



CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONSTITUTION

Preamble	1
Article I: Name	1
Article II: Mission & Vision	1
Article III: Statement of Basic Beliefs	1
Article IV: Church Covenant	2
Article V. Governance and Relationships	2

BYLAWS

Article I: Church Membership	3
Section 1: General	3
Section 2: Candidacy	3
Section 3: Privileges of Members	3
Section 4: Termination of Membership	3
Article II: Repentance and Reconciliation	4
Section 1: Sin, Repentance, and Church Discipline	4
Section 2: Dispute Resolution	5
Section 3: Indemnification (Protection Against Lawsuits)	5
Article III: Congregational Service	5
Section 1: Eligibility for Service	5
Section 2: Selection	6
Section 3: Terms of Service	6
Section 4: Elders, Deacons, and Staff	6
A. Elders	6
B. Senior Pastor	8
C. Associate Pastor	8
D. Additional Ministerial Staff	9
E. Deacons	9
F. Leadership Council	11
G. Termination of Pastors, Elders, and Deacons	11
H. State of Nevada – Non-Profit Corporation Requirements	12
1. Clerk	12
2. Treasurer	12
Section 5: Church Ministries	12
Article IV: Church Ordinances	12
Section 1: Baptism	12
Section 2: The Lord’s Supper	13
Article V: Church Meetings	13
Section 1: Worship Services	13

Section 2: Special Services	13
Section 3: Regular Business Meetings	13
Section 4: Special Business Meetings	13
Section 5: Quorum	14
Section 6: Parliamentary Rules	14
Article VI: Church Finances	14
Section 1: Budget	14
Section 2: Accounting Procedures	14
A. Contributions Secretary	14
B. Accounting Secretary	15
Section 3: Fiscal Year	15
Article VII: Church Operations Manual	15
Article VIII: Dissolution	15
Article IX: Amendments	16
Appendix A: Summary Praxis and Doctrinal Statement	17

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article I: Name

This body shall be known as the Grass Valley Baptist Church of Winnemucca, Nevada, herein after referred to as GVBC, located at 4150 W. Thomas Canyon Road, Winnemucca, Nevada 89445.

Article II: Mission and Vision

The mission of GVBC is to bring glory and honor to God through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His Great Commandment (Mark 12:30-31) and Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

Fulfillment of the mission of GVBC requires that we have a clear and common vision of what God has called us to do. Through the direction of the Holy Spirit, unity of vision, and through quality communication, we can then employ specific ministries in fulfillment of our mission. All ministries will be developed on Biblical truths and bathed in prayer. Although ministries will certainly change with time and periodic evaluation, all of the ministries will work towards the vision as cast by the pastor(s) and elders of Grass Valley Baptist Church as led by the Lord.

Article III: Statement of Basic Beliefs

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 with the following exception: we see the New Testament giving evidence of elders (which includes pastors) and deacons as the scriptural officers of the church and operating under the leadership of elders as under-shepherds, rather than through democratic processes. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to fulfilling the mission God has given both to us personally and to our congregation. (See Article II above). The ordinances of the church are believers' baptism and the Lord's Supper. (See Article IV of the Bylaws).

Article IV: Church Covenant

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body of Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship ordinances, doctrines and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations, and to work towards the fulfillment of its mission and vision (See Article II above).

We also strive to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk prudently in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our commitments, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid the occasion and appearance of sin, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the commands of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

Article V: Governance and Relationships

Christ is the Head of this body and the church will be governed as He instructs through God's Holy Word. Specifically, Grass Valley Baptist Church has decided the biblical approach to church polity is through elder governance (See Business Meeting Minutes – September 2010). The elders will be devoted to the ministry of the word and prayer to discern God's direction and will. Additionally, the congregation, with input from the elders, will select deacons to carry out the physical needs of the church and its property. Other internal groups or teams may be created and empowered by the elders. As the elders will be held responsible for all of the decisions of the church, the deacons and all other internal groups or teams shall report to and be accountable to the elders, unless otherwise specified through a delegation of authority by the elders.

This church is subject to the control of no other religious or denominational body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Northeast Baptist Association, the Nevada Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. This church receives the Holy Scripture as its authority in all matters of faith and practice.

