

**Constitution and By-Laws  
of  
Grace Fellowship of Greensboro, Inc.  
Greensboro, Georgia  
Original Date of Approval: July, 2005  
Date as Amended: October 5, 2008**

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**Constitution**

**Article I – Name**

The name of this church shall be GRACE FELLOWSHIP OF GREENSBORO, INC. which is referred to as Grace Fellowship, or simply the Church in this document.

**Article II – Mission, Purpose, Core Values, and Basic Beliefs**

Section 1 - Mission

Grace Fellowship exists to glorify God by bringing people into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Purpose

The life and activities of Grace Fellowship center on the five Biblical purposes of the local church:

1. Worship – We were created to worship God. (Matthew 4:10 and Matthew 22:37)
2. Evangelism – We are commanded to share Jesus with the world. (Matthew 28:19 and Acts 1:8)
3. Discipleship – We are to study God’s Word to become equipped. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Ephesians 4:11-13)
4. Ministry – We are to minister to others through the sharing of what God has given us. (Luke 12:48b and Galatians 6:2)
5. Fellowship – We are a family of brothers and sisters in Christ. (Acts 2:44 and Ephesians 2:19-20)

Healthy church growth, both physically and spiritually, involves a balanced emphasis on all five purposes. These purposes should be under girded by prayer and fulfilled with excellence to the glory of God.

Section 3 – Core Values

The core values of Grace Fellowship express the distinctive calling of the church. They serve as a touchstone to which every member, every leader, and every team can continually return to insure that we are not losing focus on what really matters.

1. Lost people matter to God and therefore must matter to us. (Matthew 18:10-14; 28:19; Luke 15; 19:10; John 3:16)
2. An effective church needs to be both doctrinally pure and culturally relevant. (Acts 17:16-34; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Timothy 2:15)
3. Excellence matters because it honors God and inspires people. (Malachi 1:6-9; Colossians 3:23-24)
4. All healthy things grow and all growth involves change. (Luke 2:52; Ephesians 4:17-32; Philippians

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- 1:6; Colossians 1:9-14; Hebrews 5:11-14; 1 Peter 2:2-3)
5. God has called every Christ follower to be a full participant in the life of a local church and has uniquely gifted each one for that role. (Nehemiah 3; Psalm 133:1; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12 & 14; Ephesians 4:1-16)
  6. God does his greatest work through Spirit-filled people. (Acts 1:4-8; 2:17-21; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Ephesians 5:15-18; 2 Timothy 1:7)
  7. There is much we can do after we pray, but there's nothing worth doing until we pray. (Luke 18:1-5; John 14:12-14; 15:5-8; Colossians 4:2-4; James 5:13-18)
  8. Every Christ follower has a personal responsibility to take ownership for his or her own spiritual growth while we, as a church, have a responsibility to provide the inspiration, information and resources necessary for that growth to occur. (Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28-29; Philippians 3:12-14; Hebrews 12:1-2; 2 Peter 1:5-8)
  9. Love and community must permeate every aspect of church life. (John 13:34-35; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8; Hebrews 10:24-25)
  10. We have a God-given responsibility to link with other life-giving churches in order to be the eyes, ears, hands, feet and heart of Christ to those in our communities who need Him. (Isaiah 58:6-11; Matthew 25:31-46; John 17:20-23; 21:15-17; Ephesians 2:10; James 1:26-27; 2:14-17)

### Section 4 – Basic Beliefs

We believe in:

1. The Holy Scriptures as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Mark 13:31; John 8:31-32; 20:31; Acts 20:32)
2. One God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, 26; John 1:1, 3; Matthew 28:19; Romans 1:19-20; Ephesians 4:5-6)
3. Our Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His personal return in power and glory. (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30-31; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 1:4; Acts 1:11; Romans 5:6-10; Hebrews 7:25; 9:28; 1 Timothy 3:16)
4. The Salvation of lost and sinful man through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith apart from works, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 3:15; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 10:9, 28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3-25.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8, 14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5)
5. The Holy Spirit, the Giver of spiritual gifts to each believer, and by whose indwelling the believer is enabled and empowered to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ. (Genesis

