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REDEEMING GRACE BIBLE CHURCH, INCORPORATED

A Manitoba Non-Profit Religious Corporation

CONSTITUTION

The articles of incorporation of Redeeming Grace Bible Church, Incorporated are hereby amended to read as follows.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this corporation is Redeeming Grace Bible Church, Incorporated.

ARTICLE II - REGISTERED OFFICE

The registered office of this corporation is at **490 Main Street, Winkler, MB R6W 1A1.**

ARTICLE III - TERM

This corporation shall have perpetual existence until Christ's physical return to earth. Come Lord Jesus!

ARTICLE IV - PURPOSES

- A. Redeeming Grace Bible Church exists to glorify God by seeking to see the gospel transform everything: ourselves, our church, our city, and the world.
- B. We will seek to accomplish our vision through various ministries including but not limited to: gathering in communal worship services of celebration, administration of the Lord's supper and baptism, intimate prayer and discussion in community groups, in-depth study and discipleship of the radical life of a follower of Christ, counseling and support services, various community services, educational services for all ages, retirement and nursing homes, shelters for people in need, and other initiatives as deemed necessary by the governing body.
- C. The general purpose for which this corporation is formed is to operate exclusively for

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such religious, charitable, and educational purposes as will qualify it as an exempt organization by Revenue Canada or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations which qualify as tax- exempt organizations under that code.

- D. This corporation will not, as a substantial part of its activities, disseminate propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation; nor shall it participate or intervene (by publication or distribution of any statements or otherwise) in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- E. No part of the net earnings of this corporation will inure to the benefit of any individual or member.

ARTICLE V - CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

Section 5.1. - Corporate Members

The members of this corporation will be those persons who are duly designated as elders and deacons of Redeeming Grace Bible Church, Incorporated, and such other persons as from time to time hereafter may become members in the manner provided in the by-laws.

Any action which would otherwise require approval by a majority of all members shall only require approval of the Council of Elders or such other persons as from time to time hereafter may become members in the manner provided in the by-laws.

Section 5.2. - Members of the Congregation

Nothing contained in **Section 5.1** of this Article shall be construed to limit the right of the Corporation to refer to persons associated with the church ministry of the Corporation as 'members' even though such persons are not corporate members, and no such reference in or outside of these bylaws shall constitute anyone being a member of the Corporation, other than those described in **Section 5.1** of this Article. The Council of Elders may in specific circumstances condition its approval of matters on approval by the church membership (See **Article XIII** of the bylaws).

ARTICLE VI - GOVERNING BODY

The authority of this corporation shall rest in the Council of Elders. Elders are selected, maintained and removed by the members of the corporation congregation as provided in the by-laws.

ARTICLE VII - THE ANNUAL MEETING

A congregational meeting shall take place at least once per year.

ARTICLE VIII - BYLAWS

The members of the corporation congregation (as outlined in **Article X** of the bylaws) may adopt such bylaws for the conduct of its business and the carrying out of its purposes as it may deem

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necessary from time to time. Bylaws must be approved by the consensus of the Elders and two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the corporation congregation. Fifty percent (50%) of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for changes to the bylaws.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

The articles of this constitution may be amended by a consensus approval of the elders and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the corporation congregation. Fifty percent (50%) of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for amendments.

ARTICLE X - DISSOLUTION

No person, firm or corporation shall ever receive any dividends or profits from the undertaking of this corporation and upon dissolution of this corporation all of its assets remaining after payment of all costs will go to causes furthering the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the evangelical tradition, which have qualified for exemption by Revenue Canada. None of the assets will be distributed to any member or officer of this corporation.

ARTICLE XI - OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

Section 11.1. - Officers

The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Corporation may also have, at the discretion of the Council of Elders, other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of **Section 11.3** of this Article.

Section 11.2. - Election

The officers of the Corporation, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of **Section 11.3**, or **Section 11.5** of this Article, shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at, the pleasure of the Council of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

Section 11.3. - Subordinate Officers

The Council of Elders may appoint, and may empower the Chairman to appoint, such other officers as the business of the Corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the bylaws or as the Council of Elders may from time to time determine.

Section 11.4. - Removal and Resignation

Any officer may be removed upon disqualification and removal as an Elder per **Section 8.7** of the bylaws or whenever, in the judgment of the person or persons who appointed such officer, the best interests of the Corporation would be served thereby. Any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Council of Elders, or to the Chairman, or to the Secretary of the Corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of

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such notice or at any later time specified therein; and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 11.5. - Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the bylaws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

Section 11.6. - Inability to Act

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Corporation and of any person herein authorized to act in his place, the Council of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or other person whom the Council may select.

Section 11.7. - The Chairman

The Chairman shall be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders, shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation and shall, subject to the control of the Council of Elders, have general supervision, direction, and control of the activities and officers of the Corporation. He shall preside (or may appoint another) at all meetings of the Council of Elders, which are to be conducted according to the scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. He shall be an ex officio member of all the standing committees of the Council of Elders and otherwise, if any, and shall have powers and duties incident to the office of Chairman and as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders or the bylaws.

Section 11.8. - Secretary

The Secretary shall be preferred to be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders or a Deacon except in such cases where there is no one in those roles able to fulfill the responsibility of Secretary. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the principal office or such other place as the Council of Elders may order, of all meetings of the church members, the Council and its Committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the church member meetings, the Council and Committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office (or such place as the Council of Elders shall designate) the original and a copy of the Corporation's Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, as amended to date. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept at the principal office of the Corporation (or such place as the Council of Elders shall designate), a church membership register, or a duplicated church membership register, showing the names of the members and their addresses.

Section 11.9. - Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be preferred to be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders or a Deacon except in such cases where there is no one in those roles able to fulfill the responsibility

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of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall ensure the stewardship of the physical and financial resources of the Corporation, "taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration...for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Corinthians 8:20-21). He shall select "men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3) to implement and accomplish this responsibility. The Treasurer shall ensure that all financial activities and transactions are consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and its bylaws as well as in accordance with the laws stated for such by the Province of Manitoba. The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Corporation. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder or church member of Redeeming Grace Bible Church. The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Corporation with such depositories as may be designated by the Council of Elders. He shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Corporation as may be ordered by the Council of Elders, shall render, or cause to be rendered, to the Chairman and the Council of Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all the transactions and of the financial condition of the Corporation, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as incident to the office of Treasurer and as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders. He shall make, or cause to be made, the financial reports at each regular Council meeting and at the regular annual meeting of church members.

The names and mailing addresses of the persons who are to serve are as follows:

Chairman – Joshua Shetter, 248 4th Street, Morden, MB R6M 1P1

Treasurer – Joshua Neufeld, 65 Emerald Drive, Chortitz, MB R6P 0B8

Secretary – Thomas Rempel, 225 4th Street, Winkler, MB R6W 1G4

REDEEMING GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - PREAMBLE

Recognizing that all teachers of the Word of God are fallible and are to be tested by that Word, we maintain that this document is but a guide to the life of the church. This guide may be changed and revised as our understanding of the truth grows. This constitution of itself cannot safeguard the life of the church, nor does it bind consciences to matters of detail. Rather, it provides both a useful framework for the life of the church and a concise standard of teaching for its leadership as we serve Christ to the glory of God.