BYLAWS

Article I: Church Membership

Section 1: General

This is a sovereign and elder led Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The elders will make all decisions relating to church membership.

Section 2 Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. The pastor(s) and/or elders shall counsel all such candidates for church membership. A new member will be required to read, agree to and sign the Summary Praxis and Doctrinal Statement (See Appendix A) as well as the Church Covenant (See Article IV of the Constitution). Prior to being accepted as a member, the elders will publicize to the church for the purpose of receiving input, those who have requested membership. Furthermore, if the candidate holds membership at another church, the elders shall contact that church to ensure they were a member in good standing and to request a transfer of membership. After all being in order, the elders shall present new members to the church at any regular church service or business meeting based upon their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and previous baptism by immersion.

Section 3 Privileges of Church Membership

1. Members are entitled to participate in the deacon selection process.
2. Annually, a survey may be distributed to the congregation to get feedback on the direction of the church and its ministries.
3. Only church members will be notified of church discipline decisions at a special called meeting for such a purpose.
4. Members may vote in special elections as called for by the elders.

Section 4 Termination of Membership

Elders shall consider and terminate membership of a church member, if warranted, according to the following ways:

1. Death of the member.
2. Transfer to another church.
3. Disciplinary actions (See Article II, Section1).
4. Voluntary termination of membership.
5. Erasure:

If after a period of time of non attendance or after moving away from the area members have not transferred to another church, the church will request if the person still wants to be considered a member. If there is no response to our request, or if no forwarding address is available to ask the member if they want to retain their membership, then membership will be terminated.

The elders shall respond in good faith as to a member's standing based on biblical principles with respect to transfer of membership to another church.

Article II: Repentance and Reconciliation

Section 1 Sin, Repentance, and Church Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor(s), elders, and other members of the church staff are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

The elders and every believer in the church shall address sin issues among believers in a loving manner and in accordance with Matthew 18. When necessary, the elders will continue this process of encouraging repentance. The elders will do so on a case-by-case basis as established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If an obvious lack of repentance continues or a sin issue requires immediate attention because it involves issues such as church unity, the corporate witness to non-believers, or the good and purity of the church, then the elders will initiate a process of loving discipline which may include public or private admonition by the elders, suspension from communion for a definite period of time, removal from office and/or terminating church membership (See Article I, Section 4). The church shall be notified in a loving and discreet manner of all decisions concerning termination of members as well as of their individual responsibilities towards that individual in accordance with Scripture. (Proverbs 27:5-6, 27:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Matthew 7:1-5, 7:15-23, 18:15-35; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 2:11-14, 6:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20)

The purpose of such discipline should be:

- For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15:5, 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews 12:1-11; Psalm 119:115, 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26-27; 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13-14; James 1:22);
- For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24-25);
- For the purity of the church as a whole (see 1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2);
- For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1-14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10); and
- Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 18:17, 18:25; Romans 2:24; 15:5-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12).

The elders may at a regular meeting of the church restore to membership any person previously excluded based on meeting all of the following:

1. The request of the excluded person.
2. Evidence of the subject person's repentance as determined by the elders.

Section 2: Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18:15–20, 1 Corinthians 6:1–8), GVBC shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts.

Furthermore, the members and Christian attendees of GVBC shall accept the decisions of the church through its elders, or their designees, as binding and shall refrain from any gossip, libel, slander, or legal action towards the church, its leaders, or its members and attendees.

Section 3: Indemnification (Protection against Lawsuits)

A. Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide financial consideration against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and he person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

B. Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may provide financial consideration to help any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

C. Procedure

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination for whatever reason, the requisite determination may be made by the Leadership Council or by special legal counsel appointed by the church.

Article III: Congregational Service

Section 1: Eligibility for Service

Service in the Kingdom of God is a requirement of all believers. Although, this service can and should occur, in part, outside of the formal ministry of the local church, it is also true that service within the ministries of the local church is an integral part of a believer's life as well. Service in the church allows for training, accountability, and synergy to occur in a believer's ministry. Given this fact, all individuals who have professed Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, who have been baptized by immersion, and who have signed a statement of agreement with the doctrines and practice of GVBC (See Appendix A) shall be eligible for service in the church. Although encouraged, church membership shall not be a requirement of service except for those serving as elders and deacons (Article III, Sections 4.A & 4.E) or ministry heads (Article III, Section 5).

