CONSTITUTION

Sola Grace Baptist Church

Last modification 02-01-2024

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."[1]

Ephesians 2:8-10

[1] All biblical texts will be taken from the New King James Version, except in cases where otherwise indicated.

CONSTITUTION
SOLA GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
Grandview, Washington

ARTICLE I
NAME AND LOCATION

Section 1.1 The name of this church shall be Sola Gracia Baptist Church of Grandview. It was incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Washington on July 3, 2023. His house of worship and place of business is located at 406 E 2nd St, Grandview, Washington 98930.

IGLESIA BAUTISTA
Sola Gracia

ARTICLE II
AIM

Section 2.1 The purpose of this church is to bring glory to God by turning spiritually lost people into mature disciples of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). We will fulfill the mandate to make disciples of Christ by (1) winning spiritually lost people to new life in Christ, (2) building them up for spiritual maturity, and (3) equipping them for a life of service in the church, community, and community. world.

ARTICLE III
VISION AND MISSION

Section 3.1 Church Vision

Enjoying God is the first step in entering into a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus and then following God daily through His Word, prayer, and devotion.

Enjoying communion among brothers means that for a Christian to grow, he needs to grow in community with his brothers. Your active attendance at services regularly and participation in small groups.

Leading others to His love involve two ways: the first is to serve in the local church. Secondly, it is sharing our faith through our lives as missionaries at the local, regional, and global levels.

Section 3.2 Church Mission

Sola Gracia Baptist Church exist for the glory of God, making disciples who love, serve and enjoy the Lord.

ARTICLE IV
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Section 4.1 Government Policy

1. Authority – This church will be subject only to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. His will in matters of faith and practice is known through the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God.

2. Government – Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, works through His body. Therefore, the government of this church rests solely with the body of believers who maintain membership in this local assembly.

3. Leadership: The local assembly, recognizing the gifts and calling of certain men in the body of Christ, elects them for the spiritual and organizational oversight of the local church. These men serve in one of two groups:

    a. The Pastor: The governing leadership body of Sola Gracia Baptist Church shall be known as the Pastor, who shall be composed of a man recognized and elected by the members of this church to be its pastor in accordance with Section 7.1. This man functions as an elder, also known as pastor.

    b. Council of Deacons – The Council of Deacons shall be composed of men elected to the office of deacon in accordance with Section 7.3 and shall be under the authority and responsibility of the Council of Pastors.

Section 4.2 Trustees

The Council of Deacons will act as legal trustee of the church for external affairs.

Section 4.3 Representative Officials

For legal purposes, the senior pastor will act as president of the corporation, the church treasurer will act as corporate treasurer, and the president of the Council of Deacons act as corporate secretary.

ARTICLE V
AUTONOMY

Section 5.1 This church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body but recognizes and upholds the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches of similar faith. This church reserves the right to join or withdraw from any church association or organization, as desired by vote of the members.

ARTICLE VI
MEMBERSHIP

Section 6.1 Qualifications

The requirements for membership in this church are as follows: (1) acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior as demonstrated by testimony and life, (2) baptism (immersion in water) as a believer in Christ, (3) acceptance of the Word of God as the rule of faith and practice, (4) subscription to the doctrinal statement of this church as an expression of that rule, and (5) agreement to be governed by the membership of the church covenant and this constitution.

Section 6.2 Reception

No one will be received into membership except by a personal confession of faith in Christ, either at baptism, or by oral testimony. When an individual comes from another church of the same faith and order, church letters will be requested and, if received, used as an indication of previous baptism and position in the church. Upon approval by the Council of Pastors, the new member will be introduced to the church and immediately received the full rights and privileges of membership.

Section 6.3 Rights and Responsibilities

All members shall have equal rights unless otherwise provided in this constitution. The right to vote will fall to members over 16 years of age. Individual members of this church have no property rights in the church. Upon termination of membership, they are not entitled to any interest in the property of the church and will not be permitted to have any say in the disposition of such property.

Members of this local church commit to walking, working, and worshiping Christ together. Members will honor, esteem, and pray for their pastors regularly and help them carry out the ministry of the church. They will use the talents, gifts, and resources that God has given them for the benefit of the church. They will strive to preserve the unity of the church, seeking reconciliation and offering forgiveness when offenses occur. If for some reason they cannot harmonize with others, they will seek not to disrupt their fellowship, but rather will quietly withdraw from their membership.

