

# **GracePoint Community Church**

## **CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS**

Spring 2022

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# Articles

## Article 1: Name and Location

### Section 1.1: Name

The name of this church shall be GracePoint Community Church.

### Section 1.2: Location

The principal location of this church shall be North Andover, Massachusetts.

## Article 2: Purpose

### Section 2.1

The purpose of this church shall be to promote the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor and Christian education.

### Section 2.2

Believing that the Church of Jesus Christ is One Church, and is One Body, whose Head is Jesus Christ, this church is pledged to work with all who love the Lord Jesus and look for His appearance. To this end, GracePoint Community Church shall be constituted as an interdenominational church, wherein all of those who love Jesus Christ and desire to serve Him may join in one common effort. Those elements which have caused confusion and division in the past within the Church of Jesus Christ shall not be permitted to destroy the unity of the body. To this end, this church shall be sympathetic and tolerant in spirit with respect to those areas of fellowship with the body of Christ in which true men and women of the faith have held different points of view. The Statement of Faith (Article 3) to which this church adheres are those which find their expression in general in all of the great confessions of the true church of Jesus Christ.

### Section 2.3

To legally implement this purpose, this church is incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, so that duly authorized persons can, in the name of GracePoint Community Church, buy, sell, own, lease, mortgage or otherwise handle real estate or carry on any business transaction pertinent to the maintaining of this church.

## **Article 3: Statement of Faith**

### **1. The Bible**

We believe that the Bible, composed of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God.

We believe the Bible to be verbally inspired by God through human authors, inerrant in the original writings, and the infallible and final authority in faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Peter 3:15-16).

### **2. The Godhead**

We believe there is only one living and true God, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe (Gen. 1:1; Neh. 9:6; Psalm 103:19; Heb. 1:2-3, 11:3; Eph 1:11), perfect, infinite, and eternal (Matt. 5:48; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalm 90:2), and that he is unchanging in his being, purposes, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, love and truth (Jer. 32:17; Ex. 34:6-7; Isa. 6:3; Psalm 19:9; Mal. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:17; John 3:16; Heb. 6:17-18).

We believe in one true God eternally existing in three persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are equal in their Divine perfection and harmonious in the execution of their distinct offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption (Gen. 1:1-3; Matt. 6:9, 28:19; Mk. 1:9-11; John. 1:1, 5:17, 14:16-17, 15:26; Acts 5:3-4; Eph. 2:18).

### **3. The Father**

We believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. He is Father to his eternal Son, Jesus Christ, whom he raised from the dead, by and for his glory (Luke 10:21; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 2:9-11). He is also Father to all who are adopted as his sons and daughters through faith in Jesus Christ (Gal. 4:5-6; Eph. 1:5). He has made himself known to us through his Son, through the Spirit and through the Scriptures, and has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing (1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 1:3, 3:5; Heb. 1:1-3). He has sovereignty over us and affection toward us (John 3:16; Acts 17:24-28; 2 Thess. 2:16; 1 John 3:1). To God belong all glory and honor (Gal. 1:5; 1 Pet. 4:11).

### **4. The Son**

We believe that, in the fullness of time, the eternally pre-existent Son humbled himself and assumed human nature by being born of the Virgin Mary, thus uniting organically and indissolubly the divine and human natures in their completeness in the unique person of Jesus Christ (Isa. 9:6, Matt. 1:18-25; John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14).

We believe that God has provided redemption for humanity through the mediatorial work of Christ, who voluntarily offered himself on Calvary as a perfect sacrifice for sin, the just suffering for the unjust, bearing sin's curse, and tasting death for everyone (Matt. 20:28; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 2:9, 9:11-12; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:5-6).

We believe that on the third day he rose from the dead in the body, which had been laid in the tomb (1 Cor. 15:3-6). He ascended into heaven where he reigns at the right hand of the Father

and from where he performs the ministry of intercession. he shall come again, personally and visibly, to complete his saving work and to consummate the eternal plan of God (Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:23-28; Heb. 1:3).