Section 2: Selection

Deacons shall be selected by the congregation. (See Article III, Section 4.E)

All ministry heads, Sunday school or Bible study teachers shall be appointed into office by the elders. Deacons and ministry heads may enlist volunteers to help conduct the tasks of a ministry.

Section 3 Terms of Service

Elders and deacons shall serve until they die, move, resign or are dismissed (See Article III, Section 4.G). The terms of service for all Sunday school teachers and ministry heads shall be for one year and run concurrent with the school year. Individuals enlisted by deacons or ministry heads to assist in an area of service will serve for a length of time at the discretion of the deacons or ministry heads. Prior to the completion of a term of service, the elders may dismiss or reassign individuals for the health and wellbeing of the person or the congregation including if a person is deemed to no longer meet the spiritual qualifications of their position, due to a sin issue, and/or conduct or performance issues. Should a position other than deacon become vacant for any reason, a replacement may be appointed by the elders to complete the remaining portion of that term.

The elders may reselect individuals to consecutive terms of service.

Section 4: Elders, Deacons, and Staff

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13). Although these individuals will have the primary responsibility for leadership and service in the church, respectively, they will also have both the responsibility and authority to select other individuals to help in these tasks. Elders and deacons must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

A. Elders

The elders are the church's spiritual leaders and thus oversee all the ministry of the church. They are to live lives described by 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. The descriptions given in these verses shall be viewed as standards of an elder's life rather than qualifications for service. The elder body will consist of the pastor(s) and selected men whose lives fulfill these standards and exemplify Christ. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine in keeping with Scripture), and shepherding/pastoring Grass Valley Baptist Church.

1. Responsibilities – The elders will love, pray and care for, and maintain unity within the body. In addition the elders will be responsible for the following:
 - a. The elders will meet at least once a month to pray together, seek God's will for the church, discuss relevant issues regarding the church, and make decisions that will benefit the body of GVBC and further the Kingdom of God.
 - b. The elders will examine and instruct prospective members, examine and select all individuals for offices and positions in the church, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and work groups, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders

are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

- c. The elders may establish ministry positions or work groups to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also create new paid staff positions. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, evaluation, and termination of staff members, including developing job descriptions and conducting annual performance evaluations. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member. Furthermore the elders shall conduct performance evaluations on one another and the elder board as a whole.
- d. The elders shall prepare and annual church report, including but not limited to the significant ministry events of the previous year, how many people were ministered to and how, and the church finances.
- e. The elders shall participate on the Leadership Council, when appropriate.
- f. An elder shall serve as the moderator of all regular and special-called business meetings.
- g. The elders shall serve as the trustees of the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote by the elder board authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any church property. When signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.
- h. The elders will be responsible for making changes to the constitution and bylaws, when necessary (See Article IX).

2. Selection

The Bible teaches that the selection of elders be conducted after careful investigation to see if a man's life meets the standards determined by the Bible.

The current elder board will appoint elders subject to the following:

- Any man being considered for the responsibility of an elder must meet standards described by 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- All men in the body being considered for elder will undergo a six-month evaluation. During this time the body will be requested to give input regarding any concerns or approval. Following the six-month evaluation period, the elders will make the determination whether or not to appoint a candidate as an elder. The elders may, at their discretion, lengthen this six month period.
- The elders may at their discretion call the church to submit nominations for elders.

3. Term of Service

Elders shall serve until they die, move, step down, or are removed (See Article II, Section 4.G). In the event an elder steps down and then wants to serve again at a later time, the process for his selection will be the same as described above under "Selection" (Article III, Section 4.A.2). During eldership, elders may take a sabbatical without having to be reselected.

B. Senior Pastor

1. Responsibilities

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the body to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation and pastoral ministries in the church, supervise the day-to-day business of the church, and satisfactorily perform any other duties outlined in his job description. In all ways he shall conduct himself in a way that glorifies God. The senior pastor shall be an elder. As such he shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 4.A above, shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the ministry of preaching and teaching, and shall assist the elders and the church staff to:

- Lead the church in the achievement of its Mission and Vision.
- Proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers.
- Make disciples of all nations.
- Care for the church's members and the other persons in the community.
- Maintain the purity and unity of the church.