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ARTICLE II - NAME

This church will be known as Redeeming Grace Bible Church, Incorporated (Hereinafter, Redeeming Grace Bible Church may be referred to as “this church”, “the church”, “this local assembly” or “congregation”). This will be a nonprofit corporation of the Province of Manitoba. This church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control.

ARTICLE III - WHO WE ARE

Redeeming Grace Bible Church is an assembly of believers submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the body, the church. Our supreme desire is to know Christ and make Him known in an ever increasing measure. We are committed to learning and obeying the Word of God regardless of the cost or personal inconvenience. For the glory of our God, we seek to be Christ-centered in all our ministry, basing everything solely on the Word of God.

In full dependence upon the Spirit of the living God, we seek to build up the body of Christ and to call lost sinners to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ - the one and only Saviour. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord (2 Cor. 4:5). In all that we say and do, our desire is to glorify our most wonderful Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE IV - BELIEFS

The doctrinal outlook of Redeeming Grace Bible Church is reflected in the following statements from our “Congregational Affirmation of Faith.”:

A. WE BELIEVE GOD WROTE THE BIBLE WITHOUT ERROR THROUGH MEN. The Old and New Testaments, in their entirety, constitute the written Word of God and are without error in the original manuscripts. They were written by men, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully authoritative in all matters for the follower of Christ.

B. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS ETERNALLY IN TRINITY: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. There is one God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, love, justice, goodness, and truth, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who desires that we should know Him intimately and live a life of fulfillment through the pursuit of His glory.

C. WE BELIEVE THAT THE ALL-GLORIOUS AND INFINITELY HAPPY TRIUNE GOD CREATED ALL THAT EXISTS: the heavenly places, the angelic hosts, the universe, the earth, every living thing, and crowned His creation with Adam and Eve, who were given authority to steward God’s creation. God spoke everything into creation by the word of His power and declared all that He had made as good.

D. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS CREATED ALL HUMANS IN HIS IMAGE. HE HAS

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CREATED THEM UNIQUELY FEMALE AND MALE. All humans are created in God's image; therefore all human life is sacred. In creating humans as male and female, God communicated His image in harmonious interpersonal relationships, equality of personhood and importance and a distinction in role and authority.

E. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY WHO BECAME A MAN, LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, DIED ON A CROSS, WAS BURIED, AND ROSE BODILY FROM THE GRAVE TO REDEEM SINFUL HUMANITY. He is True God of True God, begotten, not made. He became human, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and made His dwelling among us, living a full life without sin. His perfect life and death on the cross provide the only atonement that satisfies the righteous requirements of God for the sinner. The death of Jesus Christ fully and finally paid for sin, and was redemptive, substitutionary, and efficacious. The historic fact of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead testifies powerfully to His deity, and is itself humanity's ultimate hope. Jesus Christ will make a personal and imminent return to the earth; this return is a sanctifying "hope" having vital bearing on the life of every Christian.

F. WE BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SUPERNATURAL AGENT IN SALVATION, BAPTIZING ALL CHRISTIANS INTO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AT CONVERSION, INDWELLING AND SEALING THEM UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RETURN. The Holy Spirit bears persuasive testimony to the realities of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the personal, divine third member of the Godhead. He convicts the world of sin and its consequences; He brings repentance and faith to the believer; He indwells the believer with the radical life of Jesus Christ; He gives gifts to every believer for mutual service within the body of Christ; He unites each believer in the Body of Christ and seals them in that relationship; He bears the fruit of Christian character in the lives of every believer; He guides, instructs, and empowers the believer for godly living and service. He is worshipped with the Father and the Son.

G. WE BELIEVE ALL HUMANS ARE SINFUL AND IN NEED OF SALVATION. SALVATION IS THE GIFT OF GOD BROUGHT TO HUMANS BY GRACE ALONE, AND RECEIVED BY PERSONAL FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. A TRUE CHRISTIAN WILL BE KEPT BY GOD'S POWER FOREVER. God has created every person in the image of God, but we have fallen into sin, and are therefore lost; only through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit can we obtain salvation and spiritual life. All humans are sinners and face the judgment of God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and only those who place faith in Jesus Christ and enjoy a relationship with God on the basis of the work of Christ are delivered from the wrath of God, whose holy character justly requires that sin be punished. Those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are said by Holy Scripture to be justified, regenerated, redeemed, and adopted into the divine family as co-heirs with Christ of all the blessings of the Godhead. We proclaim that all persons must consciously repent of their sins and confess that Jesus Christ is Saviour and Lord.

H. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHURCH IS A SPIRITUAL ORGANISM MADE UP OF ALL

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BELIEVERS EVERYWHERE FOR ALL TIME. All Christians in all times and in all places have been united into a single body by an operation of God. This resultant union is called the Body of Christ, the Universal Church.

I. WE BELIEVE IN THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND RECOGNIZE BELIEVER'S BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. Christ commanded that all Christians band together in assembly for instruction, worship, service, and fellowship. These assemblies are called local churches. Only those who are members of the Universal Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. Baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances to be observed by the local church in the present age. These ordinances are not to be regarded as means of salvation.

J. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH TO JUDGE ALL PEOPLE AND TO RULE AND REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS FOREVER. All people will be resurrected to give account of their lives before God. The believer in Christ will be resurrected to everlasting blessedness and joy in the presence of God. The unbeliever will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

K. We hold these truths in humble conviction.

ARTICLE V - PURPOSE

Redeeming Grace Bible Church is a Christian community which exists to bring God the glory He deserves and to bring redemptive good to all peoples, extending hope through the gospel and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our mission is to bring glory to God through lives changed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We seek to advance the joy and faith of others in the Lord Jesus Christ through the teaching of the Word of God and deeds of love, embodying the gospel in community.

Therefore, we are committed to:

- **The Gospel** - Individually becoming fluent in the message of the glorious Gospel of Christ, thus aiding us in personal sanctification, harmony in Gospel-shaped community, and the proclamation of God's perfect Word and His glorious gospel of grace through all the world.
- **Community** - Collectively bearing witness to the genuine transformation the Gospel has made in our lives. Continuing steadfastly together in the Apostles' doctrine, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread and Prayer.
- **Mission** - Individually and collectively bearing testimony to the power of the Gospel, to our neighbours, city, and world.

ARTICLE VI - WHAT WE TEACH

- A. The whole of our doctrine is the Bible. Thus, the elders of Redeeming Grace Bible Church seek to teach the whole counsel of God. In the "Elder Affirmation of Faith"

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document, we have attempted to highlight some of the key truths established in the Scriptures. We do not claim that this doctrinal statement is infallible or without error. It is what we, the elders, see revealed in the Word of God as far as the light we currently have. Being finite men, we wholeheartedly ask for correction from the Word of God to any portion that does not accurately reflect its teaching. As believers we are bound by the whole counsel of the Word of God.

- B. The document entitled "Elder Affirmation of Faith," which is incorporated into these bylaws by reference, establishes our Elders' Biblical commitments as ministers of the Word to teach the Bible faithfully. The "Elder Affirmation of Faith" document may be amended from time to time in the same way that these bylaws may be amended.