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1:2; Judges 14:6; Psalms 51:11; 139:7; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10, 12; Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8, 14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17)

6. The Unity of the Spirit of all true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ. (Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; 4:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3)
7. The Resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15)

### **Article III – Ordinances**

Grace Fellowship recognizes both baptism and the Lord's Supper as ongoing acts instituted by Jesus. Neither of these acts is necessary for salvation, but both are acts of obedience and powerful symbols of our Christian belief. The Church practices baptism by immersion after a public profession of faith. The Lord's Supper is a lasting testimony to the loving sacrifice of Jesus. Grace Fellowship practices open communion; therefore, the Lord's Supper is open to all professing believers who are present regardless of church affiliation.

### **Article IV – Affiliation**

Grace Fellowship is a cooperating church in the Georgia Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. These relationships allow us to cooperate with like-minded churches in missions (locally, nationally, and internationally), Christian education through our colleges and seminaries, ministry to the needy, and other Christian causes.

### **Article V – Membership**

The membership of Grace Fellowship shall consist of persons who confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal savior; who give evidence of regeneration by living consistently with their profession and with the view of faith, doctrine and practices of this Church; who have received believer's baptism by immersion; and who have been received into its membership according to the By-Laws of this Church.

## **Article VI – Leadership and Organization**

Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the Congregation of the Church is the final authority within Grace Fellowship. This authority is exercised through the election of officers to govern the Church. However, the vote of the membership at a properly called meeting, as provided by the By-Laws, shall be required to effect the following actions:

1. Dismiss members from the Church roll.
2. Elect and remove officers of the Church.
3. Approve the annual budget of the Church, authorize expenditure of the funds of the church when such expenditure is not covered by an approved budget, and approve any transactions regarding real property.
4. Accept, reject, or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the Church by the Council of Elders.
5. Adopt, amend, or revise the Constitution or By-Laws of Grace Fellowship.
6. Approve the call, job description, and initial compensation and benefits of vocational pastors and vocational ministers.

The offices of the Church shall be Elder, Treasurer, and Clerk. The leadership of the Church shall be vested in the Council of Elders which is responsible for governing the Church, teaching the Word, and tending the flock of God in this Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.

In addition, Deacons shall assist the Council of Elders by performing services of assistance, administration, ministry, and implementation.

## **Article VII - Church Property**

In an event of a division of this Church, from which may God protect us, the property of this Church shall belong to that group which represents the largest portion of church membership providing that group remains loyal to this constitution. Otherwise, it shall belong to the group remaining loyal to this constitution though it may not be the largest group in such a division. Should any controversy arise as to whether such loyalty exists, the question shall be submitted to the Church-Minister Relations Department of the Georgia Baptist Convention for arbitration and their decision shall be final. If over time the name of this department changes, the arbitration shall be performed by the department charged with church-minister relations responsibilities at the time the need arises. Both the issue that is being arbitrated and the decision of the arbitration shall be in writing.

Should a condition arise at any time in the future when for any reason, the Church work cannot continue, the Church property shall be transferred to the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. If over time the name of the North American Mission Board changes, the property will be transferred to the agency of the Southern Baptist Convention that is responsible for church planting within the United States.

### **Article VIII - Revisions and Amendments**

A request for an amendment or revision to this Constitution may be made in writing by a resident member for consideration by the Council of Elders. In addition, revisions and amendments to this Constitution may be introduced through a written motion at any quarterly meeting by any resident member, but shall not be acted on until the next quarterly meeting. An oral notice of any proposed amendment shall be made on the two Sundays preceding the meeting where the amendment will be addressed and a written notice shall be sent to each resident member at least one week in advance of the meeting. Acceptance of an amendment requires a two-thirds vote of approval by the resident members present with at least twenty-five percent of the resident membership present.

Article II and Article VIII of this constitution shall not be repealed, amended nor revised.