2. Selection

The pastor shall be a duly licensed and/or ordained minister of the Gospel and meet the standards of an elder given in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

The church shall call a pastor whenever a vacancy occurs based on the following:

- The Leadership Council shall establish a pastoral interview or pulpit committee.
- The committee will advertise and interview pastoral candidates.
- Based on these interviews, the committee shall bring forth for the consideration of the elders one name at a time.
- Once the elders have selected a pastoral nominee, the church shall hear the nominee preach.
- The elders and congregation shall then prayerfully consider the nominee and conduct a vote of confidence on the nominee. The elders will then decide whether or not to call the nominee as a pastor. The pastor, thus selected, shall serve until the position is vacated by resignation, death, or dismissal (See Article III, Section 4.G below).

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

C. Associate Pastor

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate. The elders shall determine the process used for such a call.

An associate pastor is responsible for assisting the senior pastor in leading the body to function as a New Testament church and shall satisfactorily perform any other duties outlined in his job description. In all ways he shall conduct himself in a way that glorifies God. An associate pastor shall be an elder. As such he shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 4.A above and shall assist the elders and the church staff to:

- Lead the church in the achievement of its Mission and Vision.
- Proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers.
- Make disciples of all nations.
- Care for the church's members and the other persons in the community.
- Maintain the purity and unity of the church.

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

D. Additional Ministerial Staff

The elders may appoint additional staff to help carry out the duties assigned by the elders.

E. Deacons

In the Greek language of the New Testament, the word "deacon" meant "servant," and where deacons are seen in action in the New Testament (Acts 6:1-6), the word "servant" is a fitting description of them.

1. Responsibilities

Scripture indicates that men and women have different roles and responsibilities: women are to minister to women, and men are to minister to men. Thus a deaconess is a female servant with responsibilities that are not the same as those of male deacons.

Deacons and deaconesses shall jointly be responsible for ensuring the temporal needs of the church are met, such as, but not limited to:

- Planning for and maintenance of everything the church owns
- Planning and providing for church fellowship activities
- Caring for the personal needs of the congregation
- Benevolence
- Supporting the church ministries, i.e. preparation for the ordinances of the church
- Service on the Leadership Council.

The number of deacons serving at any one time will be sufficient to accomplish God's work for the church. It is up to the discretion of the deacons/deaconesses to form teams to assist them.

2. Standards

1 Timothy 3:8-10 says, "Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach."

In the original Greek, the word "men" used in these verses is either gender neutral or non-existent. Therefore it is understood all of the gender neutral passages listed above would apply to both men and women. Thus male and female deacons are to be:

- a. Dignified
- b. Not double tongued

- c. Not addicted to much wine
- d. Not fond of sordid gain
- e. Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience
- f. Tested
- g. Beyond reproach

1 Timothy 3:11 says, “Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.”

This verse gives additional expectations for women deacons. While we would hope our male deacons would live up to this standard as well, specifically women deacons are to be:

- h. Not malicious gossips
- i. Temperate
- j. Faithful in all things

1 Timothy 3:12-13 says, “Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”

These verses show deacons must be faithful and pure in their relationships and good managers in the responsibilities entrusted to them by God. Husbands in particular are to faithfully lead their families.

Additionally, deacons must be members of GVBC.

3. Selection

According to Acts 6, the church shall select deacon candidates based on meeting the standards described in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. In accordance with 1 Timothy 3:10, the elders shall test the prospective deacon prior to serving. In addition, prospective deacons shall have proven to be servants.

The following procedures shall be observed in the selection process:

- Forms are distributed with a description of the deacon/ess responsibilities and the Biblical standards for the office.
- People will turn in these forms with the name(s) of people they feel qualified and gifted to serve as deacons/esses.
- The elders will screen all of the names turned in to ensure they meet the Biblical standards and that they are willing to be considered.
- The names of those who meet the standards and are willing to be considered will be reported to the congregation. From this list, people will turn in the names of their top choices.
- The top candidates will be interviewed to fully explain the job.

