

## *BYLAWS OF THE RIVER OF GRACE CHURCH*

### **NAME**

Section 1. The name of this body of believers shall be The River of Grace Church.

### **MISSION**

Section 2. Making more Christians and becoming better Christians

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Section 3.1. Membership in this Church shall be extended to all applicants who confess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who subscribe to the statement of common beliefs, and consent to be governed by its articles of agreement, bylaws, and covenant partnership process.

In the event problems arise with a member, mediation will be taken up by elders with the goal of reconciliation.

Section 3.2. Discipline. In accord with Matthew 18 and other Biblical teachings, members of the Church and those persons who choose to associate with the Church although not joined in membership may become proper subjects for Church discipline. Discipline shall be conducted by and under the direction of the Council of Elders, and may arise for a number of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

Promotion of discord, continuous moral failure or lack of harmony with the teachings and ministries of the Church. In such cases, one or more Elders shall attempt to visit such members to ascertain the nature of the problem and endeavor to restore the member to proper spiritual fellowship. Where restoration to fellowship or another definite solution is not achieved, the Elders shall submit the case to the Council of Elders and suggest a recommendation concerning a solution.

Section 3.3. Discipline of Elders. Elders are not exempt from church discipline process outlined in Section 3.2. The Elder under discipline shall have no vote in any matter relating to his discipline.

### **CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

Section 4.1. Council of Elders. The spiritual and temporal government of this Church shall be entrusted in the Council of Elders. The council of elders shall meet on a regular basis at times and places set by them. Extra meetings may be called by a majority of the council of elders.

Section 4.1.A. Nomination/Term. Elders shall be nominated by a member of the Council of Elders and unanimously approved by the Council of Elders. Church membership shall be provided an opportunity to affirm (not elect) elders. Elders are ordinarily elected for a three-year term. Elders who serve on the Church's pastoral staff may also be appointed to non-rotating terms. There shall be no limit (minimum or maximum) to the number of Elders.

Section 4.1.B. Responsibilities. The Council of Elders shall have final responsibility and authority for the spiritual oversight of the Church. The Council will select and determine that all leaders are fit and qualified for service before they are announced, appointed, and then presented to the Membership for affirmation. The Council shall be responsible for the overall teaching oversight and doctrinal stance of the Church; they shall approve any formal outside affiliations between the Church and others; shall pre-review and select for Biblical qualifications (i) all ministry leaders (1 Tim 3:8-13) and (ii) any proposed paid staff members. The Council of Elders may remove ministry leaders when they deem it appropriate to do so.

Section 4.1.C. Convener of the Council of Elders. The Convener of the Council of Elders at all times will be an unpaid volunteer Elder who is gifted in organizational governance.

Section 4.1.D. All votes of the Council of Elders then convened at a meeting in which a quorum is present must be unanimous to be approved. A majority of the council of elders constitutes a quorum for the conducting of any business (exemptions – Sections 3.3 and 4.1.E).

Section 4.1.E. Removal of an Elder. An Elder may be removed from the Council by the unanimous vote of the other members of the Council of Elders at a meeting duly noticed and called for that purpose, if, in the judgment of the Council, the removal of the Elder is in the best interests of the Church. Written notice of a meeting of the Council of Elders at which such a vote is to be considered shall state the purpose of the meeting, the grounds for removal, and the time, date, and location of the meeting. The letter shall be sent to all Elders by U.S. mail, first class, postage prepaid, at least fourteen days in advance of that meeting. The Elder subject to the vote of removal shall have no vote on that issue.

## **MEETINGS**

Section 5.1. Public Services. Meetings for public worship, teaching, and informational updates regarding the overall ministry direction of the Church shall be provided for under the direction of the Council of Elders.

Section 5.2. Membership Meetings. The membership and general Church congregation shall meet on a regular basis at times and frequency determined by the Council of

Elders for the purpose of providing periodic updates concerning overall ministry direction, past programs, and future plans. The membership will be invited to provide to the Church leadership encouragement and accountability at these meetings and will be provided opportunity to inquire regarding the Church's past, present and future activities.

## **INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Section 6.1. This Church may provide for the establishment of ministry departments, committees, and other organizational structures as needed. All such subsidiary functions shall be subordinate to the Church and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole body. They shall be under the general supervision of the Council of Elders.

Section 6.2. Said corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 6.3. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in these articles. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on for propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 6.4. All employment at the Church is employment at will under New Hampshire laws.

## **FINANCES**

Section 7.1. Funds for the maintenance of this Church shall be provided by the voluntary tithes and offerings of the members and friends of the Church. Funds shall be accepted by the Church at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Council of Elders.

Section 7.2. Finance Committee. The finance committee prepares an annual written budget for review and evaluation by the elders; presents the budget ( for informational, motivational, accountability and support-building purposes ) to the membership; after giving due consideration to comments and priorities communicated by the council of elders, formally adopts a written budget for the church and submits the budget for approval to the council of elders.

Section 7.3. Treasurer. The treasurer shall administer the finances of the Church under the direction of the Business Administrative Team. He/she shall receive and deposit all funds in a responsible bank in the Church's name and shall disburse funds as authorized by the Council of Elders and in accordance with the policies of the Church as set by the Finance Committee and approved by the Council of Elders. He/she shall make an itemized report of receipts and disbursements to the Council of Elders.

## **DISPOSITION OF PROPERTIES**

Section 8. Upon the dissolution of the corporation, after payment or provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation, the assets shall be distributed as determined by the Council of Elders for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended (or any successor provision of federal tax law).

## **INDEMNIFICATION**

Section 9. Indemnification: The Church shall insure and/or indemnify and protect the Elders, Officers, Directors, or any agent or employee of Church against financial loss and expense, including reasonable legal fees and costs arising out of any claim, demand, suit, or judgment by reason of alleged negligence, alleged violation of civil rights, or alleged wrongful act resulting in death or bodily injury to any person or accidental damage to or destruction of property, inside or outside the Church premises, if the Elder, Officer, Director, agent or employee, at the time of the occurrence, was acting under the direction of the Council of Elders and within the course or scope of the duties of the Elder, Director, agent, or employee.

## **AMENDMENTS**

Section 10. These Bylaws may be amended by a unanimous vote of the Council of Elders.