Section 6.4 Mutual Care Membership

Mutual Care Membership is hereby established for college students, armed forces personnel, and other persons of temporary residence in the Washington area who maintain a legal residence elsewhere and are members of a church of the same faith and order. Mutual Care members must meet all standard requirements for membership. They shall have full privileges and responsibilities as members, including the right to vote and hold office, both elected and appointed. Mutual Care members will not be counted for inter-church statistics. They cannot be sent as messengers of this church, receive a letter of transfer, or be ordained or authorized by this church. All of these rights remain with the member's home church.

Section 6.5 Inactive Membership

It shall be the responsibility of the Council of Pastors to endeavor to make personal contact with members who are not demonstrating an active interest in the life of the church. Any member who attends worship services less than twice in three months will automatically be considered inactive and will lose the right to vote without any further process.

At the discretion of the Pastors' Council, persons who are in some way limited from meeting this requirement (i.e., physical limitations, missionary service, military service, vocational assignment) may be exempt. A written communication will be sent to the member and if his or her response is a desire to resume active participation in the church, the Pastors Council may, after a satisfactory interview with the member, restore his or her membership rights. Any member who is absent from church services for one year without a justifiable explanation for his or her prolonged absence will be automatically removed from membership. Membership can be restored through active participation in the church and approval of the Pastor.

Section 6.6 Discipline

To promote purity and maintain peace, a local church has a biblical responsibility to prayerfully and lovingly restore wayward members who are not fulfilling their membership commitment. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote spiritual well-being of the sinful believer by calling him to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1), the process of managing discipline will be according to biblical criteria (Matthew 18:15-17).

1. Composition of the Disciplinary Committee

   The Pastor and Council of Deacons will serve as the Disciplinary Committee. In cases where the accused is a pastor or is related by marriage or birth to a pastor, that pastor will not serve on the committee.

2. The restoration process

   The Bible gives the following pattern for restoring believers who have sinned:

   A. Not all sin requires confrontation. We must overlook minor sins, offering acceptance and forgiveness to your brother. (Proverbs 19:11)
   B. If the sin is too serious to walk away from, then go and show your brother his fault in private, seeking reconciliation. (Matthew 18:15)
   C. If the matter cannot be resolved privately, involve one or two trusted mature Christians, one of whom should be a pastor. (Matthew 18:16)
   D. If the matter still cannot be resolved, the entire Disciplinary Committee will intervene, admonishing known sins and offering advice and instructions to resolve the problem. (Matthew 18:17)
   E. If a Christian refuses to listen to the advice of the Disciplinary Committee, the committee will recommend that the church withdraw his or her communion, including loss of membership rights.

   Offenses are inevitable and it is important that they be resolved privately according to the biblical pattern. Members should seek reconciliation in a spirit of love when offenses occur, whether perceived by the offender or the offended person. No report of a derogatory nature against any member should be communicated to others or before the church in a business meeting.

Section 6.7 Disposal

A member in good standing in this church, upon written request to the Pastor, will be released to the fellowship of another church of similar faith. A member will be removed from membership: upon death, upon joining another church, after one year of inactivity, or as a result of church discipline.

ARTICLE VII
CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 7.1 Pastor

1. Your qualifications

    A. A basic

    You must have been a member of Sola Gracia Baptist Church long enough to be recognized by leadership; and must support the doctrinal positions of the church and the directional goals of the leadership staff.

    B. Biblical
        1) Must have moral integrity as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9
        2) He must be, if married, a man happily married with his home under proper biblical management and with a wife who willingly gives him permission (1 Timothy 3:4-5, Ephesians 5:22-6:4, and 1 Peter 3:1-7)
        3) You must have a properly motivated desire to serve as a pastor (1 Timothy 3:1);
        4) You must have demonstrated leadership in the sense that you have proven yourself in ministry.
        5) Must have attained a knowledge of the Bible to the extent of Titus 1:9, as measured by the one currently serving as Pastor.
        6) Must have demonstrated the ability to teach, disciple, and counsel others to the satisfaction of those currently serving on the Council of Deacons.

2. His appointment

    Members of the church will have the opportunity annually to nominate a man from among the members to serve as pastor. The Council of Deacons will evaluate the nominees and recommend qualified candidates to the congregation. Appointment to the Council of Deacons shall be affirmed by a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting.

3. Your term of service

    The pastor will serve three-year terms. The membership, after each three-year term of service, may reappoint pastors who are qualified and willing to serve another term.