- The top candidates willing to serve will be put up for a vote by the congregation. All those receiving an affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) will serve as deacons.

4. Term of Service

Deacons shall serve until they die, move, step down, or are removed (See Article III, Section 4.G). In the event a deacon steps down and then wants to serve again at a later time, the process for his selection will be the same as described above under “Selection” (Article III, Section 4.E.3). During deaconship, deacons may take a sabbatical without having to be reselected.

F. Leadership Council

The Leadership Council is comprised of the elders and deacons. This council shall exist for the limited purposes of: managing the budget, determining the compensation of paid staff, and the screening and evaluation of pastoral candidates. The discipline of elders (see Article III, Section 4.G below) would be by male members of the Leadership council in accordance with 1 Tim. 2:12 and Article III Section 4.E.

G. Termination of Pastors, Elders, and Deacons

The tenure of the pastor(s), elders, and deacons shall continue unless terminated by death, moving, resignation or termination by dismissal. The pastor(s) may relinquish the office of pastor by giving at least thirty (30) days notice to the church at the time of resignation.

1. Pastors and Elders

Any two individuals with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed based on sin, performance or conduct issues should express such concern to the elders. Sin issues shall be addressed in accordance with the instructions of Matthew 18:15–17, 1 Timothy 5:17–21, and Article II, Section 1. The elders may dismiss an elder from office by a unanimous vote of the other elders. The elder being considered for termination must abstain from voting. If the elders do not unanimously vote to dismiss or acquit or if the elders do not even consider an accusation brought by two or more witnesses, the decision to dismiss will go to the Leadership Council who can dismiss by 75% vote. Again, the elder being considered for termination must abstain from voting. The decision of the Leadership Council to dismiss or acquit shall be binding.

Except in instances of gross misconduct by a pastor removed from office, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one month’s worth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

2. Deacons

Any individual with reason to believe that a deacon should be dismissed based on sin, performance or conduct should express such concerns to the elders. Sin issues shall be addressed in accordance with the instructions of Matthew 18:15–17 and Article II,

Section 1. The elders may dismiss a deacon from office by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote. The decision of the elders shall be binding.

H. State of Nevada – Non-Profit Corporation Requirements

The elders will ensure that the church complies with the State of Nevada Non-Profit Corporation requirements in keeping the church in good standing with the state.

1. Clerk

The clerk on file with the State of Nevada as the corporate secretary will serve as the official church clerk. Some of the duties may be delegated to a church secretary to assist the clerk. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official action of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, the dates of admission, transfers, exclusions, death or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained. Electronic files are to be backed up to disk or a second computer once a week, this backup being kept at the church.

2. Treasurer

The treasurer on file with the State of Nevada as the corporate treasurer will serve as the official church treasurer. This church treasurer will oversee, along with the Leadership Council the financial practices of the church including supervising the work of the contributions secretary and accounting secretary (See Article VI, Section 2).

Section 5: Church Ministries

The church should develop and maintain ministries that support the mission and vision of the church. The leadership of these ministries shall be members of the church who are selected by and responsible to the elders. In response to God's leading and provision, the church will make every effort to provide the human, physical, and financial resources needed for these ministries.

Article IV: Church Ordinances

Section 1: Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

- Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- A pastor, or whomever the elders authorize, shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for and the observance of baptism.
- A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by a pastor and/or staff or elders.

Section 2: The Lord's Supper

The Church shall regularly observe the Lord's Supper. A pastor or, in his absence, an elder shall administer the Lord's Supper. The deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparations. Participation in the Lord's Supper shall be open to anyone who confesses Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord and Savior.

Article V: Church Meetings

Section 1: Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, and on additional days and times as determined by the elders, for worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, discipleship, missions, fellowship and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The elders, or their designee, shall direct the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

Section 2: Special Services

All special services and other uses of the church building and/or equipment shall be approved by the leader of the appropriate ministry and/or the elders. The dates and times of these services must be communicated to the church office so as to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Section 3: Regular Business Meetings

The church shall hold regular business meetings at least semi-annually. The date, time and location of these meetings shall be placed on the church calendar and publicized to the church. The focus of these meetings shall be reporting on and praying for the various ministries and business of the church, as well as providing the elders an opportunity to gather input from the congregation on various matters. The elders will present annually a ministry report to the church.