## 5. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third eternal Person of the Trinity (Acts 5:3-4; Heb. 9:14). The Spirit was active in the creation (Gen. 1:2), empowered true prophets to deliver God's message (2 Pet. 1:21) and empowered the virgin conception of Jesus (Lk. 1:35). Since his advent at Pentecost his principal ministry is to reprove and convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8-11); to bear witness to the truth preached (Acts 5:30-32); to regenerate, baptizing those who repent of their sins and exercise faith in Christ into the body of Christ and seal them for God (John 3:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14; Titus 3:5); to instruct, comfort and guide them (John 14:16-18, 26, 16:13); to sanctify them (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1-2); and to empower them for life and service (Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:2, 9-14; 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 3:16).

## 6. Humanity

### *Our Creation*

We believe that human beings were created by a special act of God; that we were created in the image and likeness of God, possessing personality and innocence; that we were endowed with power of rational and responsible choice in view of moral ends; and that the purpose of his creation was to glorify God (Gen. 1:26-27; Isa. 43:7; Acts 17:24-28; Col. 3:10).

### *Our Fall*

We believe Adam and Eve were subject to trial in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15-17). Under trial, they lost their holy estate, were alienated from God and became depraved physically, mentally, emotionally, morally, volitionally, relationally and spiritually, by voluntarily transgressing his positive command and yielding to the enticement of Satan. In consequence of the literal act of disobedience, the entire human race was implicated as sinners suffering from holistic depravity and so has incurred spiritual death and is prone to everlasting punishment (Gen. 3:1-6; Isa. 64:6 Rom. 1:19-32, 3:9-20, 23, 5:12, 18, 6:23; Eph. 4:18; 1 John 1:8-10).

## 7. Salvation

We believe that salvation is wholly of grace (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5); being planned by the Father, provided for by the blood of the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:3-14; John 3:3-5). In justification the believer is absolved of his guilt and declared righteous in the sight of God (Acts 13:39; Rom. 4:4-5; 5:1, 9). In adoption the believer is constituted a member of the household of God (John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:14-17). In regeneration new spiritual life is imparted by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-6; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:4, 5). In sanctification this spiritual life is strengthened and developed increasingly (2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 10:14). In glorification this work will come to its perfect culmination in an ultimate and complete renewal of human nature (Rom. 8:29-30; 1 Cor. 13). Repentance and faith are essential attitudes to be found in any one person who rightly claims the blessing of salvation (Heb. 6:1-2), for they emphasize the fact that it is not through human merit of any kind but the grace of God that redemption is achieved (Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:8, 9).

## 8. The Church

We believe that the church invisible and universal is an organism composed of the redeemed of all ages (1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 12:22, 23). We believe that the church is manifest locally and visibly through companies of believers in Christ (1 Cor. 1:2), voluntarily joined together and organized for worship, instruction, equipping, observing the ordinances and fellowship (Acts 2:42-47; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Eph. 4:11-13; Heb. 10:19-25); that it is the duty of the church to give the Gospel as a witness to all people (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8), to build itself up in the most holy faith (Acts 20:32; Eph. 4:11-13, 16; Jude 20-21), and to glorify God (Eph. 1:11-12; 1 Peter 4:11).

## 9. Ordinances

We believe that Christian ordinances are outward rites appointed by Christ, not as a means of salvation, but as visible signs and seals of the facts and realities of salvation.

### *Baptism*

We believe that baptism by water is the public confession of Christ as Savior and Lord. It is a symbol of one's union, by faith, with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection, and, therefore, is to be administered, preferably by immersion, to those who have given evidence of faith in Christ as their Savior (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38-41, 8:36-39; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12).

