



GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH of Millersburg

Manual of Procedure

Updated 1/2007

This Manual of Procedures defines how the Grace Brethren Church of Millersburg does what it does.

ARTICLE I – CORPORATION

The Board of Elders (herein referred to as “the Elders”) shall serve as corporate officers of the Corporation (Constitution, Article VII, Section 2, Paragraph 2).

Signing for Property

The Moderator and one (1) other Elder shall be authorized to sign, as directed and resolved by the Elders, on agreements pertaining to the purchase or lease of property, real or otherwise.

Signing For Payment of Funds

Should it ever become necessary for someone other than the Treasurer and / or the Financial Secretary [see Article III, Section 2, B and C] to

- sign checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money from the deposited funds of this Church, and / or
- to endorse or cash checks, notes, bills or other instruments in the name of the Church due to absence of the above mentioned Church Officers, or because of requirements of the depository institution(s), the Moderator [see Article III, Section 1, Paragraph C] and / or one (1) other Elder [see Article IV, Section 1, Paragraph B, 1b] shall be so authorized to sign. The names of the Officers of the Church so authorized to act for the Church and in its behalf shall be on file at the depository institution(s).

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Qualifications

Any person who shall have confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and is committed to Him as Savior and Lord [Romans 10:9-10]; and who shall have publicly submitted to the authority of the Bible as the complete, final, inerrant, and inspired revelation of the Triune God to man; and who shall have been baptized by water by believer’s baptism, and who shall have consented to the covenants and provisions of this Constitution and by-laws, may formally become a member of this church.

Our baptism is a believer’s baptism by triune immersion upon profession of salvation. If the prospective member has been baptized by water by believer’s baptism in another church, it is not necessary for him or her to be rebaptized in order to become a church member.

Persons being baptized may request to become a member. They must be Christian believers of godly life who hold to the faith and doctrines as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 8:12, and who have given testimony to their faith.

An alternative method of baptism may be appropriate in case medical challenges preclude baptism by immersion.

Section 2 – Duties

Members are expected to be faithful in all spiritual duties essential to Christian life, to participate in the communion ordinances, to be loyal to the church, to attend regularly its services, to contribute to its support and charities, and to share in its organized work.

Section 3 – Privileges

A. Only those members in good standing, sixteen years of age and older, are eligible to vote in all business sessions [see Constitution, Article VI, Sentence 2 and 3].

B. Any member who is dissatisfied with the general procedure of this church shall make known his case in writing to the Pastor or the Elders. No verbal complaints shall be entertained before the Elders.

Section 4 – Withdrawal

A. A letter of recommendation to another church will be granted, upon request, to any member in good standing in this church body.

B. A member's name may be dropped from the membership upon:

- written request of the member involved, or
- the member's inactivity and complete absence from all fellowship with the church body for a space of one (1) year. A letter, drafted by the elders, will be sent by the church office to the inactive member; in case of no response to the letter within one month (30 days), the inactive member will be removed from the church roll.

C. Inability to attend due to illness, infirmity or distance is not grounds for removal from membership rolls.

Section 5 – Membership, Discipline and Restoration

In cases of blatant and unrepentant sinfulness on the part of a member, the Elders (in keeping with the pattern set in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:5-11) at their discretion may withdraw the sinful party's membership from this local body, and ask them not to fellowship with this body of believers. However, the goal of this congregation (as set forth in 2 Corinthians 2:7-8) is restoration of the sinning brother or sister, not retribution for past failings, and every step will be taken to bring them to repentance and a renewed relation with God and our church.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

The titled officers of the Corporation are:

- Pastor / Moderator [see Article III, Section 1, Paragraph C],
- Vice-Moderator [see Article III, Section 2, Paragraph A],
- Recording Secretary [see Article III, Section 2, Paragraph B],
- Treasurer [see Article III, Section 2, Paragraph C], and
- Financial Secretary [see Article III, Section 2, Paragraph D].

Section 1 – PASTOR / MODERATOR

A. Call – The initial pastoral call shall be for three (3) years. The Pastor shall be chosen according to the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

B. Reaffirmation of the Call – The membership shall come together after three (3) years to

reaffirm his call.

Those concerned about reaffirming the pastoral call shall bring their concerns in writing to the Elders. These concerns shall be brought to the Elders no later than two (2) months prior to the reaffirmation meeting.

The Elders will investigate all concerns (and any Scripture that supports the written objections), discuss them with the Pastor, and work with him to resolve all relevant issues.