ARTICLE VII - CHURCH GOVERNMENT

- A. Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord over all (Acts 2:36; Phil 2:9-11). All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him (Matt. 28:18). The Lord Jesus Christ is the sole Head of the Christian church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:20-23). Thus, Redeeming Grace Bible Church is under the Headship of Jesus Christ as our Chief Shepherd and Senior Pastor. The Lord Jesus Christ reveals His will through His Word - the Bible (John 16:12-16; II Tim. 3:16). Thus the Scriptures are the final authority in all church matters (John 10:35; 17:17).
- B. Through the Holy Spirit, elders are raised up to serve and shepherd the flock as overseers (Jer. 3:15; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-2). The church shall be guided in all matters of faith and practice by the elders, who function as Christ's stewards, serving as overseers for the glory of their Lord and King (Titus 1:7; 1 Cor. 4:1). The Lord Jesus Christ holds the elders accountable for the doctrine and life of the church (Acts 20:17,28-32; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Titus 1:9; 1 Tim. 3:4-5, 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:2,24-26; 4:2; Heb. 13:17).

ARTICLE VIII - ELDERS

Section 8.1. - General Statements

- A. God promised His people in the Old Testament Scriptures that in the new covenant to come He would give them "shepherds according to [His Own] heart, who [would] feed [them] with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15). These "shepherds" are recognized according to the qualifications God gives in 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1 and are appointed as elders. The elders are normally to be appointed from within this local assembly, where their life and character can be known.
- B. Jesus Christ alone is the Head of His Church (Col.1:18). He has ordained that individual churches should be governed by Himself through officers whom He appoints, who are endowed by His Spirit with the gifts and graces needed to accomplish their work. Christ has ordained that local churches are to be administered by elders and deacons. Beside

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these two offices the Scriptures acknowledge no office which continues in the church today (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13).

- C. The senior leadership of Redeeming Grace Bible Church shall be vested in a governing board of male elders/pastors, hereinafter referred to as the Council of Elders, the Elders, Eldership, or Oversight, which may be composed of both paid and unpaid elders/pastors who follow the leading of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd and Senior Pastor of Redeeming Grace Bible Church (1 Peter 5:1-4).
- D. The Elders have the responsibility before God of shepherding and overseeing the flock of God. The elders serve the Lord Jesus Christ and as such must shepherd the local assembly in accordance to the Word of God. The elders are not lords over the flock but Christ's stewards, serving as overseers and being an example to the flock. They shall teach and preach the Word of God according to their giftedness and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures give the elders three distinct titles which are descriptive of their character and work.
 - i. **Elder** (spiritual maturity - Acts 20:17,28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
 - ii. **Overseer** ("bishop" - Acts 20:17,28; 1 Tim. 3:1)
 - iii. **Pastor** (shepherd - Acts 20:17,28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)

Section 8.2 - Extent and Limitation of Elder Governance

- A. The Council of Elders may structure and organize however it deems necessary for the sake of simplicity, clarity of communication, and efficiency of organization, according to the needs of the church and the size of the Council of Elders so long as it preserves the plurality of elders and the doctrinal and character requirements for elders articulated in this document.
- B. The Council of Elders determines the lead elder, who functions as the first among equals and is the lead elder for the church. It is the duty of the lead elder to help lead the Council of Elders and the rest of the church in obeying God's leading as revealed in Scripture.
- C. To promote efficient handling of Council of Elders matters, the Council may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Council of Elders. The general functions of councils and committees are:
 - i. To bring considered recommendations to the Council of Elders concerning ministries.
 - ii. To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific ministries.

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- D. Because the authority of the elders of the church is human authority exercised in the house of God according to the Word of God, it has both high prerogatives and important limitations:
- iii. It is divinely-delegated authority. Thus, elders are answerable to God for the exercise of this authority. Therefore, elders are obligated to discharge all of the duties specified by God in the Scriptures.
 - iv. In the exercise of this God-given authority they must seek to gain the consciences of God's people through the ministry of the Word carried out both publicly and privately.
 - v. The authority of the office of the elders does not include the right to make certain decisions unilaterally. In major decisions of church life (such as those having to do with corrective discipline, recognition of officers, and the sale of a church building), the entire local church as a whole is to have a voice (**ARTICLE XIII**) . Yet the elders must provide definitive leadership to the church in the making of such decisions.
 - vi. The authority of the elders is limited to the sphere of the local church. Thus, they will not require discipline for sin beyond those of biblical church discipline, will not invade the biblically-defined spheres of other divinely-ordained human authorities (husbands, fathers, civil rulers, and employers), and will not command God's people regarding matters not specified in Scripture except to order the house of God by the application of His Word.
 - vii. The authority of elders is conditioned by the fact that they are themselves members of the local church. While elders are shepherds over the flock, they are also members of the flock. Therefore, each individual elder is entitled to the same privileges, is obligated by the same responsibilities, and is subject to the same discipline as are all the other members of the church. Thus, each individual elder is both under the oversight of his fellow elders and accountable to the church as a whole.
 - viii. The authority of every elder is the same, though we recognize a first among equals. Every elder shares an equality in the oversight of the church. Though gifts possessed and functions performed will vary from elder to elder, this God-given diversity must not come at the expense of the goal of real parity among the elders.
 - viii. Finally, the authority of the elders is very real authority because it is given by Christ. God's people are, therefore, required to submit when such authority is biblically exercised according to the Word of Christ for the good of Redeeming Grace Bible Church.
- E. Selection as an elder pursuant to **Section 8.3** below confers the authority to preach, marry, and enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to licensed or ordained ministers under secular law.

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Section 8.3. - Identifying and Installing Elders

A. General Prerequisites

- i. All Elders of Redeeming Grace Bible Church must be members of it. Any individual set apart to one of these offices must be able to conscientiously affirm his agreement with the “Elder Affirmation of Faith” and Redeeming Grace Bible Church Constitution. If he should at any time move from this position, he would be under spiritual and moral obligation to immediately make that fact known to the other elders in an orderly manner.
- ii. While we acknowledge the valuable gifts which God has given women and the valuable assistance they may render to the officers of the church (Rom. 16:1-6; Phil. 4:3; 1 Tim. 3:11), the Bible prohibits women from holding the office of elder in the church (1 Cor. 14:33b-35; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:1-7). Also, since it is a violation of the Scriptures for a woman to exercise authority over a man in spiritual things, no woman shall be appointed to a teaching or authoritative function in a ministry of the church where adult men would be regularly under her ministry. Nevertheless, we acknowledge and encourage the valuable gifts and assistance of women in the formal instruction of children and other women (Titus 2:3-5), and especially the benevolent ministries of the church (1 Tim. 3:11; 5:9, 10).
- viii. To be considered as an elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at Redeeming Grace Bible Church (Acts 20:28) and be a man of the highest Christian character according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9).