### *The Lord's Supper*

We believe that the Lord's Supper should be observed by all believers in obedience to the command: "This do in remembrance of Me."; and symbolizes the death of Christ for the remission of our sins and our continual dependence upon him for our sustenance. It witnesses that mystical union of the believer with Christ (John 15). The union of believers around the Lord's table should be open to all who are in right relationship one with another, and with the Lord, (Matt. 26:26-30; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

## 10. Last Things

We believe that when the gospel is proclaimed to the whole world, the end of the age will come (Matt. 24:14, Rev. 7:9). Christ will descend from Heaven in the same manner he ascended (Acts 1:9-11), all people shall be raised bodily, that they shall be judged by God, and that the redeemed whose names are written in the book of life will enter into full possession of eternal bliss in the presence of God, and the unredeemed whose names are absent from the book of life shall be condemned to everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 1:11, 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:11-21:4).

## Article 4: Membership Covenant

### Section 4.1: Purpose of Membership

Believing that God's Spirit has drawn us to follow Jesus Christ and has led us to live in this area of New England, we joyfully and thoughtfully join in covenant with one another in the presence of God to be a local, tangible expression of the body of Christ.

We do so to magnify Christ together so as to present the uniqueness and glory of Jesus Christ to all who would look our way. We do so to grow strong in the grace of God and in our faith in Christ so as to experience the freedom and joy of becoming who God made us to be in his image. And we do so to impact our neighborhoods and world with the gospel unleashed by Christ through the cross so as to bring the realities of heaven to bear on earth in conversions to Christ, social justice for the poor and oppressed, and relational reconciliations between people.

### Section 4.2: Individual Declaration

Having received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, been baptized to profess such a faith, and being in agreement with the statement of faith without reservation, I unite with this church family to nurture my faith and spiritual life with Christ and commit myself to the best of my ability to do the following:

1. Participate in the Community by...
  - a) Attending Church Regularly (Hebrews 10:25)
  - b) Joining a small group at GracePoint, if possible (Acts 2:42-47)
  - c) Attending Business Meetings (Acts 6:1-6)
2. Protect the Community by...
  - a) Loving One Another (1 Peter 4:8)
  - b) Refusing to Gossip (Ephesians 4:29)
  - c) Resolving Conflict Quickly (Matthew 18:15-17)
  - d) Nurturing and Protecting the Children (Matthew 18:5-6)
3. Serve the Community by...
  - a) Serving Others in Ministry (1 Corinthians 12:7-11)
  - b) Praying for One Another (James 5:16)
  - c) Following and Supporting the Leadership (Hebrews 13:17)
  - d) Giving Generously in Support of the Ministry (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:7)
4. Spread the Community by...
  - a) Praying for the Lost (Colossians 4:2-4)
  - b) Living Out the Gospel Purposefully In Full View of the Lost (Mark 10:45; Colossians 4:5-6)
  - c) Proclaiming the Gospel to the Lost (Matthew 28:18-20)

### Section 4.3: Elder Declaration

Having been selected as a governing board member on the basis of my Christlike character by the church, I commit myself to lead to the best of my ability by doing the following:

1. Care for the Community by...

- a) Praying for Members' Needs (James 5:13-18)
- b) Tending to Members in Crisis (1 John 3:17)

2. Protect the Community by...

- a) Exercising Appropriate Discipline According to Scripture (Matthew 18:15-17)
- b) Safeguarding the Doctrine and Church Culture (e.g. mission and values) (Titus 1:9)
- c) Guarding Against False Teaching (Acts 20:28-31)

3. Follow Christ's Lead in Leading the Community by...

- a) Inviting Only People into Leadership who exhibit Christlikeness (Philippians 3:17)
- b) Listening to Scripture in Decision Making (2 Timothy 3:15-16)
- c) Praying for God's Leading in Leading Others (Acts 6:3-4)

4. Equip the Community by...

- a) Teaching (1 Timothy 5:17)
- b) Modeling (Hebrews 13:7)
- c) Empowering (Ephesians 4:11-13)

## **Article 5: Principles of Organization**

### Section 5.1

Recognizing that Jesus Christ is the head of this church and that the Lead Pastor and the Board of Elders, called by God, are the spiritual leaders of the church, they shall have the authority to organize, guide, and direct all church activities as described in the by-laws. This authority shall be in accordance with the Word of God and the Constitution and Bylaws of GracePoint Community Church.



