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**THE CONSTITUTION OF GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**KITTANNING, PENNSYLVANIA**  
**Originally written 1973**  
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**Section I The Preliminaries and Grace Baptist Church**

**Reception of Members**

- A. This church shall be composed of members who profess to be saved by grace, through faith, and who have been baptized following their confession of faith in Christ by single immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- B. All persons desiring to unite with this church shall meet with the Pastor and deacons and shall give testimony of conversion and Christian experience. They also must affirm acceptance of adherence to the Articles of Faith, Constitution, and Covenant of this church by personal signature.
- C. All persons desiring to unite with this church shall attend each membership training class as scheduled by the Pastor.
- D. No person shall be received into the membership who is a member of any secret society (e.g. Freemasonry – Eastern Star).
- E. Upon the recommendation of the Pastor and deacons, candidates shall be presented to the church. A three-fourths vote of the members present and voting is required to approve an individual for membership.
- F. Membership shall not be denied to any person based on race, color, sex, or social status.
- G. Members shall be received in one of three ways:
  - 1. By baptism after salvation
  - 2. By confession of faith, having been saved, and immersed
  - 3. By restoration

**WHO ARE WE?**

The name of this organization shall be “The Grace Baptist Church of Kittanning.” It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation, under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania as of August 14, 1974.

This church shall be an independent, autonomous church, subject only to the Head of the church, Jesus Christ. It shall have the right to cooperate and associate with other biblical groups voluntarily when and for as long as the church deems necessary, so long as such cooperation and/or association does not result in the compromise of this document.

### **WHY ARE WE HERE?**

Our purpose is to glorify God by conducting a Baptist church following the Word of God as the sole and final authority. The Articles of Faith, the Constitution, and the Church Covenant, although vital and necessary for the proper administration of this church, are subordinate to and shall not conflict with the clear teaching of the Word of God. They are, and shall remain, this church's declaration of its convictions as it relates to doctrine, demeanor, and polity.

Furthermore, we shall promote the worship of our God, edify believers, teach the whole counsel of God, Administer the ordinances and Biblical discipline, and seek to win the lost to Christ through personal witnessing and the preaching of the Gospel. We shall also carry on a vigorous missionary program around the world, establishing other Baptist churches.

Furthermore, we shall operate as an integral part of this church a total and formal Christian Education Program from the cradle to the grave.

We shall staunchly defend the faith and maintain a good testimony for Christ in our community by godliness and good works.

### **WHAT WE EXPECT OF OUR MEMBERS.**

#### **GRACE BAPTIST COVENANT**

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

We purpose, 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 attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talent in its activities; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations

We also purpose to maintain family and private donations; to train our children according to the Word of God to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all gossip, backbiting, and unrighteous anger, to abstain from all forms of activity – including the sale and use of intoxicating beverages – which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ, cause stumbling to a fellow believer or hinder the winning of a soul to Christ, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ, our Savior, and to give Him preeminence in all things.

We further purpose to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return; to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, to seek it without delay.

We moreover purpose that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church of like faith and order where we can carry out the spirit of the covenant and the principles of God's Word. If there is no such church, we shall seek, with the Lord's help, to establish one.

## **Section II The Precepts of Grace Baptist Church**

### **WHAT WE BELIEVE**

#### **THE CHURCH AS AN ORGANISM**

We believe in the unity of all true believers in the Church which is the body of Christ, which was established on the Day of Pentecost, and that all believers, from Pentecost to the Rapture, both Jews and Gentiles are added to this Church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that this Church is manifested through the local church which is a congregation of immersed believers associated by the covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinance of Christ; governed by his laws; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word; and that its officers are pastor and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scripture. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; and that it is scriptural for true New Testament Baptist churches to cooperate in contending for the faith and the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. (Acts 2:41,42; 15:13-18; 20:17-28; I Corinthians 11:2; 12:12, 13; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:1-6; 4:11; 5:23,24; Colossians 1:18; I Timothy 3:1-7)

## THE CHURCH AND ITS OUTREACH

### **Evangelism and God's Sovereignty**

We believe that God is working primarily in and through the ministry of the local New Testament church to accomplish His ends in this age of grace. The local church is under a holy mandate to evangelize (Matthew 28:18-20). Evangelism consists of more than "getting decisions" that are induced from sensational or psychological gimmickry that is carnal at best. We believe that evangelism is the work of God through human instrumentality and that genuine conversion eventuates in genuine disciples.

