

Grace Redeemer Community Church
Constitution Adopted July 21, 2012
Amended January 29, 2017

Article 1: Organization

1. **Form of Government:** The members of Grace Redeemer Community Church through the leadership of the Senior Pastor and elected Elders, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, shall determine the programs and policies of this Church. The congregation will vote on the following important issues: 1) calling or termination of the Senior Pastor 2) selection and termination of elders, 3) the annual budget, 4) major facilities and property decisions including purchase or sale of real estate, and 5) amending the Constitution. All other organizational, administrative, and ministry decisions are delegated to the Senior Pastor, Elders and Deacons.
2. **Qualification of Pastors, Elders and Deacons:** Any person who accepts any of the offices or positions defined in this Article, or who serves in any capacity shall, upon acceptance, give unreserved acceptance of the doctrinal statement and shall commit themselves unreservedly to the peace and harmony of the church.
3. **Structure:** There shall be two primary Boards:
 - A governing board: (the Elders)
 - A serving board: (the Deacons)
4. **Duties of Board of Elders:**
 - a. **Composition:**
 - i. The Board of Elders shall consist of a number of members determined by the Board itself, having not fewer than three (3) nor more than nine (9).
 - ii. The Elders shall nominate and vet prospective Elders and recommend their election to the congregation no later than two weeks before a called congregational meeting.
 - iii. Each Board member shall serve for a term of three (3) years, or such lesser period specified when elected. The terms shall be staggered to maintain continuity of the Board. A Board member may serve two consecutive terms with the approval of the existing Board and congregation. After a year sabbatical, an Elder may then return to the Board if approved by the current Elder Board and congregation.
 - iv. The Board of Elders shall be self-organizing. The various functions and areas of responsibility of the Elders shall be delegated among the Board members on an annual basis. A Moderator of the Board of Elders, other than the Pastor, shall be selected each year by the Board. He shall call meetings and preside over both the Board as well as Congregational meetings. An Elder can serve as moderator for no more than 6 years.
 - b. **Qualifications:** To qualify for the position of Elder, an individual shall exhibit the characteristics described in *1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9*. They shall be in agreement with the Doctrinal statement and shall have been an active participant

in the ministry of Grace Redeemer Community Church for at least two years. The new Elder shall be a member before completing his Elder ordination.

c. **Duties:**

The Board of Elders shall serve with the pastoral staff in ensuring the fulfillment of the Mission Statement of this Church. In doing so the Board shall:

- Ensure that the Bible in all its truth is accurately taught and applied throughout the church
- Elders will be assigned members of the body as their “flock” to provide ongoing contact and care and will update the Elder Board of areas of concern or need.
- Ensure that all pastors and paid personnel are hired, compensated, supervised, and discharged in accordance with Grace Redeemer Community Church policies. No other church staff member besides the Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Board of Elders.
- Act on behalf of and at the direction of the church in legal matters related to its duties as described herein in accordance with the law.
- Establish additional committees as appropriate.

d. **Actions of Elders**

The Elders shall try to act by consensus. However, the vote of a majority of Elders present and voting at a previously announced meeting at which a quorum is present shall be sufficient to constitute the act of the Elders unless the act of a greater number is required by the Constitution. The Moderator or Vice Moderator must be present. Moreover, two-thirds (2/3) of the board must be present. The meeting must follow standard parliamentary procedures. An Elder who is present at a meeting and abstains from a vote is considered to be present.

e. **Removal of Elders**

The Elders may recommend removal of an Elder. A congregational meeting to consider the removal of an Elder must be called with notice. The notice of the meeting shall state that the issue of possible removal of the Elder will be on the agenda. The Elder shall have the right to present evidence during the meeting as to why he should not be removed. At the meeting, the Elder Board shall consider possible arrangements for resolving the problems that are in mutual interest of the church and the Elder. The congregation must approve this recommendation for removal by a two-thirds vote of those present.

5. **Structure and Duties of the Board of Deacons**

Deacons are called according to Scripture and work under the authority of the Elder Board. Both men and women may serve as deacons/deaconesses. A Deacon will be appointed by the Elders and will serve for three years on the Board of Deacons. A Deacon’s term may be renewed at the discretion of the Elder Board, attempting to stagger terms for continuity of the Board.

Deacons, except as otherwise expressly provided herein, shall have charge of the temporal matters of Grace Redeemer Community Church, specifically, the Board of Deacons shall be responsible for:

- Holding in trust and caring for all tangible property of this church.
- Appointing such officers and committees for which it has administrative oversight as elsewhere authorized herein.