B. Qualifications

- i. **Relation to God**
 1. A man – masculine leader
 2. Above reproach – free from any offensive or disgraceful blight of character or conduct.
 3. Able to teach – effective Bible communicator
 4. Not a new convert – mature Christian
- ii. **Relation to Family**
 1. Husband of one wife – one-woman man, sexually pure
 2. Pastors and Shepherds his children
 3. Manages family well – provides for, leads, organizes, loves
- iii. **Relation to Self**
 1. Temperate – mentally and emotionally stable
 2. Self-controlled – disciplined life of sound decision-making
 3. Not given to drunkenness – without addictions
 4. Not a lover of money – financially content and upright
- iv. **Relation to Others**
 1. Respectable – worth following and imitating

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2. Hospitable – welcomes strangers, especially non-Christians for evangelism
3. Not violent – even-tempered
4. Gentle – kind, gracious, loving
5. Not contentious – peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
6. Good reputation with outsiders – respected by non-Christians

C. Elder Selection

The process of becoming an elder/pastor at Redeeming Grace Bible Church involves at least the following steps:

- i. He must be a member in good standing at Redeeming Grace Bible Church who has demonstrated the calling, character, and competency of an elder.
- ii. He must make his desire to become an elder known to one of the elders and be interviewed for approval.
- iii. If accepted as an elder candidate the man will then undergo a period of training and testing.
- iv. Training, prior to becoming an elder, will include whatever is deemed necessary to enhance the nominee's understanding of an elder's responsibilities as outlined in Scripture.
- v. Upon completing his training and testing process, the man must be approved by the full council of elders without objection to be introduced to the church members as an official elder candidate.
- vi. If approved as an elder candidate, members of Redeeming Grace Bible Church will be notified that he has met the criteria of an elder. Anyone, in or out of the church, having a concern regarding the man's qualifications to lead as an elder will have four weeks to notify the elders, who can investigate the matter to determine if there is any reason to disqualify the man.
- vii. Consensus approval from the elders and a congregational affirmation, indicated by a closed ballot majority vote, are required prior to the installation of an elder.
- viii. If the elders do not find any reason to reject the man as an official elder, an official final vote of the elders shall be taken and if there are no objections to his installation from any elder, the man will be installed by the laying on of hands, after which he shall be considered a minister of the gospel.
- ix. Selection as an elder does not result in contract rights as an employee. All employees are "at will" and the employment relationship may be terminated without regard to such person continuing to serve as an elder. See ARTICLE 8.8 of these bylaws.
- x. An elder's position on the Council of Elders is pursuant to his continuation with the church and any voting or leadership right within the church is immediately revoked upon dismissal or if he is called elsewhere to pastor.

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Section 8.4 - Elder Service

- A. Though a plurality of elders is the New Testament norm for every church, the New Testament does not specify the number of elders each church should have, nor does it dictate the length of an elder's term of office. Therefore, only when an elder fails to meet the necessary scriptural qualifications for his office, or fails to be faithful to his calling, and thus no longer has spiritual support of the people of Christ, does he disqualify himself from being an elder.
- B. While the call of an elder at Redeeming Grace Bible Church may be for life, it may be prudent for an elder to step down from his responsibilities for providential reasons that are beyond his control (i.e. - personal or family sickness or concerns.. etc.). If the elders determine that an elder needs an extended Sabbath for a season because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness, tragedy), then that elder can transition to an inactive and non-voting elder for a set period of time as determined by the elders. This temporary leave from the duties of the office would remain as long as the providential circumstances continued to be evident. Under the oversight of his fellow elders, together they would monitor when it seems most prudent for all concerned to resume his duties as an elder at Redeeming Grace Bible Church. Upon the elder returning to his biblical duties, the congregation would be advised of that decision and be allowed to respond or ask questions at a pre-announced time. This would be done to protect the integrity of the church and the elder in question.
- C. There may be other circumstances that may cause an elder to remove himself from the office due to such things as moving away from the area.
- D. To resign from the Council of Elders, an elder must notify the Council of his decision in the form of a letter of resignation, which he will give to the lead elder, and which the lead elder will then distribute to the other elders.

Section 8.5. - Responsibilities of Elders

Elders are responsible for devoting themselves to prayer and the Word, governing the church, teaching the Word, and tending the flock of God at Redeeming Grace Bible Church. Their responsibilities include ...

- Instructing and examining prospective baptism and membership candidates and acquainting them with the Congregational Affirmation of Faith, Constitution and other church documents.
- Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17).
- Ruling/leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17).
- Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4–5).
- Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7).

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- Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
- Admonishing and/or overseeing the process of church discipline (Matthew 18:15–17).
- Examining prospective candidates for the offices of elder and deacon.
- Scheduling and moderating business meetings and seeing that official church business is reported and recorded.
- Overseeing the church membership (including oversight of Deacons, appointed ministry leaders, and committees).
- Conducting or delegating responsibility for worship services.
- Administering or delegating the administration of ordinances of the gospel.
- Developing contexts for both the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry in order to present them to God as mature in Christ.
- Teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2, 5:17).
- Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9).
- Coordinating and promoting the ministries of the church.
- Mobilizing the church for world missions.
- Giving themselves to diligent study and fervent prayer (Acts 6:4).
- Praying for the sick (James 5:13–15).
- Consistently offering their lives as examples to the flock.
- Mobilizing the church to the world through mercy and evangelistic ministry.
- Caring for people in the church including the sick, elderly, hurting, non-participating, etc (1 Peter 5:2-5).
- Promoting prayer within the fellowship.
- Establishing strategic long-term goals and objectives for Redeeming Grace Bible Church.
- Clarifying and guarding church doctrine and/or practices, including the formulation of consequent church policies (Acts 20:17–31).

Section 8.6. - Absence of a Plurality of Elders

- A. Our Constitution assumes, and the norms of biblical church order require, that a plurality of elders oversee this local assembly. Therefore, if at any period in the life of the church a plurality of elders does not exist in office and this lack cannot in a timely way be supplied, the remaining elder (or the assembly, if there are no elders) shall seek the temporary accountability and aide of two deacons from within the local assembly, selected by the existing elder (if one exists) and affirmed by the congregation through a vote. Those chosen should meet the requirements for a deacon as explained in **ARTICLE IX.**
- B. The purposes of such an arrangement are to provide interim leadership in the absence of a plurality of elders and provide accountability if there is only one elder in place. Approval by the remaining elder (if one exists) and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church shall be required to vote on each deacon being appointed to serve in this capacity.

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- C. If no elder is currently in office, three men shall be chosen by the church to serve as deacons to provide temporary care of the church and to lead the church in seeking pastor-elders to provide leadership. These pastor-elders may be sought from within or without of Redeeming Grace Bible Church. One of the deacons shall be selected to serve as moderator until an elder has been selected and installed.
- D. When a man meets the requirements for an elder, completes the process described in **Section 8.3** above, and is willing to undertake the responsibilities of an elder, the church shall within a reasonable period of time officially place itself under this eldership. If the church has an existing elder, the additional elder(s) shall function as his fellow elder(s). This action shall follow the process described in **ARTICLE VIII**.
- E. When a plurality of resident elders is raised up, the temporary deacon oversight arrangement here described shall immediately cease, by written request from the eldership of this church.

Section 8.7. - Termination of Vocational Call

A. By Resignation

The question of terminating the vocational call of an elder/pastor shall be considered at any time by the church upon the presentation of the elder's resignation.