Furthermore, we believe God's Word teaches that all men are totally depraved and thus dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1), unable and unwilling to savingly believe the Gospel (Isaiah 64:7) (John 6:44). Were it not for a gracious God that in eternity past chose some to be the recipients of His grace, all would have been deservedly lost. (Act 13:48, Ephesians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:13,14). Those whom He has chosen He will bring without fail to a willing reception of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who voluntarily gave His life as the sinner's substitute (II Corinthians 5:21). None for whom He died shall ever perish (John 6:35-40; 17:2; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:30). Finally, all those that are drawn unto God by the Spirit through his Word are kept for all eternity by God based on Christ's shed blood (John 10:28; I Peter 1:19).

### **General Missions Policy**

- A. It shall be the policy of this church to support only missionaries engaged principally in evangelization and establishment of Baptist churches. (Schools, hospitals, and similar ministries must be kept subordinate to the primary objective).
- B. Missionaries desiring to speak in or be supported by this church shall:
  1. be Baptist in name and practice
  2. agree with the doctrinal position of this church
  3. be separated from all forms of apostasy and those who compromise therewith
  4. be affiliated with a fundamental Baptist mission agency or church whose policies and practices are in agreement with those of this church
  5. be primarily engaged in the establishment and development of fundamental Baptist churches of the training of national church leaders in the foreign field
- C. All missionaries seeking support from this church shall be mailed a "prospective missionary support questionnaire". The individual shall complete it honestly and to the church's satisfaction before consideration is given to support.

## THE CHURCH AND ITS ORDINANCES

### **Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, under the authority of the local church, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that participants should be immersed believers. (Matthew 3:26; 28:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36, 38, 39; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-28; Colossians 2:12).

### **Baptism**

Those who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior by faith and who desire to unite with the church may be baptized by immersion and receive into the membership upon the authorization of this church. Baptism by immersion, as a believer, shall be a prerequisite to church membership.

### **The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper shall be served at regular intervals to the assembled church by the Pastor, or his designated representative, and the deacons. None who are born-again and baptized by immersion shall be barred from the table. The elements shall be unleavened bread and grape juice. The Lord's Supper shall not be served outside of a church meeting.

## THE CHURCH AND ITS OBEDIENCE

### **Separation**

We believe in obedience to the Biblical commands to separate from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy unto God (Romans 16:17; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; I Thessalonians 1:9, 10; I Timothy 6:3-5; II John 9-11).

### **Biblical Separation**

We believe that the local church, in manifesting obedience to God's Word, must also comply with its command to separate from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy unto God (Romans 16:17; II Corinthians 6:14-17). To "illustrate," we believe this to include separation from:

1. National Council of Churches
2. World Council of Churches
3. American Baptist Convention
4. Southern Baptist Convention

5. National Association of Evangelicals
6. Modern Charismatic Movement and its adherents (such as PTL Club, 700 Club, Rex Humbard, Oral Roberts, etc.)
7. Pseudo Evangelicals or Fundamentalists who are typified in such persons as Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell, etc.
8. Any who fellowship with and are tolerant of the above.

We affirm that Biblical Separation may involve disfellowship even with other believers who are unruly, or who are violating the express commands of God. (II Thessalonians 3:6-14). Furthermore, that separation of this kind has in mind the ultimate restoration of the guilty party. At all times, we must remember to speak the truth in love and to be gracious in any disagreement.