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## **By-Laws**

### **Article I – Membership**

#### Section 1 – General

The membership of the Church shall be comprised of persons who have given evidence of regeneration through faith in Jesus Christ, who have been baptized by immersion, who have subscribed to the Basic Beliefs outlined in the Constitution, and who have completed the *Beginning with Grace* membership class. All actions regarding membership, either admission or dismissal, shall be by recommendation of the Council of Elders. An individual is considered a Candidate for Membership until the above requirements have been satisfied as determined by the Council of Elders.

#### Section 2 – Receiving of Candidates for Membership

Individuals requesting membership in Grace Fellowship may be received as Candidates for Membership in one of the following ways:

1. By making a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and requesting believer's baptism by immersion.
2. By transferring their membership from another Baptist church, or a church of like faith, where they have publicly made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and been baptized by immersion.
3. By statement of previous public profession of faith in Jesus Christ and baptism by immersion when a letter of transfer of membership from another church cannot be obtained.
4. By statement of previous public profession of faith in Jesus Christ and request for baptism by immersion.

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### Section 3 – Associate Member

Members of other churches who reside in our area on a part time basis can be received as Candidates for Associate Membership in the same way that members are received as delineated in Section 2 above. A Candidate for Associate Membership must meet all the requirements stipulated in Section 1 above before he or she can become an Associate Member as determined by the Council of Elders. Associate Members may participate in all ministries and activities of the Church and serve in all areas except that of Elder, Deacon, Treasurer, or Clerk. An Associate Member does not have voting privileges in Church business meetings. By written request and approval of the Council of Elders the Associate Member may become a Member.

### Section 4 – Dismissal of Members

Members names shall be removed from the roll upon receipt of notice of death, transfer to another church, or a request by the church member. Dismissal as a result of disciplinary action or dismissal due to inactivity after review by the Council of Elders shall require approval of the Church in a business meeting.

### Section 5 – Discipline of Members

Confronting sin is a loving responsibility of each member of Grace Fellowship. Discipline is an act of love for the member, and the objective of discipline is to redeem and restore broken relationships. It is important to confront sin when it occurs within the body in order for individual believers and the church as a whole to continue to grow in their Christ-walk and bring Honor and Glory to His name. This discipline shall be guided by a spirit of prayer mingling Christ-like kindness, forbearance, and holy firmness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If a member of the Church (including pastoral staff) is found to be living in sin or teaching contrary to the Word of God and has not repented of his or her way after being lovingly confronted by a member of Grace Fellowship, the confronting member should approach the Council of Elders and request its involvement. Once the Council of Elders receives a request it will:

- a) Pray earnestly, guided by the Holy Spirit in addressing the issue;
- b) Confirm that the action is continual and willful sin according to the Scriptures;
- c) Confirm that the believer is indeed involved in the sin;
- d) Assign an Elder to confront the believer in love with the goal of genuine repentance and turning from the sin; and
- e) If this action is not successful then the process provided in Matthew 18:15-17 will be followed until the member either repents and is restored or is dismissed from membership in Grace Fellowship.

### Section 6 – Privileges and Responsibilities of Membership

Each member of Grace Fellowship has the privilege to:

1. Be a part of a community of believers who love and care for one another,
2. Join with one another to make a difference in the world,
3. Be in an environment that will encourage spiritual growth and provide opportunities to fulfill God's purpose for his or her life,
4. Seek God's will and to vote on issues critical to the Church's future, and
5. Serve in positions of leadership and/or ministry.

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Each member of Grace Fellowship has the responsibility to:

1. Protect the unity of the Church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, and by following godly leadership,
2. Share the responsibilities of the Church by praying for its growth, by inviting the unchurched to attend, by warmly welcoming those who visit, and by intentionally sharing his or her faith with others,
3. Serve the ministry of the Church by discovering one's gifts and talents, by being equipped by the Elders to serve, and by seeking to develop a servant's heart, and
4. Support the testimony of the Church by attending faithfully, by living for God's glory, and by giving regularly and cheerfully of time and income.