Section 4: Special Business Meetings

The elders may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A two-week notice must be given for the special called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and the time and place, and it must be given in such a manner that members have reasonable opportunity to know of the meeting.

The members of the church may request that the elders call a special business meeting. If ten percent of the church membership request of the elders to conduct a special called business meeting, the elders shall be required to do so within one month of the request. A majority of the members in attendance shall choose an elder to serve as moderator at the special meeting. The elders may not be required to conduct a special called business meeting more than once in a six month period.

Section 5 Quorum

To conduct any meeting where official decisions are made, a quorum of at least 60% of the elder board is required.

Section 6 Parliamentary Rules

Roberts Rules of Order, latest revised edition, will be a guide for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church but alterations can be made as necessary to promote Christian unity.

Article VI: Church Finances

Section 1: Budget

Each year the Leadership Council, after consultation with the ministry heads, shall develop a church budget that itemizes the anticipated expenditures of each of the various ministries of the church. The church will be given opportunity to review and comment on the budget. The Leadership council will give final approval of the budget by December 31 of the preceding year and shall oversee the budget during the year. Budget items may not be exceeded without Leadership Council approval. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Leadership Council.

It is understood that membership in God's Church involves a financial obligation to support the Church, both globally and locally, and its causes with regular, proportionate tithes and offerings. The church shall encourage this support through education, promotion, and resources.

Section 2: Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall be counted and given to the church contributions secretary for deposit. The church contributions secretary will be responsible for keeping records of the amounts given by every individual and at the end of the year shall report to them, for their personal tax records, the total amount given. Once deposited, all funds will pass through the hands of the church accounting secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds may be required to be bonded, the church paying the bond whether required by the Leadership Council or requested by the secretary. The Leadership Council and church treasurer shall determine the system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds.

A. Contributions Secretary

The Elders shall select a church contributions secretary and an assistant contributions secretary to serve in the contributions secretary's absence. The contributions secretary shall be responsible for the deposit of all funds received by the church after first recording the amount and source of the funds. The contributions secretary shall also be responsible for distributing contribution records after the close of each year. The contributions secretary shall ensure that the handling of all funds is done with high levels of accountability and confidentiality and in keeping with the policies established by the Leadership Council and treasurer. All records will be kept at the church. Electronic files are to be backed up to disk or a second computer once a week.

B. Accounting Secretary

The Elders shall select a church accounting secretary and an assistant accounting secretary to serve in the accounting secretary's absence. It shall be the duty of the accounting secretary to preserve and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid by or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursement. This itemized account must be prepared and stored at the church. Electronic files are to be backed up to disk or a second computer once a week. It shall be the duty of the

accounting secretary to render to the Leadership Council and treasurer an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month and to balance the various statements. The Leadership Council and treasurer shall determine the level of audit applicable to the accounting secretary's report and records. The accounting secretary may be required to be bonded as determined by the Leadership Council and treasurer, subject to the church paying the bond if required or requested by the accounting secretary.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the Leadership Council and treasurer, the records shall be delivered by the accounting secretary to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

The Leadership Council and treasurer shall develop written policies for the accounting secretary to ensure proper accountability and stewardship is maintained.

Section 3: Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year.

Article VII: Church Operations Manual

A church operations manual shall be developed which includes church policies, procedures, staff position descriptions, and organizational charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available upon request. The church clerk or secretary shall maintain the manual. The Leadership Council and treasurer shall review the manual on a regular basis with at least one annual review. Any church member may initiate suggested changes to the manual. The elders will make all decisions concerning addition, revision or deletion of church policies.

Article VIII: Dissolution

Upon the winding up and dissolution of this corporation, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the corporation, the remaining assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes in agreement with the church's Statement of Basic Beliefs (See Constitution Article III), and which has established its tax-exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever inure to or for the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distribution in furtherance of the exempt purposes for which it was formed.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under section (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Article IX: Amendments

Changes in the constitution or bylaws may be made with the approval of seventy-five percent of the elders. Prior to any change, the elders will give a two-week notice to the church for the purposes of conducting a business meeting or special business meeting. The elders will present the proposed changes and ask the church for feedback. After prayerfully considering this feedback, the elders will announce to the congregation whether they have approved the change, disapproved the change, or are going to present a revised change – considerably different from the first – for feedback.