B. Grievance

Where a grievance or any credible charge exists against an elder, whether moral impropriety or doctrinal error evidenced by his preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of Redeeming Grace Bible Church as set forth in **ARTICLE IV and ARTICLE VI** of these bylaws, such grievance may be brought before the Council of Elders by any two members in good standing. During the investigation, the elder in question shall not be allowed to vote on any church matters and shall be placed on temporary leave. If the Council of Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, the elder in question shall be tried by the elders according to the criteria of Scripture (e.g., James 3:1; 1 Timothy 5:19–21). The vocational call of the elder may be terminated at any business meeting upon the recommendation of the Council of Elders when supported by closed ballot of a majority of those members of the Church present and voting with at least fifty percent (50%) of the membership of the church present at such meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays preceding the meeting.

Section 8.8. - Compensation

A. General Statement:

No compensation shall be paid to elders, deacons, or other staff position unless a resolution authorizing such remuneration shall have been adopted by the council of elders and church membership before the services were rendered. All staffing costs are

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reflected in the annual budget. Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Redeeming Grace Bible Church shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of that compensation.

B. Financial Support of Elders:

Though all elders are equal as to the authority of their office, not all elders possess qualifications warranting full financial support in the office. The Bible teaches that special ability in ruling the church and, more especially, in public teaching and preaching are gifts worthy of full financial support. Thus, before it undertakes his financial support, the church must recognize that an elder or nominee to the eldership possesses special ministerial gifts and that he is excelling in the employment of those gifts for the benefit of the church, in ways appropriate to his opportunities. Special caution should be exercised in giving financial support, whether full or partial, to an elder for the following reasons:

- i. Full support necessitates his removal from a secular vocation, which, in the interests of Christ's Kingdom and of his family, might be a more advantageous position for him to occupy.
- ii. A major portion of the church's financial stewardship is involved, for which its Head will hold it accountable.
- iii. A financially supported elder has a greater influence upon the church, for good or ill. The provisions of this Section apply to any portion of financial support required by an increase of ministry that would hinder an elder's full-time employment in a secular vocation. Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim.5:17-18; 1 Cor 9:1-14.

C. Increase of Financial Support:

The elders or a member of the church may recommend to the church that an existing elder or a nominee to the eldership be financially supported. In the case of a nominee, full support may be considered in conjunction with the consideration of his qualifications for the eldership. In such a case, the elders will inform the church of their recommendation when the business meeting for this purpose is announced. A distinct discussion and vote for both election to the office and financial support in the office is not necessarily intended but may be needed so that the mind of the church might be made known.

- i. In the case of an existing elder who is being recommended for financial support or an increase in financial support, whether full or partial, a church meeting to consider this recommendation shall be announced on two consecutive Lord's Days prior to its being held. Such a recommendation may be considered in conjunction with the review of the elder involved. A distinct discussion and vote for both confirmation in the office and financial support in the office is not necessary.
- ii. During any meeting where financial support is being considered, special attention shall be given to the relevant teaching of Scripture. During the discussion the man under consideration and members of his immediate family shall leave the presence of the church until the written ballot is taken. Such discussion must at all times reflect the fear of God, the claims of truth, and the gravity of the matter.

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Any vote upon full support requires three-fourths of those ballots cast for approval.

iii. **Elder Remuneration Committee:** *(Section 8.8 C. iii was amended by congregational vote on February 4, 2016.)*

1. Because of the delicate nature of payroll and the duty we have to ensure that we are above reproach with outsiders, an Elder Remuneration Committee consisting of three men shall be formed to review elder compensation. Committee members shall be members of RGBC and appointed by the membership, but subject to elder approval, so that the committee is not appointed by only the congregation or only the elders. Committee members shall serve three-year terms, with the terms staggered so that one term expires every year. An individual may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. If unforeseen circumstances necessitate interim appointments, these can be done so as to preserve the spirit of this committee and this section.
2. The committee shall regularly consider input from both the congregation as well as the elders and then make recommendations to be voted on by the membership, requiring a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of support to pass. It is expected that the committee would make a presentation to the membership at least annually. The committee will be responsible to initiate discussions as appropriate, and shall be available to the elders and the membership to hear recommendations. The committee shall function as an independent third party to the extent possible, having received this mandate from the membership and the elders.
3. All elders and members of their immediate families shall excuse themselves from congregational meetings during the time where elder compensation is discussed so that free discussion can be had without hindrance to people speaking their minds.

ARTICLE IX - DEACONS

The term deacon simply means “servant.” Though every believer is a minister (servant), deacons are appointed by the elders to assist in areas of special service.

Section 9.1. - Description

A Deacon is a lead servant in the ministry of our church who works in extending the overseeing ministry of the Elders into the physical needs of the people and property of the church and responsibilities of this body. Under the Elders’ leadership, Deacons are to care for and maintain the orderly administration of our fellowship. Deacons are not in a position of authority in areas of teaching, correction, or rebuke.

Section 9.2. - Term

Deacons shall serve for as long as the elders deem necessary. Deacons may take

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sabbaticals from service as needed upon approval of the elders.

Section 9.3. - Qualifications

In accordance with the biblical requirements found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Deacons at Redeeming Grace Bible Church must be respectable, sincere, temperate, and trustworthy. They must not be greedy or drunkards. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience and manage their families well. Deacons will be tested to ensure that their lives qualify them for the task of service. The first Deacons in Acts 6:1-7 were “full of the Spirit and wisdom;” the Deacons of Redeeming Grace Bible Church must also demonstrate fullness of the Spirit and wisdom.

Section 9.4. - Obligations

- A. To meet specific designated needs in the congregation and broader community.
- B. To provide encouragement and help to the Elders in their ministry.
- C. Deacons are responsible primarily to administer the benevolent concerns of the church as well as its business affairs. Deacons are called upon to carry out the ministries which tend to distract the elders from their God-given calling to devote themselves to the ministry of the Word and to prayer. Deacons must fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with, and in subjection to, the Elders.

Section 9.5. - Selection

The following procedure will be followed for adding members to the Deacon community.

- A. Deacon nominations shall be presented as the Elders deem necessary.
- B. Nominations may also be made by the congregation according to the needs of the church (See **ARTICLE 8.6**) ([Acts 6:1-7](#); [1 Tim. 3:8-13](#)).
- C. The number of deacons shall not be fixed.
- D. A consensus approval of the Council of Elders and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership will be required to install deacons into office.

Section 9.6. - Termination

The following are reasons for termination of service:

- A. Resignation.
- B. Continued behavior which violates the biblical qualifications for the office (requires consensus vote of elders).
- C. Continued agreement with doctrine which violates the doctrinal outlook of our church as stated in **ARTICLE IV** and **ARTICLE VI** of these bylaws (requires consensus vote of elders).

ARTICLE X - MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the church of Jesus Christ is based on salvation.

Section 10.1. - Basic Requirements to be a Member

Any person shall be eligible for membership of Redeeming Grace Bible Church who:

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- Professes allegiance to and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Has been baptized in water upon profession of his or her faith. (Details of our position on Baptism and its relation to Membership are found in **Section 10.5.**)
- Is not under the biblically warranted corrective discipline of a genuine church.
- Agrees with our "Congregational Affirmation of Faith."
- Expresses substantial agreement with the teachings, aims, and organization of this church and its elders (See "Elder Affirmation of Faith" document).
- Has been made familiar with our "Constitution," "Relational Commitments," and other church documents.
- Mastery of church confessions is not required of any new disciple before he is admitted to church membership. Such a requirement would violate the order of [Matt. 28:19,20](#), which instructs us to disciple, to baptize, and then to teach the baptized disciple to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. It is necessary, however, that any disciple applying for membership manifest a willingness to be taught and possess substantial agreement with what he already knows concerning the church's doctrine and government.
- Has signed our Church Covenant.