6. **Pastor**

- a. **Calling the Pastor:** The Board of Elders shall appoint qualified persons to the Pastoral Search Team. The Pastoral Search Team shall have at least one Elder and shall make recommendation to the Board of Elders. Once the Elders determine it has a man to recommend as a candidate for a call, the congregation shall be convened for a special business meeting. The recommendation will be presented with all the reasons for suggesting him as a candidate. The congregation shall then vote as to whether or not it desires to send the recommended candidate a call. If he receives three-fourths majority vote of the members present, the call shall be extended. If not, the matter goes back to the Elders and Pastoral Search Team.
- b. **The Senior Pastor** shall be a voting member of the Elder Board and shall meet biblical qualifications for Elder. He shall be responsible to & reports to the Elder Board. He shall not serve as an officer on the Elder board. Moreover, no other church staff may become the Senior Pastor of this church unless 1) the Senior Pastor recommends this and 2) the members approve this by a three-fourths vote.
- i. **Responsibilities:** The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the following:
- a. Preaching and teaching the Word of God and administering the ordinances of the church.
 - b. Equipping the body to do the work of the ministry
 - c. Exercising general leadership, administrative and pastoral oversight.
 - d. Caring for the members with the love of a shepherd
 - e. The Senior Pastor shall have the freedom to choose his pastoral staff with the advice and consent of the Elders.
- ii. **Termination and conflict resolution**
If at any time the relationship between the Pastor and the Church shall be deemed unsatisfactory, the Board of Elders shall meet with him and endeavor to resolve the matter. Both the Senior Pastor and the Elder Board are held accountable by Scripture and the congregation to make a good-faith effort to resolve any conflict. If the relationship continues to be unsatisfactory, the Board of Elders or the Pastor may bring the matter before the church. A meeting for such purpose shall be held, and all active voting members shall be notified by mail of such a meeting at least two weeks prior thereto. The Pastor or his chosen designee shall have the right to attend the meeting and to present his side of the matter. Two-thirds of the eligible voting members are required to declare the Pastor's position vacant.

Article 2: Membership

1. Requirements for Membership

- Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
- Agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of the Evangelical Free Church of America as stated at the end of the Constitution
- Baptism. "Believer's Baptism" (immersion) will be the normative form of baptism and shall be encouraged, although exceptions can be made at the discretion of the Elders.
- Not under discipline by another church
- Members under the age of eighteen are not voting members

2. **Procedures for Membership**

- Request for membership application
- Completion of required reading material (provided)
- Interview with an Elder(s)
- Signature of Church Discipline disclosure document

3. **Termination of Membership**

Membership in this church may be terminated by any of the following:

- Transfer
- Written request of the member
- Removal by discipline
- Removal by the Elders of any member who has been absent without justifiable reason for a period of over six months after three or more attempts to contact the individual have been made.

4. **Church Discipline**

a) Purpose: The holiness of God requires within the church, having as its aim the glory of God, the welfare, purity and edification of the church, and the repentance, restoration, and spiritual growth of the offender (*1 Corinthians 5:6-7; Ephesians 4:13; 1 Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 12:11*)

b) Authority: The authority to discipline comes from Scripture and is administered through the Elders. (*Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 6:1-2; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 3:10*)

c) Procedure: The Board of Elders shall be responsible for the discipline of any member whose life conduct is not consistent with the spiritual walk of the believer as set forth in Scripture. The Board shall proceed with due consideration for the spiritual welfare of both the member and the church. The purpose of discipline shall be restoration of the erring member and the purity of the church.

Article 3: Meetings

An Annual Business Meeting shall be held in the month of January at which the annual appointment of Elders shall be held and the annual budget approved. At least two weeks notice shall be given to members before the date of the annual meeting. Votes shall be cast by church members in good standing who are at least eighteen years of age. A written report of the ministries of the church for the preceding year shall be prepared and distributed in advance of the meeting.

Other Business Meetings may be called by the Elders. A two-week minimum notice shall be required before any Business Meeting. On the Sunday of the business meeting the congregation will be notified of the meeting at the beginning of the worship service. A description of the business matters to be considered at any such meeting must be included in the announcement of the meeting. Unless described in the advance notice, other items of business may not be discussed.

Article 4: Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the church by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Written notice of the proposed amendment must be given or mailed to each voting member at least one month prior to the meeting. Such meeting must be announced at the worship service on the two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.

Article 5: Dissolution

The corporation is not organized, nor shall it be operated, for financial gain or profit, or dividends to its members; it is organized solely for non-profit purposes. The property, assets, and net income of the corporation are irrevocably dedicated to religious purposes. In the event that Grace Redeemer Community Church is dissolved, assets shall first be used to pay any debts. Any remaining assets shall be given to the Texas/Oklahoma District of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

The Doctrinal Statement of the Evangelical Free Church of America

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus-Israel's promised Messiah-was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into

heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.