If there are no Biblically-based objections to his reaffirmation, the Elders shall recommend the Pastor to the membership for reaffirmation of his call.

Reaffirmation shall be for four (4) years.

C. Direction – The Pastor as Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees, with the right to vote. His term of office shall run concurrent with his call as Pastor. He shall be the presiding officer at all church business meetings, except when he is personally involved in the matter, in which case he shall defer to the Vice-Moderator. All paid staff members shall be accountable to, and under the authority of, the Moderator.

D. Duties – The Pastor shall provide leadership for the congregation and the Elders, serving as Moderator of both. His primary responsibilities shall be to edify the saints in accord with Ephesians 4:11-16; to preach and teach the Word of God; and to set a pattern of good works appropriate with his office. He shall be directly responsible for the selection, conduct, and dismissal of any paid staff in consultation with the Elders.

E. Termination – His pastoral tenure of this church may be terminated voluntarily by submitting a written resignation to the Elders at least one month (30 days) before any subsequent formal notification of the congregation at a regular service or business session.

The Elder Board may also initiate a removal process if deemed necessary. This would be subject to approval at a duly called meeting, and would require a two-third (2/3) vote of the membership present. Immorality, open and flagrant sinfulness, and / or teaching contrary to the Constitution, Article III, The “Statement of Faith” are cause for immediate termination.

F. Pastoral Vacancies

1. Selection of Pastoral Search Committee – The Elders may act as the pastoral search committee, or may select a pastoral search committee from among the elected officers. At least two (2) Elders, including the Vice-Moderator, shall serve on the pastoral search committee, with the Vice-Moderator serving as chairman.

2. Recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee – The pastoral search committee shall prepare a list of possible candidates, in order of priority, and make a recommendation to the Elders for approval. Upon approval of the search committee recommendations, the Elders shall propose one (1) candidate to the membership, as soon as a special meeting can be called, asking authorization to cover the candidate’s expenses. The Elders may authorize the chairman of the pastoral search committee to correspond and make arrangements with the candidate. Only one (1) candidate at a time shall be considered.

3. Candidate Approval – Following the initial visit of the candidate so that he can be interviewed by the pastoral search committee, the search committee, shall, within seven (7) days, prepare a recommendation to the membership for a vote to either a) issue an

official call for him to candidate, or b) decline to issue a call and refer the matter back to the pastoral search committee. Salary and benefit considerations may also be discussed at this meeting. These decisions shall require a two thirds (2/3) vote of the membership at a duly called special meeting.

Section 2 – OTHER OFFICERS

A. Vice Moderator – In the absence of the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator shall assume the duties of the Moderator. The Vice Moderator shall be a senior elder of the Board of Elders (the elder who is serving his last year in office).

B. Recording Secretary – The Recording Secretary shall record, keep, and make available the official corporate minutes at regular and special business meetings of the church, which shall be read for approval at the next following business meeting.

C. Treasurer – The Treasurer is appointed by the Board of Elders, and shall:

- record and maintain the cash receipts, disbursements journal, and supporting general ledger for all funds of the Church,
- record and maintain personal giving records of all persons who give to the Church,
- issue receipts for tax purposes for those recorded gifts,
- retain a receipt for all bank deposits,
- review invoices, bills and vouchers prior to payment,
- ensure that all monies are promptly deposited,
- prepare monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports of receipts, disbursements, assets and liabilities, to be presented to the Pastor and Elders in a format approved by the Elders, and
- assist in the counting of offerings.

The funds, books and vouchers in the treasurer's hands shall (with the exception of confidential reports so deemed by the Elders) at all times be subject to verification and inspection by members of the congregation.

As approved by the Board of Elders, and with the continued supervision and control of the Treasurer, the process of recording entries in journals and ledgers may be assigned to a qualified individual or accounting service.

Upon the resignation and / or replacement of the Treasurer, they shall deliver over to their successor or, in the absence of a Treasurer-elect, to the Moderator, all books, monies, records and other property.

D. Financial Secretary – The Financial Secretary is appointed by the Board of Elders, and shall:

- assist in the counting of offerings and
- fill in for the Treasurer whenever he is not present for the Sunday service.

The funds, books and vouchers in the Financial Secretary's hands shall, with the exception of confidential reports (as deemed by the Elders) at all times be subject to verification and inspection by members of the congregation.

Upon the resignation and / or replacement of the Financial Secretary, they shall deliver over to their Successor or, in the absence of a Financial Secretary-elect to the Moderator, all books, monies, records and other property.