## **THE CHURCH AND ITS ORDERLINESS**

### **Discipline of Members**

- A. The purpose of church discipline shall be:
  1. To help errant members recognize and repent of their sins so they may be restored to fellowship with the Lord and this church.
  2. To maintain the purity of this church by removing those who are unrepentant toward their sins.
  3. To restrain others from sinning.
  
- B. With this purpose in mind, it shall be the duty of the Pastor and deacons to diligently seek to reclaim any member known to be living in disregard of his Biblical and Covenant obligations. The Pastor and deacons shall move with promptness and vigor in dealing with anyone who is obstructing the work or disturbing the peace of the church by slander, falsehood, gossip, conspiracy, or any other unchristlike methods. If a member is walking disorderly, involved in immorality, dishonesty, or is engaged in public scandal, and such a member can be restored to fellowship through confession and correction of his sins, he shall be dealt with based on Matthew 18 and I Corinthians 5. His case shall be brought before the church by recommendation of the Pastor and deacons. He shall be given a statement of the charges against him, and he shall have the opportunity to present his case before the church at a duly called business meeting. The church may vote to remove him from the membership if the charges and evidence warrant such action. He shall be restored to active membership only by vote of the church after satisfactory evidence is given of scriptural repentance and confession. While expulsion from the membership of the church is the most serious form of discipline, other options open to the church shall include loss of office or placement on the inactive list, as the situation may warrant.
  
- C. Members who are absent from the services of this church for three (3) months without proper cause shall be placed on the inactive membership list automatically. Proper cause shall be considered to be sickness, disability, work schedule, or vacation. Those on the inactive list may

not vote, hold office, or serve in the church. Any member placed on the inactive list shall be notified in writing by the church clerk within three (3) days of such action.

- D. Persons on the inactive list who desire to be restored to full membership shall meet with the Pastor and deacons to give satisfactory evidence of a repentant attitude and renewed interest. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and deacons, full membership privileges may be restored to them by vote of the church.
- E. Persons whose names remain on the inactive list for three (3) months shall be removed from the membership automatically. No vote of the church will be required. Such persons shall be notified in writing of the circumstance.
- F. It is further recognized that when the church, by regular order and proper vote has determined upon a course of action, that course becomes the duty of every member of the church.

## **THE CHURCH AND ITS ORGANIZATION**

### **A Biblical and Doctrinal Foundation**

#### **Articles of Faith**

##### **The Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally and plenary inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore is truth without any admixture of error for its matter. We believe the Bible to be the center of true Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried. (II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21).

##### **The True God**

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite, sovereign Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love, that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct, but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Exodus 20: 2,3; I Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11).

##### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the new birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer. The gifts of tongues and healing were "sign-gifts" until the Scriptures were completed. The gifts ceased at that time. (Genesis 1:1-3; Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:8; Luke 1:35; 24:49; John 1:33; 3:5,6; 14:16-17, 26; 16:8-11;



Acts 5:30-32; 11:16; Romans 8:14, 16, 26,27; 15:19; I Corinthians 13:8; Ephesians 1:13-14; Hebrews 2:4; 9:14).

### **The Devil, or Satan**

We believe in the personality of Satan, that he is the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. (Matthew 4:1-11; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10)

### **Creation**

We believe the Genesis account of creation as being neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man: spirit, soul, and body, was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race. (Genesis 1 and 2; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16, 17)

### **The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression, Adam fell from his sinless and happy state, and all men sinned in him, in consequence of which all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by nature and by conduct, and therefore are under just condemnation without defense or excuse. (Genesis 3:1-6, 24; Romans 1:18, 32; 3:10-19; 5:12,19;)

### **The Virgin Birth**

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Joh 1:14; Hebrews 1:8)

### **The Atonement For Sin**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord bearing our sin in His own body on the tree. (Isaiah 53: 4-7; Jonah 2:9; Matthew 18:11; John 3:16; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24-25; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:14; I John 4:10)

### **Resurrection and Priesthood**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest. (Matthew 28:6-7; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 39, 51; John 20:27; Acts 1:9-11; I Corinthians 15:4; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:17 5:9-10; 7:25, 8:6; 12:2; I John 2:1; Revelation 3:21)