Section 10.2. - Method of Becoming a Member

- A. **First**, notice is given to an elder by the individual that they would like to become a member of Redeeming Grace Bible Church in one of two ways:
 - i. **By verbal request.** Any person who can meet the requirements mentioned in **Section 10.1** of this Article may make his/her desire for membership known to one of the elders.
 - ii. **By letter of transfer.** Any person desiring to unite with this church who meets the above mentioned requirements and is coming from another evangelical church may present a letter of recommendation from the other church to the elders.
- B. **Second**, the applicant is interviewed by the elders and congregation. An elder (elders), and possibly another church member requested to be present by the elder(s), will meet with the applicant, who will be questioned as to his or her basic Christian experience, doctrinal beliefs, and seriousness of intention to wholeheartedly support the total ministry of this local assembly.
 - i. At this meeting the applicant will be introduced to our Constitution with particular attention to our "Congregational Affirmation of Faith," "Relational Commitments," and "Elder Affirmation of Faith" documents.
 - ii. At this meeting, the elders will also invite the applicant to provide a written testimony for distribution to the members of Redeeming Grace Bible Church explaining his/her understanding and experience of the Gospel of Christ. This written testimony is intended to promote a proper evaluation of the potential member and to encourage knowledgeable fellowship with him/her. The elders may request further clarification and/or expansion of this written testimony before

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proceeding with the application process.

- iii. The purpose of this process will be to determine whether or not the applicant meets the qualifications as stated in **Section 10.1** of these bylaws. If the applicant has been a member of another church, the elders will also investigate his/her standing in that church before he/she is accepted as a member in this church. Where it is possible and appropriate, a letter of transfer may be requested. Reception by transfer does not negate any of the requirements for becoming a member in this assembly.
 - iv. Upon the reception of an acceptable written testimony, the elders may, at their discretion, ask for another meeting with the applicant. Otherwise, the written testimony will be distributed to members at least one week (7 days) prior to the membership vote. This time period is for the purpose of enabling the members to read the testimony and to raise any questions or objections concerning the applicant's qualifications. Existing members are expected to consider this a personal duty of the most serious nature. They are expected to voice privately to the elders all questions or objections that have not yet been resolved ([Matt. 18:15ff](#); [Lev. 19:16, 17](#)).
- C. **Finally**, the applicant is publicly received into the church membership. If the elders are satisfied that the applicant meets the qualifications for membership, and any objections raised by the membership are effectually resolved, the person will be voted on by members and then subsequently received at the next stated member's meeting of the church, or at a special meeting called for the purpose of membership installation. ([Matt. 3:6-12](#); [Acts 9:26, 27](#); [1 John 4:1](#); [Rev. 2:2](#)).

Section 10.3. - Blessings of Membership

Membership in this church includes the following privileges:

- The context of public worship which enables them to worship God according to His command (John 4:23-24; I Pet. 2:4-5) and regular participation in the Lord's Supper ([Acts 2:41-42](#); [1 Cor. 11:18-26](#), [33](#)).
- Hearing preaching which is wholly true, instructive, spiritually useful unto repentance, faith, and edification unto sanctification (II Tim. 4:2-5; Titus 2:1-15).
- Labouring to extend God's Kingdom in fulfillment of the Great Commission to evangelize the world through ministries of the church (as one's gifts, graces and calling make appropriate) (Matt. 18:18-20; [1 Cor. 12:4-27](#) [cf. [1 Cor. 1:2](#)]; [Eph. 4:7](#); [11-12](#); [16](#); [1 Pet. 4:10-11](#)).
- Pastoral oversight and counsel suited to one's individual spiritual needs ([Acts 20:28](#); [1 Pet. 5:2-3](#); I Thes. 2:7, 10-12; 5:12; Heb. 13:17).
- The committed care and protection against heresies and corrupting sins through the corrective discipline (as needed) of the church and (Acts 20:28-30; Rom. 16:17; [Acts 6:1-2](#) [cf. [Acts 2:41](#); [5:13-14](#); [9:26](#)]; [1 Cor. 5:1-13](#) [cf. [1 Cor. 1:2](#)]; [Gal. 6:10](#)).
- An active participation in our corporate life through attendance at church family business meetings, the privilege of voting according to the stipulations of **Article X**; and the

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opportunity to serve and teach as granted by the eldership ([Acts 6:1-6](#)[cf. [Acts 2:41](#); [4:4](#); [5:13-14](#)]; [1 Cor. 5:4-7](#); [13](#) [cf. [1 Cor. 1:2](#)]).

- Fellowship with God's people so as to receive the helps of their love and spiritual gifts and benevolence (I Cor. 12:18-27; Eph. 4:11-16; Gal. 6:10).
- And generally, the due supply of the appointed means of grace necessary unto final perseverance to glory (Heb. 3:12-14; 6:11-12).

Section 10.4. - Expectations of Members

There are also biblical expectations upon every member. These expectations are further developed in our “Relational Commitments” document. Relationships in the church will be guided and governed by the biblical principles set forth in a document entitled “Relational Commitments,” which is incorporated into these bylaws by reference. This document establishes our commitments related to peacemaking and reconciliation, preserving marriages, protecting children, biblical counseling, confidentiality, accountability, and church discipline. These commitments may be amended from time to time in the same way that these bylaws may be amended.

Following is a summary of our expectations of members:

- All members are expected and encouraged to attend the meetings of the church whenever possible (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25).
- Each member is expected to regularly read the Bible and pray, and to tell others what God has done for them in Jesus Christ.
- All members are expected to support the church financially by systematically and joyfully giving of their income as the Lord directs them according to the principle laid down in [1 Cor. 16:2](#); 2 Cor. 8, 9. The tithe (ten percent of one's gross personal income) is not imposed on the people of God as a tax, as in the Old Testaments. However, it is considered an excellent starting place in our worship through basic giving. Added to this should be gifts and offerings according to one's ability and the willingness of his heart ([2 Cor. 8:1-5](#); [Exod. 36:2-7](#)).
- All the members of this church are expected to obey the teachings of Scripture in respect to the life and government of the family. The husband is the God-appointed head of the family and must rule his household with gentleness, love, wisdom, and firmness ([Eph. 5:25ff](#); [1 Tim. 3:4](#), [5](#); [1 Pet. 3:7](#)). The wife must be in Scriptural subjection to her husband in all things ([Eph. 5:22-24](#); [1 Pet. 3:1-6](#)). The husband and wife must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, being careful to not provoke them to anger ([Eph. 6:1-4](#)). This includes setting a godly example before them, consistently instructing them from the Scriptures ([Deut. 6:4-9](#)), and administering corporal chastening to them when needed ([Prov. 13:24](#); [22:15](#); [29:15](#); [Heb. 12:7](#)).
- It is expected that every Christian, as an individual and as a member of this local assembly, to labour by prayer, word, and deed for the extension of the kingdom of God in ever widening circles, beginning at home and stretching forth to the ends of the earth ([Isa. 54:1-3](#); [Acts 1:8](#)). Therefore, every member of this church is expected prayerfully to recognize and to seize every opportunity to bear witness to his faith in Christ, both by

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consistent Christian conduct and by the testimony of his lips.

