shall have complete responsibility for the administration of all the church business in accordance with the authority vested in them by the congregation and the State of Montana through this Constitution.

Section 5. OTHER OFFICES (i.e. Teams or Committees)

Such other offices and committees as may be necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church may be established and appointed by the Board of Elders provided they are not contrary to the Word of God or to this Constitution.

ARTICLE IX - QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. OFFICERS

Board of Elders

The Elders of the church shall appoint from among them, members to serve as Chairman of the Board, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. These officers shall serve as the Board of Directors and legal trustees of the Corporation in compliance with the laws of the State of Montana and they shall perform such corporate duties as are required. With prior instructions from the church, these trustees are authorized to buy, sell, mortgage or transfer church property, or borrow money for property purchase or improvements. They shall fulfill all Scriptural requirements and duties as outlined in the Constitution. These officers shall preside at Board meetings and meetings of the membership. The Chairman of the Board, Vice-Chairman and Secretary shall be elected annually by the Board of Elders. The election shall take place at the first Elder Board meeting after the Annual Business meeting and Elder Board annual ratification.

A. Chairman

The Chairman shall serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation. He shall report directly to the Board of Elders (Directors). He shall have authority of signature and authority to direct the day to day operation of Church staff and programs.

B. Vice-Chairman

Shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. He shall have authority of signature and report directly to the Chairman.

C. Secretary (Board of Elders)

Shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. He shall have authority of signature and be responsible for recording minutes of all Board meetings.

Section 2. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications of persons selected for spiritual leadership will be in accordance with Article XIII.

Section 3. DUTIES AND AUTHORITY OF CHURCH OFFICERS

All officers and board members must agree to support the services of the church and support the church's position doctrinally.

A. Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, perform all scriptural and necessary duties of his office, promote the spiritual interest, growth and evangelistic outreach of the church, develop the individual for his best possible service and administer the ordinances of the New Testament. The Senior Pastor shall have liberty of the pulpit and freedom of expression on scriptural matters. Senior Pastor can be full-time, part-time, permanent, or interim.

B. Elders

The Elder Board shall have complete responsibility for the administration of all the church business in accordance with the authority vested in them by the

congregation and the State of Montana through this Constitution. 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1.

- C. Deacons
Deacons shall be appointed by the Board of Elders and ratified by the church body each year in accordance with the selection criteria listed in I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13 and the ratification guidelines for Elders in Article XI, Annual Confirmation of Elders. Deacons shall perform functions as requested by the Board of Elders following the example of Acts 6:1-7.
- D. Treasurer/Financial Secretary
The Treasurer shall assure that payment of all church obligations has been made by check drawn on the church account, as provided by the church budget and the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements and shall be responsible to the Board of Elders and make additional reports as requested by them.
- E. Church Clerk/Secretary
Shall be appointed by the Elders and be responsible for recording membership, baptisms, marriages, funerals, and minutes of church membership meetings.
- F. Other Officers
All other officers shall be responsible to the Board of Elders and shall function as indicated in a written job description.
- G. Other positions as deemed necessary (to be appointed and/or hired by the Board of Elders) with prior instructions from the church body.

Section 4. TERMS OF OFFICE

- A. The Senior Pastor and Staff shall serve an indeterminate term unless otherwise specified.
- B. All members of the Board of Elders except the Senior Pastor shall be appointed by the Board of Elders for a term of three (3) years. Each individual Elder must receive a Seventy-Five percent (75%) vote of confidence by the voting membership annually. Refer to Article XXI regarding initial selection.
- C. The Board of Deacons shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, and shall be elected for an indeterminate term. Each deacon must receive a Seventy-Five percent (75%) vote of confidence by the voting membership annually.
- D. A leave of absence can be scheduled by the board for any members of the Elders or Deacons but ratification must take place at the annual meeting even during a leave of absence.
- E. All other officers shall be appointed annually. And the church body properly informed at the next informational meeting or at the annual informational report.

ARTICLE X - MEETINGS

At all business meetings, the church shall abide by the "Simplified Robert's Rules of Order" a copy of which are attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit "A" for reference.

Section 1. PUBLIC WORSHIP

- A. The stated meetings of this church for public worship shall be held on Sundays. Additional meetings will be at the direction of the Board of Elders.
- B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each month and Christian Baptism administered as frequently as there are qualified candidates.