## **Grace in the New Creation**

We believe that to be saved, sinners must be born again, that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process, and that in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature of received eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life. (John 1:6-7; 3:3, 8; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:17, 19; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13; II Peter 1:4; I John 5:1)

## **Justification**

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby He declares us to be righteous through faith in Christ Jesus; that justification includes the pardon of sin and the imputation of God's righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood. (Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1, 9; 8:1; II Corinthians 5)

## **Repentance**

We believe that repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit; that it is characterized by godly sorrow for sin as offensive to God and ruinous to the soul; and that true repentance is inseparably related to true faith. (Luke 13:1-3; 15:7; Acts 8:22; 20:21; Romans 2:4; II Corinthians 7:10) See page 19, Grace in the New Creation.

## **Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner: first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior. Second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life. Third, it is the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. (John 17:17; I Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 3:1; 10:10-14; I John 3:2; Jude 24-25; Revelation 22:11)

## **Adoption**

We believe that adoption is the gracious act whereby the Father, for the sake of Christ, places new believers into the honored position of mature sons, in contrast with regeneration whereby the believer receives the nature of God and becomes a child of God. The full benefit of the position accorded by adoption as the sons of God awaits the glorification of the believer at the coming of the Lord. (Galatians 4:1-7; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:13-14; I John 3:1-2)

## **The Security of the Saints**

All who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ. (John 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; Philippians 1:6; Jude 1)

## **Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming King of Kings. (Exodus 18:21-22; II Samuel 23:3; Daniel 3:17-18; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 5:29; 23:5; Romans 13:1-7)

## **Israel**

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land, and after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ. Israel is distinct from the church and the church is distinct from Israel. (Genesis 13:14-17; Ezekiel 37: Romans 11:1-32)

## **The Rapture and Subsequent Events**

We believe in the imminent, premillennial return of Christ for His Church, and that at the moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seventieth week of Daniel. (I Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 3:10)

We believe that the Great Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial reign. (Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-9; Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Acts 2:29-30; Revelation 20:1-4, 6)

## **The Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire. (Genesis 18:23; Proverbs 14:32; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 25:34-41; Luke 16:25; John 8:21; Romans 6:17-18, 23; 7:6; I John 5:19; Revelation 20:14-15)

## **SECTION III The Polity of Grace Baptist Church**

### **THE CHURCH AND ITS OFFICERS**

#### **The elected and appointed servants.**

A. The elected officers of the church shall be Pastors and Deacons/Trustees.

- B. A person may be considered by the church for office or other service after six (6) months of active membership (excluding the Pastor).
- C. All officers shall be spiritually mature, of unquestioned Christian character, loyal to the Word of God, dedicated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and the spiritual and material welfare of this church. They shall also be faithful in attendance at all regularly scheduled worship services and business meetings of the church. In the light of I Timothy 3, the home and family relationships must be given due consideration, as well as individual qualifications.
- D. All officers (excluding the Pastor) shall normally assume their duties in January, following the annual meeting. Retiring officers shall hold office until the terms of newly elected officers shall begin.
- E. Any officer unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties of his office shall resign. If any officer refuses to subscribe to the Articles of Faith, the Constitution, and the Church Covenant, his resignation shall be requested by the Pastor. If it is not received within a reasonable time, the office shall be declared vacant by a vote of the church.