The members of the church may request that the elders make changes to the constitution or by-laws through a direct appeal or if necessary through the steps in Article V, Section 4.

Appendix A

Grass Valley Baptist Church - Summary Doctrinal Statement

1. We believe the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is true God and man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.
4. We believe that the Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit brings conviction to men and testifies of Christ in the world. The Holy Spirit enters believers at the time of their conversion and serves as both a seal of God's possession and a pledge of His future work. The Holy Spirit works in a believer's life as a teacher, counselor, comforter, guide, and translator. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer and empowers them for service in the Kingdom. Though every believer receives one or more gifts from the Holy Spirit, there is no one specific spiritual gift that every believer receives. Thus, the gifts are not a sign of salvation. All spiritual gifts must be used within Biblical guidelines.
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
6. We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Salvation is only obtained through faith in the God of the Bible and only made possible by the atoning work of Jesus Christ.
7. We believe in a regenerated church membership: that is, persons who are old enough to understand their need for Jesus Christ and who have, of their own volition, accepted Him as their personal Lord and Savior.
8. We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord's Supper is a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in obedience to the Lord's command. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man's salvation and, thus, come after salvation.
9. We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His Second Coming inspires believers for dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while waiting for His return.
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell.
11. We believe in the autonomy of the local church. The church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.

Grass Valley Baptist Church - Summary Praxis Statement

We believe that God speaks directly to every member of His body. Every member of the Body has a gift to use and a task to do within the Body. Each task is important. Every member is responsible to the rest of the Body for encouragement, exhortation, accountability, discipleship, and service. Because Christianity is relational, (we enter into a relationship with Christ which makes us related to one another – as siblings and various members of the same Body – and which motivates us to form relationships with non-believers whom we can introduce to a relationship with Christ) we must all work to strengthen relationships within the Body. This is done through Bible study classes, accountability/discipleship groups, ministry teams, and personal relationships outside of the ministry of the church. Some members of the Body have the task of serving as pastors, elders, deacons, teachers, and/or leaders of other ministries or teams/work groups. Though Christ is the head of the Body, these members have been given a certain level of responsibility to serve, lead, and equip the Body. Thus these members serve not only alongside the other members of the Body, but at times serve above or below them as well.

The organizational structure of the Body is as follows:

The New Testament describes Elders as being the human leaders of the church under the headship of Christ. They not only oversee the spiritual welfare of the congregation but they also select the leaders/teachers and make the major decisions regarding how we apply Scripture to our congregational life (i.e. revising the Constitution and Bylaws). The Elder Board is composed of the called Pastors and other men selected from the congregation. Deacons shall be selected by the congregation and approved by the elders to care for the temporal and physical needs of the congregation and its property. They, along with the elders as part of the Leadership Council, will make the financial decisions of the church. The deacons, staff, and ministry heads shall be accountable to the elders but will be given the authority to make the day to day decisions in their appointed area of responsibility. They, along with the elders, serve above the congregation only in their appointed roles and do so primarily to equip the rest of the Body to serve. In all other matters, they serve alongside the Body. The elders, deacons, and ministry heads shall be members of the church.

The spiritual relationship within Grass Valley Baptist Church (GVBC) mirrors that outside of it as well. GVBC is one small member of the Body of which Christ is the Head. We are under His direction and His only, but our health is affected by the other members of the Body (Christian churches in Winnemucca and around the world), and we affect the health of other churches. Because the goals of the Kingdom go beyond the vision and abilities of GVBC, we will openly cooperate with other Christian churches and welcome other individual Christians to serve and worship alongside us.

As a potential worker at/with GVBC, I have read and understand both the summary doctrinal statement and the summary praxis (how we do things) statement of GVBC. I am in basic agreement with these statements and agree to operate in accordance with them. I may have disagreement in specific areas, but agree to only teach and/or act in accordance with them.

Name

Date