ARTICLE IV – CHURCH BOARDS, STANDING COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES

Section 1 – Standing Boards

A. General Guidelines – Members of all standing boards shall be duly elected by nomination and ballot from appropriately qualified members of the Grace Brethren Church of Millersburg [See Article IV, Section 1, B, 1a, 2a, and 3a]. Elections will be held at either a regularly scheduled business meeting, or a duly meeting called for this purpose.

Members of all standing boards are elected to serve for three (3) years, subject to a second term. At the end of two (2) terms, the board member shall step down for at least one (1) year to allow for the recognition of developing leaders within the church body.

Boards shall meet at least quarterly, or more often if necessary, at a time and place chosen by the Moderator. All members of each board shall be given notice, as deemed adequate by such board, of upcoming meetings, and a written agenda will be provided.

Standing boards shall submit written minutes of board meetings for publication in the church newsletter. A majority of the members of any standing board shall constitute a quorum, and all decisions by standing boards require a majority vote.

The Pastor and / or Board of Elders shall seek to educate and prepare those who aspire to serve as board members of this church. The church authorizes the Pastor to appoint temporary replacements for Elders, Deacon, Deaconess, or Trustees as necessary until a special meeting can be called to officially appoint a replacement board member.

B. Standing Boards – Listing and Function

1. Elders

a. Call – The membership shall elect its own elders according to the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 (see Article V, Section 2 for procedure). The number of elders shall be commensurate to the size and growth of the church, but at no time will the Elder board be less than three (3) members. All terms shall be for three (3) years.

If the recognition of any elder is to extend beyond the local congregation, the normal procedure for licensure and ordination examination in the district shall be pursued. For information on the NEO District Examining Board, contact the Fellowship Coordinator's office at P.O. Box 384, Winona Lake, Indiana, 46590 [574.269.1269].

b. Duties – Elders shall oversee all matters of church life and practice, and shall ensure regular public services for worship, prayer and the observation of the Christian ordinances. The Elders shall serve as corporate officers of the church. The Elders shall submit to the membership for election each year a sufficient number of names to provide a full complement for all standing boards.

c. Termination – An elder may resign from his position as elder by submitting a written resignation to the Elders or the Pastor. Immorality, insubordination, or teaching contrary to the Constitution, Article III, "Statement of Faith" shall be cause for immediate termination.

2. Deacons and Deaconesses

a. Call – Deacons and Deaconesses shall be chosen from the members of the church according to the qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13 (see Article V, Section 2 for procedure).

The number of Deacons and Deaconesses shall be determined by the immediate needs of the congregation. The term of service shall be for a period of three (3) years.

b. Duties – Their ministries shall be to assist the Elders, primarily in the area of ministering to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the individual members of our church body, and beyond into the community.

c. Termination – A Deacon or Deaconess may resign from their position as deacon or deaconess by submitting a written resignation to the Elders or the Pastor. Immorality, insubordination, or teaching contrary to the Constitution, Article III, “Statement of Faith” shall be cause for immediate termination.

3. Trustees.

a. Call – Trustees shall be chosen from the members of the church according to the qualifications of I Corinthians 4:2 and Luke 12:41-44 (see Article V, Section 2 for procedure). The number of Trustees shall be determined by the immediate needs of the congregation. The term of service shall be for a period of three (3) years.

b. Duties – Their ministries shall be to assist the Elders, primarily in the area of care and maintenance of the church building and ground.

c. Termination – A Trustee may resign from their position as trustee by submitting a written resignation to the Elders or the Pastor. Immorality, insubordination, or teaching contrary to the Constitution, Article III, “Statement of Faith” shall be cause for immediate termination.

Section 2 – Standing Committees

A. General Guidelines – Standing committees shall be composed of qualified non-elected members of the church, with the Pastor serving as an ex-officio member. Committees shall come together for the purpose of achieving a commonly agreed upon goal, and any other duties as may be requested by the Elders.

Standing committees shall exercise only limited authority as related to their specific area of their focus, and shall submit written minutes of committee meetings and recommendations to the Elders. A majority of the members of any standing committee shall constitute a quorum, and all decisions by a standing committee require a majority vote.

B. Standing Committees – Listing and Function

1. Missions Committee

a. Mission Statement – This Committee exists to develop awareness and a growing congregational involvement in prayer for, support of, and participation in fulfilling the Great Commission beyond our local church area.

b. Mission Goals --

- Communicate to the church the ministries and needs of the various mission organizations supported by the church.
- Host visiting missionaries and coordinate a schedule for mission programs in the church.
- Prepare recommendations to the Church for short-term and / or permanent mission candidates (long-term candidates subject to approval by the membership)

upon recommendation by the Elders).