### **Pastor**

- A. A candidate for the pastorate shall be carefully examined by the pulpit committee as to his salvation, doctrine, Christian conduct, and call to the ministry. If he has served in other churches, his ministry there should be explored. He shall be required to state his acceptance of and adherence to the Articles of Faith, Constitution, and Covenant of the church. Any differences which he holds concerning these documents should be submitted to the pulpit committee in writing. He shall also state in writing any differences which he holds relating to groups and associations with which this church is in fellowship. The pulpit committee shall present only one man at a time for the consideration and vote of the church. He shall meet all qualifications listed in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- B. A call to a pastor shall be extended at a meeting of the church called for that purpose and announced from the pulpit for two (2) Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting. A three-fourths majority of those present and voting shall be necessary for a call. Voting shall be by ballot. A written call and agreement shall be presented to the prospective pastor, giving details of the church-pastoral relationship, including salary, housing and car allowances, insurance, vacations, etc. after these matters have been discussed with the pastor and approved mutually.
- C. The pastor shall continue in office until he resigns, or is dismissed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a special meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall be announced from the pulpit for two (2) Sundays immediately preceding the date of such a meeting. It shall be understood that the pastor can only be dismissed based on teaching false doctrine.
- D. The pastor shall give the church not less than thirty (30) days' notice of his intention to discontinue as pastor. The church shall give the pastor not less than sixty (60) days' notice of

dismissal. If, in the judgment of the church, the conduct of the pastor justifies immediate termination of his ministry, the church may declare the pulpit vacant and pay two (2) month's salary beyond that date.

- E. The pastor shall moderate the business sessions of the church. In his absence, the senior deacon present shall call the meeting to order and the church shall elect a temporary moderator. If the pastor is to be under discussion in a business session, another moderator shall be elected, and the pastor and his family may withdraw from the meeting.
- F. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- G. The pastor shall also be received into the church membership with his wife and qualified children.
- H. The pastor shall receive three (3) weeks of paid vacation annually. Beginning with his third year of service, he shall accrue two (2) days of additional vacation time, not to exceed five (5) weeks.
- I. The pastor and his wife may be sent to two (2) conferences per year approved by the church, with all expenses paid by the church. This time shall not be considered a vacation.

### **Deacons**

- A. It shall be the duty of the deacons to advise and assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church; to be his helpers and counselors; to exercise prudent watch-care over the church membership; to visit the sick; to examine with the pastor candidates for church membership; to assist at baptisms, their wives assisting the ladies; and to supervise the preparation and distribution of the Lord's Supper.
- B. The church shall elect from its membership at least three (3) qualified men to serve as deacons for three-year terms. Their terms of office shall be arranged so that one (1) of the deacons shall be elected each year. One (1) additional deacon shall be elected for every fifty active members. They must meet the standards of Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3.
- C. Deacons who serve two (2) consecutive terms shall be required to take a one-year recess before being eligible for re-election. If a deacon is unable to complete his term of office, a special election may be held to choose another to complete the unexpired term.
- D. The deacons shall serve as the trustees of this church for legal purposes. They shall have authority to acquire and dispose of church property up to the value of one thousand dollars. All transactions exceeding that amount shall first be approved by a vote of the church, except for routine budget matters. The deacons shall be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the church facilities, equipment, and properties.

- E. The deacons shall serve as the pulpit committee when a vacancy occurs in the office of pastor. After consultation with the church, the deacons may invite a speaker to return as a candidate for the position of pastor. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time. He and his wife shall meet with the deacons and the church to state their views on doctrine, church policy, and pertinent matters.
- F. The deacons shall discuss with the candidate salary and benefits and shall make the church's decision known to him as soon as possible. If favorable, salary and benefits shall be included in a written notification.
- G. Deacons' meetings shall be held only when necessary and called only when the pastor does so or gives consent to do so.

**Support Personnel**

**Salaried Staff**

- A. All staff personnel shall be approved by the pastor, work under his supervision, and be in harmony with the program of this church.
- B. Salaried staff personnel shall be called majority vote of the church upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons.
- C. Staff members may be dismissed at any time by the pastor and deacons. Dismissed staff members who received a salary shall be paid thirty (30) days salary and shall have thirty (30) days to vacate church-owned housing. Their duties shall terminate immediately or at the time set by the pastor and deacons.

**Appointed Staff**

Amended: 1-18-89 Added to the Constitution –  
Appointed Business Manager.