### **Article II – Church Government**

#### Section 1 – General Statement

Clerk and Treasurer – The Church upon recommendation by the Council of Elders shall elect members to the positions of Clerk and Treasurer as specified in Article II, Section 3. The Elders shall provide a written description of the duties of the Clerk and Treasurer. In addition, at the discretion of the Elders, an Assistant Treasurer may be brought to the church for affirmation. Even though the individual holding the position of Assistant Treasurer is not an officer, the affirmation process will follow the procedure for affirming the Treasurer as described in Article II, Section 3. The duties of this position will be documented by the Elders.

Clerk and Treasurer – The Church upon recommendation by the Council of Elders shall elect members to the positions of Clerk and Treasurer as specified in Article II, Section 3. The Elders shall provide a written description of the duties of the Clerk and Treasurer.

Deacon – The position of Deacon is one of servanthood and is not a governing authority within the church.

Teams and Appointees – The Council of Elders has the authority to create teams and positions to which it may delegate any specific aspect of its responsibility. The Council of Elders has the authority to dissolve any team or any position not established by these By-Laws. The Council of Elders also has the authority to appoint Elders, Deacons, or other members or regular attendees of the Church to serve as members of such teams and to act as agents in such positions. The Deacons may nominate candidates for any team or position, with appointment by the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may delegate to the Deacons the authority to appoint members of the Church or regular attendees to serve as members of such teams and to serve as agents of the Council of Elders in such positions. Each team shall have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the team, who shall be appointed by the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may delegate the responsibility for selecting the chairperson to the Deacons or to the team.

#### Section 2 – Vocational Pastors and Vocational Ministers

Definition - Vocational Pastors are ordained ministers of the gospel who have answered God's call for full-time vocational service to the ministry. Ordination is reserved for vocational Pastors only. Vocational Ministers are ministers of the church who, in response to God's call, serve the Church as their primary vocation. Vocational Pastors and vocational Ministers are supported financially by the Church in return for

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their vocational labors. The Senior Pastor is the principal preaching and teaching Elder. The other Pastors may become Elders as discussed in Article II, Section 4.

Duties – Vocational Pastors and Ministers shall perform the duties determined by the Council of Elders and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes must be approved by the Church. The Senior Pastor is an Elder and he and any other vocational Pastor who is called to serve as an Elder must have the Biblical qualifications of an Elder.

Vocational Call by the Church – The members shall call vocational Pastors and Ministers by ballot upon recommendation of the Council of Elders and by at least a two-thirds vote of the resident members present with at least twenty-five percent of the resident membership of the Church present. Oral notice of any such meeting shall be given in a regular service of worship on the two Sundays preceding the meeting. In addition, notice shall be given by mail to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

Reaffirmation of Pastors and Ministers - Vocational Pastors and Ministers shall stand for reaffirmation not earlier than one year nor later than three years following their call as determined by the Council of Elders. Reaffirmation shall be by two-thirds vote of the resident members present at the meeting with at least twenty-five percent of the resident membership of the Church present. Oral notice of any such meeting shall be given in a regular service of worship on the two Sundays preceding the meeting. In addition, notice shall be given by mail to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

Termination of Vocational Call by the Church – The termination of a vocational Pastor or Minister shall be by resignation, grievance, lack of reaffirmation, or request by the Church. The Elders shall immediately act upon the receipt of a resignation tendered by any vocational Pastor or Minister. In the case of a grievance, the procedure outlined in Article I, Section 5 shall be followed. In the event a vocational Pastor or Minister fails to be reaffirmed, as stipulated in the preceding paragraph, the Elders shall begin the process of termination. The vocational Pastor or Minister has two weeks in which to notify the Elders of a desire to appeal the action to the Church. If an appeal is requested, a special business meeting will be called by the Elders for the appeal to be heard by the Church. A two-thirds vote of the resident members present with at least twenty-five percent of the resident membership of the Church present shall be required to reverse the action taken to terminate the Pastor or Minister. In addition, for other reasons not associated with a lack of reaffirmation, a request for termination can be brought to the Church by the Elders at a quarterly meeting or a special business meeting. The vocational call shall be terminated only if supported by a two-thirds vote of the resident members present with at least twenty-five percent of the resident membership of the church present. Oral notice of any meeting that addresses the termination of a Pastor or a Minister shall be given in a regular service of worship on the two Sundays preceding the meeting. In addition, notice shall be given by mail to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

### Section 3 – Lay Officers

Definition – Lay officers are the Elders who are not vocational Pastors, the Treasurer, and the Clerk of the Church.