## Section 5.2

The responsibility of the Elders shall be carried out through the following:

1. The Lead Pastor, including the pastoral staff and other employed personnel to carry on the various ministries of the church and serve the needs of the Body of Christ.
2. Office of Deacon.
3. Board of Elders' Committees.
4. Other committees as needed.

## **Article 6: Membership**

### Section 6.1: Membership

Membership in this church (Church Corporation) shall be composed of such persons who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and give evidence of a true Christian experience, affirming without reservation the views of faith and practice set forth in Article 3: Statement of Faith and Article 4: Membership Covenant.

### Section 6.2: Admission of Members

Membership into this church is by approval of the Board of Elders under the following conditions:

1. By being baptized as a believer, or giving evidence of a previous baptism as a believer, and giving a public confession of faith in and allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. And by meeting with an assigned group of Elders, giving witness of their faith in Christ, completion of the membership process, and being recommended to membership in GracePoint Community Church for final approval by the Elders, or
2. By reinstatement.

### Section 6.3: Separation of Members

The name of an individual may be removed from the official church roll under the following circumstances:

- 1) By death, or
- 2) By member's desire for separation. A member requesting a letter of separation or transfer will be given same upon recommendation by the Elders, or

3. By desire of the church members.

- a) Any member guilty of gross misconduct and having been admonished by the Elders and not evidencing real repentance, may be dismissed by three-fourths vote of the Elders.
- b) In keeping with their covenant to the church, when members move away, they are expected to unite with some other church. It shall be the responsibility of the Elders annually to communicate with all members from whom, following a period of one year after moving, this church has received no record of their having united with another church, to inquire concerning their membership status. If a second year elapses without such members having united with another church, the Elders may take action to remove such person(s) from membership. Such members will be notified in writing that their membership is terminated.
- c) The Elders shall review the church roll annually to determine the status of all members. Members who have been unjustifiably absent for six months from regular church services during the preceding year shall be interviewed by a pastor or by an Elder concerning the reasons for their absence and their membership status. If, during this interview, they indicate that they no longer desire actively to fulfill the duties of members, they shall be advised that they may request a letter of separation. If, after six months following this meeting, the members have not resumed an active status or have not requested a letter of separation, the Elders may take action to remove such person(s) from membership. Such person(s) will be notified in writing that their membership is terminated.

## **Article 7: Pastors and Staff**

### Section 7.1: Pastoral Qualifications

All pastors shall meet the biblical spiritual and character qualifications for the office as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and shall subscribe without reservation to the Church Covenant and Statement of Faith and accept the Constitution and Bylaws of GracePoint Community Church.

### Section 7.2: Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor shall be a male and shall report to and is responsible to the Board of Elders.

### Section 7.3: Lead Pastor Selection

When the position of Lead Pastor becomes vacant, the Elders shall appoint a Lead Pastor Search Committee which shall take the necessary steps to recommend a candidate for the pastoral office to the Elders consistent with the statement of qualifications as set forth in Section 7.1.

Upon a three-fourths vote of approval by the Elders, the candidate shall be recommended to the church members for approval. An affirmative vote by written ballot of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a duly called corporation meeting shall be necessary to extend a call.

Upon acceptance of a call, the Lead Pastor and spouse shall automatically become members of this church.

#### Section 7.4: Role of the Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor, under the authority of the Board of Elders, is responsible for preaching/worship ministries, providing vision for overall church policy, giving spiritual encouragement to its leaders, and for carrying out the operation of the church.