Section 2. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. A QUORUM IS REQUIRED FOR ALL BUSINESS MEETINGS. A quorum is defined as at least Ten percent (10%) of the voting membership. The term voting member is defined in Article VII, Section 6A of this Constitution.
- B. All persons attending and participating in any meetings pertaining to the business of Grace Baptist Church are committed to conduct themselves in a civil manner, with dignity and respect afforded to all. In the event any person or persons are in violation of this commitment a) they will be reminded of the commitment; b) the meeting may be briefly suspended; or c) the meeting may be adjourned with a detailed report to the Board of Elders.
 - 1. The Annual Business Meeting shall be held no later than the end of February. The church shall operate under the last approved budget until the proposed budget is approved by the congregation.
 - 2. Special business meetings of the church may be held at any time by recommendation from the Board of Elders, the Senior Pastor or upon written request of a quorum of the membership after a Sunday worship service announcement and a seven (7) day waiting period.
 - i. Corporate (legal) Business:
At least Ten percent (10%) of the voting membership must be in attendance and a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those present will carry.
 - ii. Calling or Terminating of the Senior Pastor:
The Board of Elders shall recommend to the congregation the calling or termination of the Senior Pastor. At a regular or specially called meeting where at least Fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership is in attendance and a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those present will carry for calling or terminating a Senior Pastor.
 - iii. Annual or Special Meeting:
At least Ten percent (10%) of the voting membership must be in attendance and a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those present will carry.

Section 3. BOARD MEETINGS

All members of the Board of Elders shall be notified in advance of any board meeting.

ARTICLE XI - SELECTION AND APPOINTMENTS

Section 1. BOARD OF ELDERS

A. Elders

Those interested may submit themselves for consideration of Leadership indicated in I Timothy 3:1. The Board of Elders will invite an interested person to begin a period of examination. This may include study projects and/or meetings with a subgroup of Elders for personal examination. Subsequently, a unanimous recommendation from the Board of Elders is required to bring a prospective Elder to the church body for review, prior to installation by the Leadership Board.

B. Number of Elders

There shall be no minimum or maximum number of Elders, but rather the goal shall be to recognize only those whom God has called to have the ministry of leadership.

C. Duration of Elders

Service on the Board of Elders is limited in accordance with the provisions of Article IX, Section 4B. An Elder appointment may be terminated in one of the following methods:

1. Withdrawal of membership in Grace Baptist Church;
2. Voluntary resignation;
3. By simple majority vote of the Board of Elders; or
4. By negative vote equal to Twenty-Five percent (25%) of the total eligible voting membership.

D. Annual Confirmation of Elders

Annual confirmation of non-staff Elders shall be an order of business at every annual business meeting. Voting shall be by written ballot (yes or no) coded so that tellers (previously selected and not voting on this order) may count the ballots without knowledge of the names. Tellers shall report the results along with all comments, to the Senior Pastor immediately upon completion of their tabulations. The results of the ratification shall be announced in writing at the next Sunday morning service.

Any candidate that receives Twenty-Five percent (25%) or more negative votes of the eligible church membership shall be removed from office and not ratified. All comments or negative votes shall be reviewed with the candidate by the Elder Board and an appropriate plan of action determined.

Section 2. DEACONS

- A. The Board of Elders shall appoint those who meet the scriptural qualifications and who feel called to do the ministry of a Deacon as outlined in Article XIII, Section 4. The Board of Deacons shall, according to the number of qualified members available to serve in this capacity, strive to maintain a membership of at least seven (7) members with a maximum of one deacon per ten (10) church members.
- B. Duration of Deaconship
Service on the Board of Deacons is limited in accordance with the provisions of Article IX Section 4C. A Deaconship appointment may be terminated in one of the following methods:
 - 1. Withdrawal of membership in Grace Baptist Church;
 - 2. Voluntary resignation;
 - 3. By simple majority vote of the Board of Elders; or
 - 4. By a negative vote equal to Twenty-Five percent (25%) of the total eligible voting membership.
- C. Annual Confirmation of Deacons
Will be in conjunction with and follow the procedure of the Annual Confirmation of the Board of Elders as described in Article IX, Section 4, item C.

Section 3. APPOINTED OFFICERS

- A. Appointed officers shall normally serve for one year unless the purposes for which they have been appointed is completed earlier.
- B. Appointed officers shall be responsible to the Board of Elders or such person or groups designated by the Board of Elders.