- Seek out new ways to minister to our community, county, and country, as well as cross-culturally.
- Recommend to the Pastor and / or the Elders as soon as possible before the annual meeting a suggested missions budget, a list of mission goals for the coming year, and any additions or deletions in the mission fund accounts.

2. Other Committees

Other committees shall be formed as the need arises, at either the suggestion of the Elders, or by the request and concern of members of the congregation, and shall be approved by the Board of Elders. These may be either short-term committees with a limited time duration, or a committee designed to function over a longer period of time. They shall submit written minutes of committee meetings and recommendations to the Elders.

ARTICLE V – RECOGNITION (ELECTION) OF BOARD OFFICERS

Section 1 – Annual Recognition (Election) of Officers

Recognition by ballot (election) of appropriately qualified candidates who have been recommended by the congregation for any open positions of Elder, Deacon and Deaconess, and / or Trustee shall be held at the annual meeting.

The election shall be held as early in the new year as practicable, with the new officers being commissioned to their position the following Sunday.

Section 2 – Recognition (Election) Process

Qualified officers (see Article IV, Section 1, B, 1a, 2a, and 3a for qualifications) shall be recommended from a list of all current members. The list shall be supplied to the congregation by the Board of Elders as a bulletin insert for at least three (3) consecutive Sundays, and ending no later than one (1) month before the scheduled meeting. The Elders shall, following careful consideration, and speaking with those recommended allowing each the opportunity to accept or decline the nomination, present a ballot to the membership. The membership shall then elect the new officers at the upcoming annual meeting.

A member will only serve on one (1) elected committee (Elders; Deacon & Deaconess; or Trustees) at a time. Should a situation arise where this is not possible, the Pastor and Board of Elders shall determine what appropriate action to take.

Section 3 – Inability to Serve

Should the candidate elected be unable to serve for any reason, the candidate with the second most votes will fill the vacant office. If no one else was being considered for that office, the Board of Elders will determine how best to fill the vacant office.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Meetings shall be announced publicly from the pulpit in regular worship services at least two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting. Annual meetings shall include the following items:

Section 1 – Reports

A. Activity Report by Pastor – Members shall receive a written report of activities and ministry of the Pastor which clearly reflect the major endeavors, current condition and future goals of the Church.

B. Financial Statements – Members shall receive a written report which will:

- reflect clearly the financial activity and current financial condition of the Church,
- state beginning cash balances, amounts of cash receipts, allocations and amounts of cash disbursements, and ending cash balances, and
- compare the cash activity to the authorized budget.

A balance sheet shall be presented which states the Church assets, liabilities, net worth and year-to-date changes. Assets shall be stated at cost.

The format for this financial report shall be approved by the Elders.

C. Proposed Budget for the Coming Year – The Pastor (in conjunction with the Treasurer) shall submit a detailed proposed budget for the coming year to the Board of Elders. Upon their approval, it shall be submitted to the membership for final approval. Both pastor and treasurer shall be prepared to answer questions concerning the proposed budget.

Section 2 – Procedure

The most recent *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern meetings of this Church in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with this Manual of Procedure. The rules of procedure may be suspended temporarily by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting at any meeting.

Section 3 – Voting

A. The voting at all meetings may be by voice (except in election of officers); however, a vote by secret ballot may be requested, whereupon such vote shall be taken.

B. Every member shall have one (1) vote. Should a member in good standing be unable to attend a duly announced annual and / or a special meeting of the corporation, they may vote by absentee ballot. The absentee ballot shall be submitted (either in person, or by third party) to a member of the Board of Elders at least one (1) week in advance of the scheduled meeting, and shall specify the matter to which the absentee ballot shall apply. The selection of the matters to be voted by absentee ballot shall be at the discretion of the Elders.

C. All motions are passed on a simple majority unless otherwise indicated.

Section 4 – Agenda

The agenda for each semi-annual or special meeting shall be approved by the Elders. The normal order of business may be altered or suspended for any regular meeting by the recommendation of the Elders, or by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members, a quorum being present.

Section 5 – Approval of Recommendations by the Board of Elders

A two-thirds (2/3) vote cast by the membership present at a duly called meeting is needed for the following recommendations of the Board of Elders:

- changes in financial indebtedness,
- changes to the annual budget,
- salaries paid by the church,
- removal of the pastor (see Article III, Section 1, E), and
- amending the constitution.