The Lead Pastor shall have one vote on the Board of Elders. The Lead Pastor shall serve as an ex- officio member of all other boards and committees of the church without vote, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

#### Section 7.5: Lead Pastor's Contract

The Elders shall have sole responsibility to enter into a contract for employment with the Lead Pastor. Once a pastor is selected and has duly executed the contract for employment as the Lead Pastor, the terms of the agreement shall become part of the records of the Minutes of the Board of Elders and shall remain confidential within that Board. The agreement may be terminated at the will of the Lead Pastor provided the Lead Pastor shall give at least 30 days notice to the Board of Elders or by will of three-fourths of the Elders and approval of two-thirds of the church members present at a duly called Corporation meeting called specifically for the purpose of voting on this issue.

#### Section 7.6: Interim Lead Pastor

If the need for an Interim Lead Pastor arises, the Elders shall be responsible for selecting and, upon a three-fourths vote of the Board of Elders, recommending a male candidate to the church members for approval. An affirmative vote by written ballot of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a duly called Corporation meeting shall be necessary to extend a call. Upon acceptance of a call, the Interim Lead Pastor and spouse shall automatically become members of this church.

#### Section 7.7: All Other Pastoral Staff

Other Pastoral Staff may be employed to assist in those duties which the Lead Pastor shall delegate. Pastoral Staff shall automatically become members of this church. Pastoral staff are not eligible to be members of the Board of Elders.

#### Section 7.8: Employment of Pastoral Staff

Additions to the Pastoral Staff as required to staff any pastoral role as described in Section 7.7 shall be made on recommendation to the Board of Elders from the Lead Pastor, or in his absence, upon recommendation from the Chair of the Board of Elders. All candidates shall require the approval of three-fourths of the Elders to be employed by the church. In addition, those positions deemed by the Elders to be at a senior level will also require an affirmative vote by two-thirds of the members present and voting at a duly called Corporation meeting.

### Section 7.9: Termination of Pastoral Staff

The employment of all pastors, with the exception of the Lead Pastor, may be terminated upon the recommendation of the Lead Pastor provided there is approval of three-fourths of the Elders.

### Section 7.10: Hiring and Termination of Non-Pastoral Staff

The lead pastor shall have the authority to hire and terminate non-pastoral staff.

## **Article 8: Boards, Officers, and Committees**

### Section 8.1

All elected officers and members of boards and committees shall be members of this church in good standing. Elected officers, board and committee members shall assume office on the day of their elections. Non-members may serve in such areas of ministry as may be permitted under policies and conditions established by the Elders. All nominees for church offices and committees shall be members.

#### 1. Elders

- a) Purpose. The Elders shall be the spiritual guardians of the church, its teachings and doctrine, and be responsible for the spiritual care, development, and protection of the church, according to the teachings of Scripture and the Constitution and Bylaws.
- b) Qualifications. Elders shall be male and must meet the spiritual character requirements as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Only one person from an immediate family may sit on the board. Elders are elected by a 2/3 vote of the congregation at a duly called meeting.
- c) General Responsibilities. The Elders shall teach the church, pray for the church, and assure the management of the activities of the church on behalf of the members.
  - 1) They will provide guidance and support to the Lead Pastor in his personal integrity, and the spiritual oversight and the administration of the total ministry of the church.
  - 2) They will approve the hiring and dismissal of the Lead Pastor and pastoral staff according to Article 7.
  - 3) They will oversee the office of Deacon.
  - 4) They will approve applications or removals from membership and assure scriptural administration of the ordinances of the church (i.e., communion, baptism).

- 5) They will approve objectives; budgetary and financial plans; and policies and programs.
- 6) They will assure the ministry conforms to the teaching of Scripture, these Bylaws, and the stated purposes of the church.

d) Administration.