Duties- Lay Elders have the duties of their offices as described in Section 4 below. The Treasurer has the duties of the office as described in Article IV below in addition to the duties delineated in the job description developed by the Council of Elders. The Clerk's responsibilities will be determined by the Council of Elders and will ensure that the legal requirements for creating and keeping church records are met.

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Calling – The Council of Elders shall interview and investigate candidates for lay Elder, Treasurer, and Clerk. Individual members of the Church may nominate candidates or present themselves to the Council as candidates for these positions and for the Council’s further investigation.

The Council of Elders shall present a ballot of candidates for calling or reaffirmation as Elders, Treasurer, and Clerk to the congregation at the Church’s quarterly business meeting during the fourth quarter of the fiscal year. The Council of Elders may also present candidates for election to these positions at any regular or special meeting, provided the meeting is announced in a regularly scheduled worship service the two Sunday’s preceding the meeting and a written notice is mailed to the resident membership at least one week in advance of the meeting. Those called or reaffirmed shall assume their duties at the beginning of the next fiscal year or immediately if the position being filled is one that has been vacated before the term has been completed.

Lay Elders shall be called by the Church for a normal term of three years. Lay Elders shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. Following their service in office, they will not serve actively as an Elder for a period of one year. For purposes of this provision, a term during which an Elder serves not more than one year shall not be considered a term in office. Calling or reaffirmation of a lay Elder shall be by two-thirds vote of the resident members present at the meeting.

The Treasurer and the Clerk shall be called by the Church for a normal term of three years and shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. Following their service in office, they will not serve actively in the office they vacated for a period of one year. For purposes of this provision, a term during which the Treasurer or Clerk serves not more than one year shall not be considered a term in office. Calling or reaffirmation of the Treasurer or Clerk shall be by two-thirds vote of the resident members present at the meeting.

All eligible lay Elders, the Treasurer, and the Clerk will be reaffirmed annually.

Removal - Any officer may be removed by resignation, grievance, or lack of reaffirmation. An officer may resign at any time if the officer can no longer discharge the duties of the office. The resignation should be in writing to the Council of Elders. In the case of a grievance, the procedure outlined in Article I, Section 5 shall be followed. If an officer stands for reaffirmation and fails to be reaffirmed, the officer shall be removed from office. Removal from office by this means shall not be considered a disciplinary action.

### Section 4 – Council of Elders

Composition – The Council of Elders shall be composed of men. There shall be at least three members with a maximum number of fifteen, with the number of Elders at any time being determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder with the chief responsibility of teaching and preaching. After a pastor’s reaffirmation (Article II, Section 2) any other vocational Pastor of the Church can become a member of the Council upon recommendation of the Council of Elders and a two-thirds vote of the resident members present at a Church business meeting. There shall be at least twice as many lay Elders as there are vocational Pastors serving as Elders. The call, affirmation, and term of the Elder shall be as stipulated in Section 3 above.

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

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

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

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

### Section 5 – Deacons

The Church shall elect Deacons to serve on a Deacon Team for a normal term of three years. A Deacon shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. Following their period of service, they will not serve actively for a period of one year. For purposes of this provision, a term during which a Deacon serves not more than one year shall not be considered a term of service. Calling or reaffirmation of a Deacon shall be by recommendation from the Council of Elders to the Church in a business meeting and shall require a two-thirds vote of the resident members present at the meeting. All eligible Deacons will be reaffirmed annually.