4. His removal from office

The pastor may be removed from office either by resignation or by vote of the Council of Deacons for failing to live up to the biblical qualifications of a pastor or for failing to continue to care for the needs of the congregation.

5. Your responsibility

   The biblical responsibilities of the shepherd fall into three general categories: those of FEEDING, LEADING, and PROTECTING the flock.

   A. Feeding the Flock

      The pastor is to preach and teach the Word of God (1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7), exhort and admonish believers (Titus 1:9, 1 Thessalonians 5:12), and model godly living (Hebrews 13: 7, 1 Peter 5:2-3).

   B. Leading the flock

      The pastor is to lead and guide the church (1 Thessalonians 5:12, 1 Timothy 3:5), "rule" and "direct" the church (1 Timothy 5:17), decide important doctrinal matters (Acts 15:28), establishing biblical priorities for the church (Acts 20:27), “overseeing” the church (Acts 20:28, 1 Thessalonians 5:12), and having “authority” in the church (Hebrews 13:17).

   C. Protection of the flock

      The pastor must guard against false teaching (Acts 20:28-31), refute false teachers and scoffers (Titus 1:9), preserve the unity of the church (Ephesians 4:3, 11-13), and pray for the needs of the church (James 5:14, Acts 6:4).

6. Its internal organization

   The Council of Deacons shall annually elect from its own number a vice president to provide leadership in its ministry in the absence of the senior pastor. They will also elect a secretary to keep permanent minutes of their meetings. Two-thirds of the deacons must be present for a quorum to exist. A majority vote is required unless otherwise specified in this constitution.

7. Bringing Business to the Pastor

   Any member who wishes to present a business item to the Pastor may do so by contacting the president or vice president two weeks before a regular meeting, indicating the item to be presented and requesting that it be placed on the agenda.

Section 7.2 Pastoral and Ministerial Staff

[Note: “Shepherds” and “shepherds” are recognized as biblically equivalent terms. For the purposes of church structure, it should be recognized that "pastor" refers to a pastor who receives remuneration for his shepherding and is therefore free to devote more time and energy to his ministry.]

1. Senior Pastor

    A. Your qualifications.

    The senior pastor must meet the qualifications of an elder found in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He must be licensed or ordained to the ministry by a church of the same faith and order and must be in accordance with the doctrinal positions and associations held by this church.

    B. His calling.

    When it is necessary to call a senior pastor, the Council of Deacons will designate one of its members to serve as chairman of a pulpit committee. The pulpit committee will consist of the president, as well as four additional church members. The remaining pastors, if any, will serve as advisors to the pulpit committee. The pulpit committee will develop its own operating procedures. Only one candidate at a time will be recommended to the church at a special business meeting announced from the pulpit two weeks in advance. Voting will be done by written ballot and the call will be extended if the candidate obtains at least three-quarters of the votes.

    C. Your Responsibilities.

        1) The senior pastor serves as the spiritual, administrative, and educational head of the church. He will serve as the leader of the church in all its activities and will be the moderator. In this capacity, he serves as President of Leadership. He shall carry out the decisions of the Leadership Council and shall have power, as delegated on his behalf, to execute all actions as the Council of Deacons and the members so deem.
        2) The senior pastor will be the administrative and ministerial head of the church. He shall have the authority, with the concurrence of a majority of the Council of Deacons, to dismiss other Deacons and ministerial personnel.
        3) The senior pastor will preach regularly, administer the ordinances, and tenderly care for and promote the spiritual strength of the congregation. He will seek through creative leadership to lead the church in setting and achieving goals for the honor and glory of God.

4) You will, by virtue of your position, be welcomed as a voting member of any board or committee meeting you attend.

D. Your Service Term

The senior pastor will serve an indefinite term of service. You may resign at any time by giving thirty days' written notice to the Council of Deacons, unless otherwise mutually agreed. The resignation will be accepted without being voted on by the church.

E. His removal from office.

Severance of the pastoral relationship may be initiated by the Council of Deacons due to unsatisfactory service and requires a two-thirds majority vote of the Deacons. Your recommendation must be approved at a special business meeting announced two weeks in advance and communicated to all members in writing. Voting will be by written ballot, and a two-thirds majority of the members present, and voting is required for removal. In case of serious moral or doctrinal deviation, the Council of Deacons will immediately remove the pastor from office. In the event of resignation or removal from office for any reason, the pastor will receive thirty days of salary and benefits.

2. Other pastoral and ministerial personnel

The senior pastor, together with the Council of Deacons and other pastors, will determine the needs for additional pastoral and ministerial staff in the church.