THE BUSINESS MANAGER SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE PASTOR, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEACONS, FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD. THE BUSINESS MANAGER, AS AN APPOINTEE, SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE PASTOR IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEACONS, AND AS SUCH, SHALL HAVE CHARGE OVER THE BUSINESS-RELATED AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH, INCLUDING THE MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF THE TREASURER AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

THE TREASURER WILL CONTINUE TO WRITE CHECKS, COLLECT THE MONEY AND MAKE DEPOSITS. THE TREASURER WILL HAVE CUSTODY OF THE CHECKBOOK.

THE BUSINESS MANAGER WILL NOT HANDLE MONEY DIRECTLY BUT WILL BE PRESENT WHEN MONEY IS COUNTED. ALL MONIES RECEIVED WILL BE DULY RECORDED AND A SLIP WILL BE PRESENTED TO HIM SIGNED BY THE TREASURER AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

ALL BILLS WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE BUSINESS MANAGER WHO WILL MAINTAIN THE LEDGER.

ADDITIONALLY, THE DUTIES OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER SHALL INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT NECESSARILY LIMITED, TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. KEEP ACCURATE LEDGER OF RECEIPTS AND DEBITS.
2. PRESENT WEEKLY, QUARTERLY, AND ANNUAL REPORTS OF CHURCH FINANCES TO THE PASTOR AND CONGREGATION.
3. SHALL AUTHORIZE PAYMENT OF ALL VALID BILLS PRESENTED TO HIM. ALL QUESTIONABLE ITEMS REFERRED TO PASTOR AND DEACONS.
4. SHALL ARRANGE FOR THE INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF THE CHURCH FINANCIAL RECORDS.
5. SHALL ENSURE THE TIMELY AND ACCURATE PRESENTATION OF ALL REQUIRED FORMS TO EACH APPROPRIATE TAXING AGENCY (FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL).
6. SHALL ENSURE THE INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION OF, AND MAINTENANCE OF, ALL REQUIRED TAX-RELATED FORMS (FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL).
7. SHALL, WITH THE PASTOR AND DEACONS, PREPARE THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE THIRD QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING.
8. SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING THE MAINTENANCE OF A BALANCED BUDGET, WEEK BY WEEK.

NOTE: ANY PAYMENT FOR NON-BUDGETED EXPENSES THAT EXCEEDS \$100.00 MUST BE CLEARED BY PASTOR AND ONE DEACON. THE CHURCH MUST EXPEDITIOUSLY ALTER THE BUDGET AT A DULY CALLED MEETING TO REFLECT THE CHANGE.

### **Church Clerk**

- A. The clerk shall be appointed by the pastor after consultation with the deacons to a one-year term of service. The clerk may be appointed to an additional year, but cannot serve after two (2) successive terms for at least one (1) calendar year.
- B. The clerk shall have charge of all official correspondence requiring his or her signature and shall keep a record of all transactions at every church business meeting in a bound record book.

Furthermore, the clerk shall keep in a bound book a record of the membership, including baptisms and the reception and dismissal of members. The clerk shall perform such other duties as properly belong to the office, making quarterly and annual reports to the church.

- C. The clerk shall promptly provide to the business manager, financial secretary and treasurer a transcript of the minutes of each church business meeting in which authority is granted for the disbursement of funds.
- D. The clerk shall certify annually to the bank the names of officers who are authorized to have access to the safety deposit boxes and sign the checks for disbursement of funds. It shall be understood that only the business manager and clerk, along with the deacons, shall have access to the safety deposit box. It is further understood that only the treasurer, or in the absence of the treasurer, any deacon, shall be authorized to sign checks for the disbursement of funds.
- E. Upon the completion of the clerk's term of service or removal from office, he or she shall deliver to his successor or the pastor all records, files, and/or other papers belonging to the church, and shall present same with all contents complete to the date of surrender of such documents. To ensure the proper transfer of church documents, a checklist with each item listed shall be signed by the clerk and the person receiving the documents.