Number – The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and the call and qualification of members in the Church.

Qualifications –Deacons shall be qualified for office as specified in 1 Timothy 3:8-12.

Responsibilities – The Deacons are servants and shall be ready to assist the Elders in any service that will support and promote the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Their responsibilities may include: administering funds to assist the poor and needy and otherwise providing aid in times of crisis and distress; providing for the greeting and welcoming ministries of the Church; assisting in administering the ordinances of the Church; caring for and maintaining the church properties; and ensuring that the ministries of the Church, as approved in the Church budget, are effectively performed.

Removal - Any Deacon may be removed by resignation, grievance, or lack of reaffirmation following the same procedures as that of lay officers in Article II, Section 3.

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Organization – The Deacon Team may organize itself however it determines to be best to coordinate ministries and achieve the mission of the Church. The Deacons, or the Elders, may designate any specific individual or group of individuals within the Deacon Team to specialize in any or all Deaconal functions. Meetings of the Deacons, or subgroups thereof, shall be held as needed to best fulfill their responsibilities.

### **Article III – Church Employees**

In addition to vocational Pastors and Ministers, the Church may employ additional personnel. The moneys for such personnel must be approved by the congregation at a properly called business meeting. The Council of Elders shall be responsible for determining the duties and hiring of such personnel.

### **Article IV – Church Finances**

It is understood that membership in this Church involves regular financial contributions to support its mission and ministries. Each member shall be encouraged in Scriptural giving with tithing as the minimum.

The receiving, overseeing, and safeguarding of all funds donated to the Church shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer. Other members or Church Employees may assist in discharging this responsibility as approved by the Council of Elders. Accounting practices as prescribed by the Elders shall be employed by the Treasurer and the accounting personnel of the Church. All contributions will be accepted and disbursed in accordance with the laws of the nation and as required to maintain the Church's tax exempt status. In addition, on behalf of the Church and as required by the Internal Revenue Service, the Lay Elders have the authority and responsibility to examine, and, if found appropriate, to approve the housing allowance allocation for Vocational Pastors and Vocational Ministers. This shall be accomplished each year prior to the issuance of the first paycheck for the applicable calendar year. The Church has the right to refuse any contribution, and no fundraising shall be entertained which is in conflict with the Scriptural ideals of the Church.

The financial planning of the church shall be carried out by means of an annual budget. The annual budget shall be adopted by the Church upon recommendation of the Council of Elders, or if authorized by the Council, the Deacons or another team. The proposed budget shall be provided to the Church membership in advance of and shall be approved at a business meeting in the first month of the fiscal year. In the period of time between the end of the fiscal year and the approval of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year the Treasurer has the authority to continue spending at a level that is consistent with the previous year's approved budget.

Each year the Council of Elders shall appoint a team of three members to do an internal audit of the finances of the church. The name of one of the team members will be provided by the Deacons. Upon the team's recommendation and the Elders concurrence the Elders will seek the Church's approval for the expenditures necessary to perform an external review.

The Chairman of the Council of Elders, the Treasurer, and the Clerk are the only officers who have authority, in accordance with these By-Laws, the Church Constitution, and any applicable laws, to execute legal documents relating to real estate, church property, and church finances. At least two out of three

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signatures are required to execute these documents. Additionally, this team of officers shall designate the bank where the funds of the church shall be deposited and identify who has check writing privileges.

### **Article V – Meetings**

#### Section 1 – For Worship

A worship service shall be regularly scheduled on Sundays. Other services may be held at times and places as determined by the Council of Elders. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated as scheduled by the Council of Elders. Baptismal services will be conducted as needed to celebrate with those making decisions for Christ.

#### Section 2 – For Business

All resident members are encouraged to communicate regularly with the Elders and to provide them with suggestions and/or observations. The Elders will seriously consider all recommendations and, where appropriate, report on them at future business meetings. Any item that a member desires to be placed on the agenda of a business meeting should be provided in writing to the Elders at least one month in advance of a scheduled business meeting in order to provide the Elders time to determine the appropriateness of including the item on the agenda.