F. Ministry Personnel.

Part-time and full-time ministerial staff serve under the authority and direction of the senior pastor and the Council of Deacons. These positions are approved by the church budget process and selected by the senior pastor, in coordination with the pastor and deacons. The authority of these positions is non-pastoral and is vested in and accountable to the Council of Deacons.

Section 7.3 Deacons

1. Your number

Any number of deacons may be chosen as deemed necessary to meet the needs of the church. If there are no men qualified and willing to serve as deacons, the available positions on the Council of Deacons will remain vacant.

2. Your qualifications

   The deacons will be composed of members of the church who have been members in good standing for at least one year. They will be men who meet the biblical requirements found in I Timothy 3:8-13 and who agree with the doctrinal positions of the church and the directional goals of the Pastor.

3. His appointment

   Members of the church will have the opportunity to annually nominate men from among the members to serve as deacons. The Pastor will evaluate the nominees and, together with the Council of Deacons, recommend qualified candidates to the membership. The appointment to the Council of Deacons shall be affirmed by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

4. Your term of service

The term of office will be three years. The membership, after each three-year term of service, may reappoint deacons who are qualified and willing to serve another term. To the extent possible, one-third of the deacons will be elected annually. If vacancies occur, the Pastor may call a special election or leave the position vacant until the next annual meeting.

5. His removal from office

   Deacons may be removed from office either by resignation or by the Pastor for not living up to the biblical qualifications of a deacon or for failing to continue to care for the needs of the congregation.

6. Your responsibilities

   A. Release shepherds to shepherd the flock more effectively.
   B. Serve the practical needs of the congregation as ministers of mercy.
   C. Exercise servant leadership in the congregation.
   D. Receive and distribute funds for the relief of the physical and material needs of members and others in whom the church has an interest.
   E. Oversee church property and buildings, as well as work with pastors in planning and carrying out future building needs.
   F. Oversee church finances and assist the pastor in developing an annual budget to present to members.
   G. To assist in the administration of church ordinances.
   H. Supervise the ministries of ushers and receptionists during worship services.
   I. Serve under the direction and authority of the pastor, and undertake ministerial assignments given by the pastor.

7. Its internal organization

   The deacons shall annually elect from their own number a president and a vice president to provide leadership in their ministry. They will also elect a secretary to keep permanent minutes of their meetings. Two-thirds of the deacons must be present for a quorum to exist. A majority vote is required unless otherwise specified in this constitution. They will elect committees of their own number as necessary to carry out their responsibilities.

8. Bringing Business to the Council of Deacons

   Any member who wishes to present a business item to the Council of Deacons may do so by contacting the president or vice president two weeks before a regular meeting indicating the item to be presented and requesting that it be placed on the agenda.

ARTICLE VIII
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

Section 8.1 Elected Officials

1. Appointment and Election

   Six weeks prior to the annual meeting, nomination forms will be sent to each active member with the following information:

   A. A list of incumbents and retiring church officials.
   B. Qualifications for positions.
   C. A list of positions to be filled.

   Nominations must be returned four weeks before the annual meeting. The Council of Deacons and the Pastor will consider the biblical qualifications of the nominees, their example of Christian character and participation in the life of the church, and the relative frequency of their nomination. Consent to serve must be given by the nominees. The final list of one or more nominees for each position will be published at least two weeks before the annual meeting. No nominations will be made from the floor at the time of the election. A majority vote of the members presents, and voting is required for election, unless otherwise specified in this constitution. If there is only one candidate for an office, two-thirds of the members present, and voting must approve his election.

2. Pastors and Deacons

Information regarding the qualifications, election, and responsibilities of pastors and deacons is found in Section 7.

3. Financial Secretary

   The Financial Secretary will maintain accurate records and deposit all receipts. He or she will maintain a confidential record of individual donations and issue quarterly and annual receipts to donors.

4. Church Treasurer

   The Church Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all expenses and will disburse them only when authorized. He or she will present a monthly financial report to the deacons and an annual report to the church.

Section 8.2 Designated Officials and Ministerial Teams

The Pastor shall appoint such ministerial officers and teams as are deemed beneficial to the ministry of the church and shall communicate such appointments to the membership.

Section 8.3 Organization and Duties

Unless otherwise specified in this constitution, the organization and duties of ministerial teams shall be left to the officials and leadership of those ministries. Ministry leaders are, in turn, accountable to the Council of Deacons and the Pastor.