- 1) A Chair and a Secretary of the Elders shall be elected by the Elders from their membership within four weeks after the annual meeting.
- 2) The Elders shall maintain an annual evaluation process to assess their own effectiveness including an evaluation of the Lead Pastor.
- 3) At least annually, the Elders shall conduct thorough strategic and operational reviews of the ministry to review goals, assess performance, and evaluate resource and ministry effectiveness and assure programs are consistent with church objectives.

e) Deacon Nominations.

- 1) The Elders will nominate individuals to the office of Deacon.
- 2) The slate of nominees for deacon shall be posted to the congregation not less than 60 days prior to the annual meeting. Within the next 30 days, any member of the congregation knowing of reasons why a nominee is not biblically qualified shall give such evidence to the Elder board for consideration.
- 3) The slate of nominees shall be submitted to the congregation for ratification.

f) Number. The Elders shall consist of the Lead Pastor and at least three elected from the membership who meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The term of the office for elected Elders shall be three years. Any elected member who has served as an Elder for six consecutive years shall not be eligible for reelection to the same office for at least two years. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members.

g) Organization. The Board of Elders shall appoint Committees as needed to assist in the effective carrying out of the responsibilities stated in this Article. The Committees are responsible for bringing their recommendations for approval or other action, as appropriate, to the full Board of Elders.

## 2. Deacons

- a) Purpose. The Deacons shall be responsible for the physical care and oversight of the church and its members.
- b) Qualifications. Deacons shall meet the spiritual character requirements as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and shall be open to both men and women. Deacons are elected by a 2/3 vote of the congregation at a duly called meeting.
- c) General Responsibilities. Deacons will engage in activities that free up the Elders to oversee, teach and pray, according to Acts 6:1-6. Under the leadership of the Elders, they will assist in the care and leadership of the church by providing physical support in key areas of ministry. As such, they will exercise delegated authority in their respective realms of ministry responsibility, reporting to the board of Elders.

Deacon responsibilities may include:

- 1) Mercy ministry: The physical care of our members and the disbursement of the benevolence fund.
  - 2) Facilities: The purchase and maintenance of capital and other equipment and the responsibility for upkeep and maintenance of church facilities.
  - 3) Finances: The planning, disbursement and expenditure of finances.
  - 4) As determined by the Elders in accordance with the needs of the church.
- d) Number. The Deacons shall consist of at least three elected from the membership, assuming individuals who meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-12 can be found. The term of the office for elected Deacons shall be three years. Any elected member who has served as a Deacon for six consecutive years shall not be eligible for reelection to the same office for at least one year. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members.

## 3. Elder Nominating Committee

- a) The Elder Nominating Committee shall consist of:
  - 1) At least one Elder appointed by the Board of Elders, one of whom will serve as chair.
  - 2) Two to four at-large members of the congregation elected by the congregation at the annual meeting.
- b) The Elder Nominating Committee shall serve a term of one year. No member of the Elder Nominating Committee shall be eligible for nomination to office.

- c) Active members of the congregation who wish to suggest nominees for offices and committees called for within the Bylaws may submit names to the Elder Nominating Committee 120 days prior to the annual business meeting. The committee shall consider the qualification of the suggested nominees and any additional nominees suggested by the committee.
- d) The Elder Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of potential nominees to present to the Board of Elders for its review at least 90 days prior to the annual meeting. Upon ratification of these recommendations by the Elders, it shall be the committee's duty to contact the appropriate number of candidates for the offices to be filled and then to have the names of all nominees who are willing to serve printed upon a ballot.
- e) The slate of nominees shall be posted to the congregation not less than 60 days prior to the annual meeting. Within the next 30 days, any member of the congregation knowing of reasons why a nominee is not biblically qualified shall give such evidence to the Elder Nominating Committee for consideration. Should a nominee be disqualified, the Elder Nominating Committee shall submit another qualified nominee.
- f) The slate of nominees shall be submitted to the congregation for ratification. Should any nominee fail to be elected, the Elder Nominating Committee shall submit new nominations at a special congregational meeting to be called within 30 days of the annual meeting.