Section 6 – Special Meetings

Special meetings may also be called as needed by contacting the Board of Elders and the Pastor.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Section 1 – Handling of Offerings

At least two (2) persons shall count the offerings of the Church. Persons authorized to count offerings shall be the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and others, if necessary, as appointed from a pool of assistants pre-approved by the Board of Elders, not the Treasurer. Offerings shall be deposited promptly, and shall not be stored overnight in the church building.

Section 2 – Banking and Investment

The funds of the Church are deposited in a local bank, and disbursed upon the order(s) of such officers or other persons as may be prescribed by the Elders. Investments of excess money may be deposited in institutions other than a local bank as authorized by the Elders.

Section 3 – Accountability

The Elders shall see that an adequate system of financial controls, accounts and records is in place. An audit may be requested at the discretion of the Elders of all books and accounts of the Church and its related auxiliaries, and a written report submitted to the Elders and members of the church.

Section 4 – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall be the calendar year.

ARTICLE VIII – MEDIATION / ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES

Section 1 – Personal Disputes

The Pastor and / or the Elders may, upon request, appoint a committee of mediation and / or arbitration in cases of dispute involving members of the congregation. This committee [of not less than three (3) persons] shall be empowered to follow procedures as designed by the Elders to resolve the dispute and to reconcile the parties, as set forth in 1 Corinthians 6:1-6 and Matthew 18:15-20.

Section 2 – Disputes Involving the Pastor

Either the Elders or the Pastor may request a representative from the District Grace Brethren Ministerial Association and / or the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches to mediate and / or arbitrate a dispute between the Pastor and the church, or between the Pastor and the Elders.

For information on the FGBC Paraclete Ministry, contact Dr. Charles Ashman [574.372.6338], or the Fellowship Coordinator's office at P.O. Box 384, Winona Lake, Indiana, 46590 [574.269.1269].

Section 3 – Disputes Involving Other Churches, Districts or National Boards

In disputes or disagreements involving this Church and another church, district, or national board within the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the Board of Elders may appeal to the Fellowship Council of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches to help resolve the dispute through mediation and/or arbitration. Contact the Fellowship Coordinator's office (see Section 2 above) for information on how to get in touch with a representative of the Fellowship Council.

ARTICLE IX — OUR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Our Manual of Procedure defines those activities through which the concepts and principles of our Constitution will be implemented.

The Church shall review the Constitution and Manual of Procedure with all those who seek membership. Each new member shall consent to its contents and a copy of the Constitution and Manual of Procedure shall be provided for each new member.

ARTICLE X – CHANGES AND UPDATES

Section 1 – Amendments

This Manual of Procedure shall not be amended, repealed or altered, in whole or in part, without the express approval of the Board of Elders, the Pastor, and by a simple majority vote of the membership at any duly organized meeting of the Church. Sufficient notice shall be an announcement from the pulpit on two (2) successive Sundays immediately preceding such meeting, or insertions in the church bulletin of the full text of such proposed amendment on two (2) successive Sundays immediately preceding such meeting.

Section 2 – Church Policies

From time to time, policies outlining and detailing the operation of certain aspects of ministry need to be developed as the need arises. This may involve such things as use of the church facilities, borrowing church tables and chairs, care and maintenance of the kitchen, etc.

Proposed policies are drafted by the appropriate board or committee, then submitted to the Elders for suggestions and approval. After the approval of the Elders, the new policy will be distributed to each individual or family for inclusion with their copy of the Constitution and Manual of Procedure.

Section 3 – Dissolution

Should the Corporation ever be dissolved, an audit shall be prepared by two (2) representatives appointed by the Moderator from the local District of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, or from the Fellowship Council of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (see ARTICLE VIII, Section 2). This audit shall list the remaining assets and liabilities of the Church, and such audit shall be submitted to the remaining members of the Church, and shall be made available to whatever organization receives said property, assets and liabilities (as described below).

In case of dissolution, property or assets shall not inure to the benefit of any private citizen. The right of first refusal for the transfer and / or sale of this facility shall go to the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches [FGBC] Northeast Ohio [NEO] District (or such district as may be in existence at the time of this dissolution of this church body). In case of refusal by the NEO District of the FGBC, said property shall be distributed to another qualified tax exempt charitable religious organization selected by the members of the local church; or, in the event of their failure to make such selection, by the Judge of Court of general jurisdiction in the county where said church shall be located.