Section 8.4 Vacancies

Vacancies that occur during the year in elected or appointed positions (other than pastors and deacons) will be filled by appointment of the Council of Deacons and Pastor.

ARTICLE IX
MEETING

Section 9.1 Congregational Services

The church will meet regularly on the first day of the week, and at other times at the call of the Pastor for the purposes of worship, evangelism, instruction, edification, and fellowship.

Section 9.2 Annual Business Meeting

An annual business meeting will be held prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. Business matters will include the election of pastor and deacons, communication of designated officers and ministry teams, and approval of the annual budget. The pastor and deacons will present written reports of the previous year's ministries.

A preliminary estimate of total income and expenses will be given at the annual meeting. As soon as possible after the close of the fiscal year, a complete financial report will be presented to the church for approval at a regular church service.

Section 9.3 Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called by the Pastor or Council of Deacons, or by a quorum of the church. Public notice will be given from the pulpit two weeks before the meeting, indicating the business to be conducted. No other business may be conducted at the special business meeting.

Members may be welcomed or dismissed (except when it comes to disciplinary action) at any congregational church service without notice.

Section 9.4 Quorum

The annual meeting and all special business meetings require one-fifth of the active membership for a quorum. When voting on the recall or dismissal of a pastor, one-third of the active voting membership shall constitute a quorum. A majority vote of the members presents and voting is required, unless otherwise specified in the constitution.

Section 9.5 Rules of Order

The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be used as a general guide when conducting business meetings. All matters must be handled according to the Word of God and the guidelines of this constitution.

ARTICLE X
CHURCH YEAR

Section 10.1 The fiscal year of the church will be from July 01 to June 30.

ARTICLE XI
LICENSES AND MANAGEMENT

Section 11.1 Licenses

When a man of this membership is called to the Christian ministry and desires to obtain licensure, he must make his desire known to the Pastor. The Pastor will interview and examine the man regarding his desires for ministry, his qualifications for ministry, his understanding of the Word of God, and his preparation and experience in ministry. If satisfied, the Pastor may recommend the candidate to the church for licensure, and with a three-quarters majority vote, a certificate of licensure will be granted. The duration of the license will be one year and will become void once the license holder leaves the church. A license may be renewed at the annual business meeting of the church, at which time the licensee must submit a written report that will include: (1) a statement regarding the exercise of his or her ministry; (2) a statement about spiritual, academic, and practical progress in the experience; (3) plans for next year; and (4) an application for continued licensure. The pastor will recommend the renewal or non-renewal of each license, with a majority vote of three-fourths of the members present and a vote is required to continue approval.

Section 11.2 Arrangement

A licensee desiring ordination must make his or her desire known to the Pastor, who, with the approval of the church, will convene an ordination council. An examination board of invited messengers from churches of the same faith and practice will thoroughly examine the candidate for ordination with respect to his or her call to ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrine, and demonstrated ability in ministry. The council will make a recommendation regarding the candidate to the church, and with a three-quarters majority vote, the church will proceed with ordination at a future date as agreed upon by the church and the candidate.

Section 11.3 Guidelines

No one may be licensed or ordained by this church for the ministry of the gospel unless he has demonstrated his ability in the ministry to the satisfaction of the pastors and meets the requirements of an elder set forth in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The church shall have the right to revoke the license or ordination credentials granted by this church, or of any member of this church, if the church, in its judgment, has sufficient cause for such action. A recommendation to revoke a license or ordination shall be presented to the church at a business meeting called for that purpose and, by a majority vote of the members present and voting, shall take effect immediately.

ARTICLE XII
DISPOSAL OF CHURCH PROPERTY

Section 12.1 Division

In the event of an organic division of the church membership, the property of the church shall belong to those members who comply with this constitution and subscribe to the doctrinal statement of the church. If both parties meet these requirements, the majority members will retain ownership.

Section 12.2 Dissolution

If a condition should arise in which, for any reason, the work of this church cannot continue, after all its debts have been paid, the property of the church will be transferred to Northwest Baptist Home Mission, or non-profit organizations that are in accordance with the principles and doctrinal beliefs of this church. This action will be determined by a majority vote of the remaining active members. None of the assets will be given to any individual member.

ARTICLE XII
AMENDMENTS

Section 13.1 This constitution may be amended at a special business meeting by a two-thirds vote of the active members present and voting. The doctrinal statement of the church may be amended at a special business meeting by a vote of three-fourths of the active members present and voting. Proposed amendments must be announced and published two weeks before the meeting.