#### Section 8.2: Removal from Office

Any officer of the church whose conduct is such that it might bring reproach upon the church or who fails to carry out his or her job in a responsible manner (refer to 1 Tim. 3:1-13, Titus 1:7-9), shall be disqualified by a three-fourths vote of the Board of Elders.

#### Section 8.3: Filling Vacancies

Vacancies in the Elder Office shall be filled for the unexpired term by nomination by the Elder Nominating Committee and election by the Board of Elders. Vacancies in the Deacon Office shall be filled for the unexpired term by nomination and election by the Board of Elders. A person filling an existing term can only be elected for one additional term on the Board of Elders and then must wait two years to be nominated for re-election. A person filling an existing term can only be elected for one additional term as a Deacon and then must wait one year to be nominated for re-election.

## **Article 9: Meetings**

### Section 9.1: Devotional Meetings

1. The church shall meet regularly each week as frequently as necessary for worship and the preaching of the Gospel.
2. The church shall meet for the observance of the Lord's Supper and baptisms periodically as the Elders may decide.
3. The church will provide opportunities throughout the week for people to meet for prayer, intercession, and studying and teaching the Bible.

### Section 9.2: Business Meetings

1. The annual business meeting shall be held within 60 (sixty) days after the end of the fiscal year on a day to be determined by the Board of Elders.
2. The annual business meeting shall be held for the purpose of electing officers and committee members, of receiving the annual reports of the officers, boards, and committees of this church, approving the annual budget, and for the transaction of such other business as is proper to come before said meeting.
3. Notice of the annual business meeting, stating the place and time, shall be posted by the Board of Elders on the church website in a conspicuous place and announced to the members at a regularly scheduled church service at least seven days prior to the meeting.
4. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Lead Pastor, the Chair of the Elders, the Elders, or by written request of a quorum of the active members of this church. Notice of such meeting and the object for which it is called shall be given from the pulpit at least one week in advance of the date of the meeting and said notice shall be posted on the church website seven days in advance of said meeting. The above notice may be waived provided that each church member is notified of said meeting at least one day prior to such meeting.
5. Qualifications of Voters: On all matters, members who are 16 years of age or older are entitled to vote.
6. Quorum and Voting: Ten percent (10%) of the church members, in good standing, qualified voters, shall constitute a quorum at all congregational meetings. A majority of such members present and voting on any particular matter, in a regularly or properly called meeting, at which a quorum is present, shall be required to decide any questions presented unless these Bylaws specify otherwise. All officer, board and committee elections shall require a two-thirds majority for election. Voting shall be by secret ballot if requested by any church member. In no event shall more than a two-thirds vote of members present be required for the approval of any matter coming before a duly called Corporation meeting, with the exception of Article 3: Statement of Faith (see Section 14.2).



## **Article 10: Auxiliary Organizations**

### Section 10.1

Any organization regularly meeting in the church buildings and/or having the name of this church included in its official name shall be considered as an auxiliary organization of this church. The constitution of any such organization shall be drawn so as not to conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church Corporation and shall be subject to approval of the Elders. Meetings should be held at such times as not to conflict with the meetings of this church. Organizations shall provide an annual report to the Elders prior to the annual meeting. Any special activities of auxiliary organizations shall be subject to the prior approval of the Elders.

### Section 10.2

The Elders may withdraw or refuse the use of church property or its name from or to any auxiliary organization whose purposes, objectives or conduct are not consistent with the stated purposes and objectives of this church.

## **Article 11: Church Year**

Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Church Corporation shall begin on the first day of May and close on the 30th day of April. Elected officers and committees shall assume office on the day of their elections.

## **Article 12: Rules of Order**

Parliamentary procedures as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order Revised* shall govern the business proceedings of this church in all cases unless otherwise stated in these bylaws.