- Each member of the church is expected to render loyal obedience to all the moral precepts of God's Word in his daily life ([Rom. 8:3, 4](#); [1 Cor. 9:20, 21](#); [James 2:12](#)). If God has not condemned or forbidden a practice in His Word, a Christian is at liberty to participate in it. The exercise of Christian liberty, however, must at all times be governed by an earnest desire to walk in the fear of God and to glorify Him in all things ([1 Pet. 1:17](#); [1 Cor. 10:31](#)), a loving regard for the consciences of weaker brothers and sisters ([1 Cor. 8:9](#); [Rom. 15:1-3](#)), a compassion for the lost ([1 Cor. 9:19-22](#)), and a zealous regard for the health of one's own soul ([Rom. 13:14](#); [1 Cor. 6:12](#); [9:24-27](#); [Gal. 5:22, 23](#); [1 Pet. 2:16](#)).
- All who come into the membership of this church are expected to recognize and to submit to the authority of the overseers (elders) of the church ([1 Cor. 16:15,16](#); [1 Thess. 5:12, 13](#); [Heb. 13:17](#)). This responsibility will include willingly scheduling an oversight meeting with (an) elder(s) when requested.
- We who have been joined to Christ by faith and are members of this church are also members one of another ([Rom. 12:5](#)). With this privileged relationship come particular responsibilities. We must maintain mutual transparency and honesty ([Eph. 4:25](#)). We must rejoice in each other's honour and bear one another's sorrows ([1 Cor. 12:26](#)). We must discreetly confess our faults one to another ([James 5:16](#)). We must mutually oversee each other, faithfully admonish and encourage one another, avoid all backbiting and gossip, and keep in strict confidence all matters which the elders determine are of private concern to the church ([Prov. 11:13](#); [Matt. 18:15ff](#); [1 Thess. 5:14, 15](#); [Heb. 3:12, 13; 10:24, 25](#)). Also, we must, when necessary, help meet the material needs of our brethren ([Gal. 6:10](#); [James 2:14-16](#); [1 John 3:16-18](#)).

Section 10.5. - Baptism and Church Membership

- A. The teaching and practice of baptism at Redeeming Grace Bible Church is defined in the Redeeming Grace Church "Elder Affirmation of Faith." The key paragraph states: We believe that baptism, which should occur soon after initial conversion, is an ordinance of the Lord by which those who have repented and come to faith express their union with Christ in His death and resurrection, by being immersed in water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is a sign of belonging to the new covenant community in Christ, and an emblem of burial and cleansing, signifying death to the old life of unbelief, and purification from the pollution of sin. In Baptism the believer is buried in the water symbolizing their death and raised from the water symbolizing their new life in Christ.
- B. Thus the official position of Redeeming Grace Bible Church is that only baptism by immersion of believers will be taught and practiced by the church. Customarily, therefore, all members of the church will have been baptized by immersion as believers.
- C. However, we believe it is fitting that membership in the local church (distinct from leadership in the local church) should have prerequisites similar to the prerequisites for

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membership in the universal church. In other words, we believe it is unfitting to deny membership to a person who, by faith in Christ, gives evidence of regeneration.

- D. Therefore, our aim is not to elevate beliefs and practices that are nonessential to the level of prerequisites for church membership. This implies that Christians who have not been baptized by immersion as believers, but, as they are convinced, by some other method, may under some circumstances be members of this church.
- E. Since we believe that the New Testament teaches and demonstrates that the mode of baptism is only the immersion of a believer in water, we therefore regard all other practices of baptism as misguided. Yet, while not taking these differences lightly, we would not elevate them to the level of what is essential. Thus, we will welcome into membership candidates who, after a time of study, discussion, and prayer, prescribed by the Elders, retain a conviction that it would be a violation of their conscience to be baptized by immersion as believers. This conviction of conscience must be based on a plausible, intelligible, Scripturally-based argument rather than on mere adherence to a tradition or family expectations. The elders will make all such judgments in presenting candidates for membership to the congregation. All candidates for membership, even when holding firmly to views different from the official position of the elders, must demonstrate a humble and teachable disposition with respect to the church leadership.
- F. We will not admit into membership persons who has not been baptized by any mode as a believer, or who believe that their water baptism caused their regeneration. The former is a serious rejection of the Lord's commandment, and the latter is a serious misunderstanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Our CONGREGATIONAL AFFIRMATION OF FAITH states, "Baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances to be observed by the local church in the present age. These ordinances are not to be regarded as means of salvation."
- G. Finally, no member shall teach or in any way promote any mode of baptism other than immersion, which is the official position of Redeeming Grace Bible Church.

Section 10.5. - Termination of Membership

A. By transfer

Letters of transfer will be granted by the elders to members who apply for them, providing they are in good standing at the time of the application. Letters of transfer shall only be given to other evangelical churches.

B. By request

A member may request to remove his or her membership from the church. This may be done at any time, provided the member is not currently under discipline as described below. All those who so remove their memberships must go through the original application process if they want to rejoin the church again.

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C. By exclusion

Any member who is habitually absent from the stated meetings of the church for a period of six months or more, or is unwilling to settle matters of private offence with others in a biblical manner, or requests severance of membership, may be excluded from the membership at the discretion of the elders, subject to the approval of the members.

D. By excommunication

It is right and in harmony with the Scriptures for the elders, upon approval of the congregation, to exclude from this fellowship any person who persists in holding false doctrine, or who obviously and persistently lives inconsistently with his or her Christian profession, or who persists in disturbing the peace and unity of the Church (see [Matthew 18:15ff](#); [1 Corinthians 5:1ff](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:6-15](#); [Romans 16:17](#)).

Section 10.6. - Records of Membership

The Council of Elders shall keep a file of all past and present members of Redeeming Grace Bible Church.

ARTICLE XI - CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Redeeming Grace Bible Church recognizes the need to exercise Biblical discipline to bring fellow believers caught in sin to repentance and restoration and to protect the purity of the church. This discipline is to be administered according to the guidelines of the Word of God (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; Titus 3:9-11).

The purpose, practice and procedure for Church Discipline are explained in our *Relational Commitments and Guidelines for Church Discipline*. Every person who maintains membership at Redeeming Grace Bible Church explicitly consents to submit to the process of church discipline outlined therein and agrees that there shall be no appeal to any court because of decisions reached in the disciplinary process or public statements made during the process.

ARTICLE XII - MEETINGS

Section 12.1. - For Worship

Public meetings shall be held on the Lord's Day. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at least once per month or at such other times as the Council of Elders may determine. Other meetings may be appointed as the advancement of the work of the Church may require.

Section 12.2. - For Business

A. The Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting shall be held some time during the last month of the fiscal year of the Church for the purpose of calling and reaffirming the officers, reviewing proposed budgets and other business. Corporate Officers called at the annual meeting shall assume their duties at the beginning of the new fiscal year.

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B. Quarterly Meetings.

Quarterly meetings of the Church shall be held within the first month of each quarter of the fiscal year.