The Elders are required to address any issue or request that is brought to them in writing by any ten or more members. The Elders may elect to act upon the request and so notify the requestors. If the Elders determine that the request requires further discussion with the Church or if the request is for a motion to be brought to the church for a vote, the Elders will do so in the next quarterly business meeting or in a special business meeting called within ninety days of receipt of the request.

Annual Meeting - An annual meeting shall be held during the two months following the completion of the fiscal year of the Church. The fiscal year of the Church shall be determined by the Council of Elders. The annual meeting is for the review of the ministries of the previous year and preview of the plans for the upcoming year, and for other appropriate business.

Quarterly Meeting – Quarterly meetings of the Church shall be held within the first month of each quarter of the fiscal year. If the annual meeting is held in the first month of the new fiscal year it may be combined with the quarterly meeting that is scheduled for that month.

Special Meetings – The Council of Elders may call a special business meeting at anytime during the year. Notice of the meeting shall be given in a regularly scheduled worship service the two Sundays preceding the meeting and a written notice shall be sent to all resident members within a week of the meeting. The oral and written notice shall clearly state the purpose of the meeting.

Quorum – Any number of resident members shall constitute a quorum at business meetings of the Church except at meetings dealing with particular matters stipulated in these By-Laws where the quorum prescribed shall apply.

Rules Governing Business Meetings – The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all business meetings of the Church. Seeking the Lord's wisdom and blessing through thankful

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prayer shall be a part of every meeting. Unless otherwise stated in these By-Laws a simple majority of resident members present is required to carry a motion.

Notice Provisions – Unless specifically defined in other parts of these By-Laws or the Constitution, “resident member” means those members who reside within 75 miles driving distance of the Church building and who are regular attenders of its services and regular contributors to the church financially; “notice . . . in writing” or “written notice” means a written announcement sent by regular U.S. mail or electronic mail; and a “notice . . . in a regularly scheduled worship service” means an oral announcement at a Sunday morning service.

### **Article VI – Organization of Members for Ministry**

Members of Grace Fellowship are encouraged to participate in ministries and have the liberty to organize themselves for ministry, providing that such participation does not conflict with Article II of the Constitution. Any organization may seek church sanction from the Council of Elders as an official ministry of Grace Fellowship. Such sanction shall be granted provided that 1) the object, purpose, belief, and conduct of the organization and its members are consistent with Article II of the Constitution, and 2) the primary officers of the organization are resident members or regular attendees of the Church. Sanction by the Council of Elders does not necessarily imply support of the organization by the Church with personnel, finances, or facilities.

The word “team” when used in these By-Laws is a group of members and/or regular attendees who are appointed to accomplish a specific task or group of tasks.

### **Article VIII – Revisions and Amendments**

A request for an amendment or revision to these By-Laws may be made in writing by a resident member for consideration by the Council of Elders. In addition, revisions and amendments to these By-Laws may be introduced through a written motion at any quarterly meeting by any resident member, but shall not be acted on until the next quarterly meeting. An oral notice of any proposed amendment shall be made on the two Sundays preceding the meeting where the amendment will be addressed and a written notice shall be sent to each resident member at least one week in advance of the meeting. Acceptance of an amendment requires a two-thirds vote of approval by the resident members present with at least twenty-five percent of the resident membership present.

For GRACE FELLOWSHIP OF GREENSBORO, INC.:

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James O. Meadows  
TRUSTEE (Treasurer)

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Robert C. Christian  
TRUSTEE (Deacon Chairman)

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Gerald W. Torbert  
TRUSTEE (Clerk)

## Grace Fellowship Constitution and By-Laws

I certify that this constitution and by-laws document was adopted in church conference this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2005 by a vote of \_\_\_\_ aye and \_\_\_\_ nay, and amended in church conference on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2007 by a vote of \_\_\_\_ aye and \_\_\_\_ nay.

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John T. Demarest, Jr. (Moderator)