## **Article 13: Contractual Authorities**

The Board of Elders shall appoint the financial authorities of the church. However, no one shall have the authority to mortgage, pledge, assign, contract, assume new debt, acquire or dispose assets or otherwise legally commit or bind the church for more than 10% of its total assets to any person, entity, municipal, state or federal organization or agency unless that person, persons, committee or group has been authorized to so commit or bind the Church by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called Church Corporation meeting.

## **Article 14: Amendments**

### Section 14.1: Bylaws

These Bylaws, excluding Article 3: Statement of Faith, may be amended, altered, waived, or repealed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called Church Corporation meeting, provided that: the proposed change in the Bylaws has been referred to the Elders, prior notice of at least 30 days has been given to the members of the Church Corporation, and the provisions of Section 9.2 have been complied with.

### Section 14.2: Statement of Faith

Article 3: Statement of Faith, may be amended by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting at a duly called Church Corporation meeting, provided that: the proposed change to Article 3 has been approved by three-fourths of the Elders, prior notice of at least 30 days has been given to the members of the Church Corporation, and all other provisions of Section 9.2 have been met.

## **Article 15: Validity of These Bylaws**

The publication of this set of bylaws makes null and void any previous set of bylaws and any amendments thereto. People will be deemed to have ratified the bylaws by becoming members of the church. Once members, individuals can make changes to the bylaws as provided in the bylaws themselves.

## **Article 16: Division and Dissolution**

### Section 16.1: Division

In the event that the membership of the Church Corporation becomes divided in its beliefs, doctrines, policies, practices, conduct or any other aspects relating to the purposes for which this church was formed, and with the result that the division creates individual groups unable to work together with common effort to accomplish the purposes for which this church was formed, then, in such event, the ownership and operation of the property, and all of its facilities, together with the name of this church, shall be vested with that group which, by its convictions and practices, continues with the Statement of Faith, as submitted to and approved by the Church Corporation.

### Section 16.2: Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this Church Corporation, with the result that there is no continuing body to conduct the work for the purposes for which it was initially formed, a Special Board will be appointed by the Elders with at least one member-at-large of the church appointed by the Chair of the Board of Elders to arrange for disposition of the property as follows, and a majority decision of the Special Board shall govern in the fulfillment of their duties hereunder. (If any or all of such offices do not exist, the members of the Corporation will appoint a qualified person or persons from its membership to make a full complement of five Special Board members.)

1. The Special Board shall use its best efforts to sell all assets for the largest realizable return, either through private or public sale.
2. From the proceeds thereof, the Special Board shall distribute the money in the following order:
  - a) Pay all current and long-term obligations of the Church Corporation;
  - b) Pay all commitments of the Church Corporation under the Outreach Budget;
  - c) With the residual sum, after paying obligations and commitments in items A. and B. above, give:
    - 1) One-third of such residual sum to the church in the Merrimack Valley region of Massachusetts with the largest number of active members and which conducts its ministry under Statement of Faith similar to those adopted by this Church Corporation; if no such church exists in the region, then this sum will be given to that church in the Greater Boston area with the largest number of active members and which conducts its ministry under Article 3: Statement of Faith as defined in these Bylaws.
    - 2) One-third of such residual sum to the theological school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with the largest enrollment of students being trained for the ministry and which conducts its educational program under Statement of Faith similar to that adopted by this Church Corporation. In the event that there is not a qualified school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then a school in any other state may be selected which meets the qualification of agreement with Article 3: Statement of Faith as defined in these Bylaws.
    - 3) One-third of such residual sum divided equally among all organizations which shared in the Outreach Budget of this church for the most recent fiscal year of the church. In event that there was no Outreach Budget in the most recent fiscal year, then the Board of Elders will give the entire one-third of the residual sum to a missionary organization which conducts its efforts under Article 3: Statement of Faith as defined in these Bylaws.