Section 4. STAFF

- A. Staff Selection

The Senior Pastor and Staff shall be selected in accordance with Article XII, of this Constitution.
- B. Staff Acquisition and Support

The Board of Elders shall be responsible for hiring and releasing of all staff personnel other than the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall be informed and review the process to assure that hiring and releasing is in accordance with the vision and direction of the church. The salaries and benefits shall be fixed at the time of employment and shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Elders.

Section 5. Leadership Teams

- A. Purpose

All teams shall exist to serve the ministries of Grace Baptist Church. As the size of the church changes, and ministries are added and deleted, the composition and number of teams shall be adjusted to allow for the accomplishment of those ministries in the most efficient manner possible.

B. Task and Duration

All official church teams shall be appointed by and be responsible to Board of Elders and the Senior Pastor or their designated representative. At the time of appointment, a written statement of purpose, and authority and duration shall be given to the team.

C. Qualification

The participants of all official church teams shall be as stated in Article XIII, Section 5.

ARTICLE XII - SELECTION AND TERMINATION OF PASTORAL STAFF

Section 1. SENIOR PASTOR

I. SELECTION

The calling of a Senior Pastor shall be done in all cases by written ballot, by a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the voting members present after a unanimous recommendation by the Board Elders. A business meeting for this purpose may be held at any time after a Sunday worship service announcement and seven-day waiting period.

II. TERMINATION

1. RESIGNATION

The Senior Pastor may terminate his position upon thirty (30) days notification submitted in writing and in person to the Board of Elders. The notification will then be presented to the church body.

2. TERMINATION OF THE SENIOR PASTOR

A. By initiation of the congregation: All action to dismiss the Senior Pastor shall be referred to the Board of Elders for its consideration before action is taken by the church membership.

B. The Board of Elders shall be required to present to the church membership any written request for the dismissal of the Senior Pastor when signed by Twenty-Five percent (25%) of the voting membership of the church. Termination proceedings shall be by written ballot taken at a regular or specially called business meeting. A three-fourths (3/4) majority of the voting members present will carry the motion for dismissal (Article X, Section 2B).

C. By initiation of the Board of Elders: The Elders may present to the church membership a request for the dismissal of the Senior Pastor if all non-staff Elders

are unanimous in that decision. Termination proceedings shall be by written ballot taken at a regular or specially called business meeting. A three-fourths (3/4) majority of the voting members present will carry the motion for dismissal. (Article X, Section 2B).

D. Vote of Confidence

In the event the Pastor wins a vote of confidence from the church membership in such an election, all officers signing such petition mentioned above in Section 3C of this Article shall automatically relinquish their office.

Section 2. ALL OTHER PASTORAL STAFF

A. The Board of Elders shall recommend and hire staff. All hiring shall be done within the constraints of the Annual Budget approved by the congregation each year at the annual meeting. Such hirings and terminations shall be announced to the congregation in a timely manner no later than the next regular meeting or report.

B. REGISNATION

The term of any staff person may be ended upon thirty (30) days written notice of resignation to the Board of Elders and the Senior Pastor.

ARTICLE XIII - QUALIFICATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Section 1. SENIOR PASTOR

A. The Senior Pastor shall be an evangelical, born again male, ordained or licensed minister, sympathetic to and cooperative with the Converge Worldwide Conference and the Converge Northwest District, and possessing a vision encompassing the many opportunities for expansion in the ministry and outreach of this church.

B. He shall be a graduate of a recognized college or university and shall also possess a seminary degree or its equivalent in training and/or experience.

C. He shall meet the qualifications set for forth in Article XIII, Section 3 below.

Section 2. ALL OTHER STAFF

A. Shall have a dynamic faith in Jesus Christ as Savior with a vision encompassing the many opportunities for expansion in the ministry and outreach of this church.