C. Special Meetings.

The Council of Elders or any ten members in good standing, may call for a special meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit or by other notification, the particular object of such meeting being clearly stated in the notice. Notice shall be given at least one week in advance for meetings on specially important matters not otherwise provided for.

D. Quorum.

Any number of members shall constitute a quorum at any ordinary meeting of the Church. At meetings dealing with particular matters stipulated in these bylaws, the quorums prescribed shall apply.

E. Rules Governing Business Meetings.

Business meetings are to be conducted according to the scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. Seeking the Lord's wisdom and blessing through thankful prayer shall be a part of every meeting.

F. Notice Provisions.

Reasonable attempts to notify membership shall be made including public notice from the pulpit, by email, by phone, etc.

ARTICLE XIII - VOTING

Those admitted to church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members of the Corporation, and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the Corporation, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the Corporation, or rights to vote on its disposal, except any vote specifically provided in these bylaws or as specifically provided by the Council of Elders. Said property of the Corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation.

Congregational voting shall occur in the following instances:

- A. Affirmation of the annual budget and significant changes in the budget exceeding 5% of the annual budget.
- B. Affirmation of Elder or Deacon candidates from within Redeeming Grace Bible Church for installation.
- C. Purchases of land and real estate.
- D. Specific purchases over \$500 not previously designated in the annual budget (A quorum for this vote shall require twenty percent (20%) of our membership in attendance at a regular meeting of the church and two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present.)
- E. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws.

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- F. Other such matters as shall be brought to the church for a vote by the council of elders.

The above votes must be approved by the consensus of the Elders and two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the congregation (except those exempted above). Fifty percent of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for the above votes.

ARTICLE XIV - BUDGET

The budget may be amended in three ways: reallocation, adjustment for growth, and expansion

Section 14.1. - Reallocation

- A. The budget may be amended by reallocation of funds from one account to another upon approval by the elders so long as the total change in funds does not exceed five percent of the annual budget. This change does not require congregational approval.
- B. Reallocation of funds which exceeds five percent of the annual budget requires both consensus by the elders and a majority vote of the congregation. In this case, the amendment to the budget must be presented in writing to the congregation and approved by a majority vote at a members' meeting. Fifty percent of the members shall be considered a quorum for this vote.

Section 14.2. - Adjustment for growth

- A. The budget may be amended if giving exceeds the amount estimated in the annual budget. Adjustment for growth allows the elders to expand the budget so that what is given can be distributed to various budget items in proportion to the excess giving.
- B. Elders must approve adjustment for growth by majority vote.
- C. Adjustment for growth does not require congregational approval.

Section 14.3. - Expansion

- A. The budget may be amended for the expansion of ministry need. This includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Expansion of a budget for a ministry that has grown in its need for resources.
 - ii. Addition of a new budget item, such as a new ministry or staff member.
- B. Expansion for budget items less than five percent of the annual budget may be approved by a majority vote of the elders and does not require congregational approval.
- C. Expansion for budget items greater than five percent of the annual budget may be approved by a majority vote of the elders and a majority vote of the congregation. In this case, the amendment to the budget must be presented in writing to the congregation and approved by a majority vote at a members' meeting. Fifty percent of the members shall be considered a quorum for this vote.

ARTICLE XV - OBSERVANCE OF ORDINANCES

Section 15.1. - Introduction

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- A. God has left His people with two physical signs with which to strengthen our often lagging faith - baptism and the Lord's Supper. There is no saving power in these ordinances. They are for those who already are saved through faith in Jesus Christ.
- B. Baptism is a public testimony in which the believer identifies himself or herself with the Saviour, who died, was buried and rose again. The Lord's Supper is a visible, symbolic reminder that Jesus Christ gave His body and shed His blood on Calvary for our redemption.

Section 15.2. - Baptism

- A. Following the direction of the Scriptures, we practice baptism of believers by immersion and only admit into membership those who have testified to their faith in the waters of baptism. (Details of our position on Baptism and its relation to Membership are found in **Section 10.5.** of these bylaws.)
- B. Any person who professes allegiance to and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and whose life gives tangible evidence that this is the case, may make known his or her desire to be baptized to one of the elders. A representative of the elders will then meet with the applicant who will be examined concerning his or her Christian experience and understanding of the meaning of baptism.
- C. The ordinance of baptism is the outward profession of faith for the believer. Upon a clear profession of faith, believers in Jesus Christ are to be baptised into water by immersion in obedience to our Lord's command. In this baptism, we are reminded of the truth of our union with Jesus Christ. We are now part of His Kingdom. We have been delivered from this present evil age -- its curse, its condemnation, its vanity, its corruption. We walk in newness of life. We stand complete in the merits of God's own Son. Baptism is the believer's formal profession of faith and identification with Jesus.
- D. Since many of the baptisms recorded in scripture are private, it is not necessary for there to be a public service of baptism. It is perfectly proper for a believer to baptize someone who has made a clear profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

Section 15.3. - The Lord's Supper

- A. All who profess faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are welcome to join Redeeming Grace Bible Church in taking of the Lord's Supper. However, known unbelievers or children without proper understanding must not partake, otherwise they eat and drink judgement upon themselves.
- B. The Lord's Supper was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ on the night He was betrayed. This ordinance of the New Covenant age is to be observed in the church until our Lord returns. The church is to come together, break bread, and partake of that bread and cup in remembrance of the Lord on a regular basis (Acts 20:7; Acts 2:42). The elements, the bread and the fruit of the vine, are a reminder of the sacrifice on the cross of Jesus Christ for His people. At the Lord's table, we are reminded that through the one perfect

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offering of Himself, Jesus Christ has atoned for ALL our sin. The bread represents to us the body of Christ, of which we are all members (1 Cor. 10:16-17). Christ has come in human flesh that we might be redeemed and made partakers of the kingdom of light. Christ has reconciled us to His Father, whereby we have peace with God through the blood of His cross in an everlasting covenant relationship. The cup represents this new covenant relationship purchased through the shed blood of our Lord.

- C. We are to continue this remembrance regularly until our Lord returns (1 Cor. 11:23-26). In that day we will feast with our Lord at His table in all the fullness of the Kingdom. Indeed, our gracious Lord has given us this occasion to prop up our faith until that day when our faith shall be made sight.

ARTICLE XVI - PHILOSOPHY OF BIBLE TRANSLATION

Those who minister the Word publicly from the pulpit, in Sunday school, or other teaching opportunities shall be at liberty to preach from “essentially-literal” translations, such as the English Standard Version, New American Standard, King James Version, etc. These translations are “essentially literal” in that they seek as much as possible to capture the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer. These translations are also sometimes called “formal” or “optimal” equivalence translations. Since these are not paraphrases but are instead the Word of God, it is therefore entirely right and lawful to use them both privately and publicly.

Visitors and members should never be subject to a spirit of intimidation based on the translation he or she prefers or brings to meetings of Redeeming Grace Bible Church. Our fellowship must not be based upon which English translation one carries and studies. Since we are committed to the explicit teaching of God’s Word and there is no statement in Scripture that says God’s Word is preserved exclusively in one text or translation, the issue of Bible translation is not one over which we will divide.

ARTICLE XVII - ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTION

This constitution stands adopted in its current form.