B. Shall be sympathetic to and cooperative with the Converge Worldwide Conference and the Converge Northwest District.

C. Shall possess other qualifications essential to meeting the responsibilities stated in their job descriptions.

Section 3. Elders

All adult males presented to the church membership for the position of Elder shall be men who have accomplished a measure of success in, strive for, and are growing in each of the following qualifications, taken from I Timothy 3 and Titus 1:

- A. Above reproach (good reputation);
- B. Temperate;
- C. Prudent (sensible);
- D. Respectable;
- E. Hospitable;
- F. Able to teach and possess a teachable attitude;
- G. Not given to too much wine or other intoxicating or mind altering substances;
- H. Self-controlled;
- I. Not quick tempered;
- J. Not aggressive;
- K. Not arrogant;
- L. Gentle;
- M. Free from the love of money;
- N. One who manages his own household well;
- O. Good reputation with the unsaved;
- P. Love what is good;
- Q. Just (wise, discerning);
- R. Devout (becoming Christ-like); and
- S. Not a new convert (novice).

Section 4. DEACONS

All persons recommended for Deacon shall have accomplished a measure of success in, strive for, and are growing in each of the following qualifications, taken from I Timothy 3:8-10, and 12-13:

- A. Respectable;
- B. Sincere;
- C. Not given to too much wine or other intoxicating or mind altering substances;
- D. Free from the love of money;
- E. A clear conscience;
- F. Previously tested; and
- G. One who manages ones own household well.

Section 5. TEAM MEMBERS

The Senior Pastor or the Board of Elders (depending on the team) and their designated representatives shall select team members who are:

- A. Born again believers.
- B. Growing in their faith.
- C. Supporting Grace Baptist Church with their attendance, financial support and abilities.

ARTICLE XIV - FINANCES

Necessary finances for conducting the church business, its program and missionary outreach, shall be obtained through voluntary and regular giving. Additional pledges and free will offerings may be taken as deemed advisable by the Senior Pastor or Board of Elders. No entertainment, suppers, bazaars, auxiliary organizations nor other projects of a similar nature shall be held by the church for profit for meeting the operational budget of the church.

ARTICLE XV - CHURCH PROPERTY

Section 1. Ownership of Church Property

The real estate and assets of the Corporation shall belong to those that adhere to the Constitution of this church. In the event of division among the membership, the deciding body shall be the Board of Trustees of the Converge Northwest Conference and/or the Converge Conference. Our prayer shall be that we may "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" Ephesians 4:3.

Section 2. Use of Church Property

The real property and tangible personal property belonging to Grace Baptist Church (hereinafter "the Property") shall not be used for or to promote any political activity or agenda. Furthermore, the Property shall not be used for any event that would be considered promoting or supporting deviant or abnormal behavior as prescribed in Article VI of this Constitution.

ARTICLE XVI - AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. ESTABLISHMENT

No organization shall be formed, or considered a part of the church's activities unless the sponsors have first submitted their plans to the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders for sanction and approval.

Section 2. ONGOING ACTIVITIES

The various organizations shall confer with the Elders or their representatives regarding the plans and activities of auxiliary organizations.

Section 3. DISSOLUTION OF AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

If for any reason an organization of the church ceases to function, all monies and properties of said organization(s) shall become the property of Grace Baptist Church.

ARTICLE XVII - LIABILITY

No officer, Elder, staff member or any member of any team appointed by this church shall be personally or individually liable for any error or mistake, act or omission for, or on behalf of this church, occurring within the scope of his or her duty as such officer, Elder, staff member or committee member, excepting for his or her own willful misconduct or violation of the law.

ARTICLE XVIII - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any business meeting of the church by three-fourths (3/4) majority vote provided at least Fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership is present and voting. Such a meeting must be preceded by a Sunday worship service announcement and a seven-day waiting period.

ARTICLE XIX - DISSOLUTION

The term of existence of this Corporation shall be continuous without specific term of existence. The property of the Corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious, charitable or hospitable purposes, and upon the liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment of the Corporation, after providing for the debts and obligations thereof, its assets will not inure to the benefit of any private person, but rather shall be distributed as the existing membership directs to the Converge Northwest Conference and/or the Converge Conference or to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for religious and charitable purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986.

ARTICLE XX

This Constitution shall take effect as soon as the Senior Pastor approves with input from the fellowship and agreement by the Leadership Team (Transitional) as detailed in Article XXI.

ARTICLE XXI - INITIAL SELECTION OF ELDERS

The Senior Pastor shall appoint and chair a Transitional Leadership Team. The Leadership team shall function as the church board until Elders are chosen by the Senior Pastor. The church will choose the Board of Elders in accordance with this Constitution. Upon the selection of the Board of Elders, the Transitional Leadership Team will cease to exist and this Article XXI will be null and void.