### **Church Treasurer**

- A. The treasurer shall be appointed by the pastor after consultation with the deacons to a one-year term of service. The treasurer may be appointed to an additional year, but cannot serve after two (2) successive terms for at least one (1) calendar year.
- B. The business manager shall be responsible for the recording of all financial transactions in permanent records and shall make quarterly and annual reports to the church. A report of income and expenses shall be given to the pastor weekly.
- C. The treasurer shall be responsible for depositing all funds in the bank.
- D. The treasurer shall pay all the bills of the church as authorized by the business manager via a weekly disbursement sheet as they are due. If any question as to the validity of a bill shall arise, the treasurer shall consult with the pastor, business manager and deacons. He or she shall record, write, sign, and deliver all checks.
- E. In the absence of the treasurer, any deacon may assume the responsibilities of the treasurer, except that he shall not simultaneously perform the duties of the financial secretary, as outlined in Section 4.



### **Financial Secretary**

- A. The Financial secretary shall be appointed by the pastor after consultation with the deacons to a one-year term of service. The financial secretary may be appointed to an additional year, but cannot serve after two (2) successive terms for a least one (1) calendar year.
- B. It shall be the duty of the financial secretary, together with the treasurer, and business manager to count and record in a permanent record all monies received in the offerings of the church. The treasurer and financial secretary will deliver signed verification of monies received each service. This shall be done following each service of the church.
- C. The financial secretary shall provide each member/family with a receipt of contributions annually.
- D. In the absence of the financial secretary, a deacon shall assume the secretary's duties, except that he may not simultaneously assume the duties of the treasurer, as outlined in Section 3

### **Bible School Coordinator**

- A. The Bible School Coordinator shall be appointed by the pastor after consultation with the deacons to a one-year term of service. The Bible School Coordinator may be appointed to an additional year, but cannot serve after two (2) successive terms for at least one (1) calendar year.
- B. The coordinator shall have the responsibility to ensure that the Bible School runs smoothly and effectively. He shall implement the program as established by the pastor and deacons. When possible, and as the need arises, he shall render any assistance and instruction to the Bible School teachers to enable them to do the best possible job.
- C. He shall be in charge of ordering all Bible School materials for each quarter. Before sending any order, he shall review the order with the pastor, unless given specific instructions to do otherwise.
- D. The Bible School Coordinator shall plan and implement a Vacation Bible School annually. He shall recruit any help he requires from among the active church members. The teachers and course material shall be subject to the approval of the pastor and deacons.

### **Auditing Committee**

- A. The pastor, in consultation with the deacons, shall appoint two (2) members and a deacon to audit all the financial records of the church before the annual church meeting.
- B. The church treasurer and financial secretary shall submit all records, upon request, to this committee.

- C. The church treasurer and financial secretary are not eligible to serve on the auditing committee.
- D. The auditing committee shall render a written account of their findings and possible suggestions for improvement to the church at the annual meeting.
- E. The auditor's report shall be read before the reading of the treasurer's report at the annual meeting.
- F. As an alternative to an auditing committee, the church may vote to authorize a professional accounting firm to audit the church's financial records.
- G. No person shall be appointed to this committee when such assignment shall require them to audit the work of a member of their immediate family.

### **Support Contingency**

- A. Additional non-salaried staff may be appointed by the pastor as the need arises, after consultation with the deacons.

## **THE CHURCH AND ITS OPERATIONS**

### **Business Meetings**

#### **Calling Business Meetings**

- A. The annual business meeting shall be held during January on the day set by the pastor and deacons and shall be announced verbally and in print at least two (2) weeks in advance.
- B. Quarterly business meetings shall be held during April, July, and October on the date set by the pastor and deacons, and shall be announced verbally and in print at least two (2) weeks in advance.
- C. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the pastor or deacons (with the pastor's knowledge) or upon the written request of the pastor and deacons or by ten (10) unrelated voting members.
- D. The official church year shall coincide with the calendar year.

### **Procedures at Business Meetings**

- A. An agenda shall be distributed to each member the Sunday before any regularly scheduled business meeting. Agendas shall consist of at least the following items: Reading of all pertinent reports (treasurer/clerk) and any items to be considered for vote. It shall be understood that only the items placed on the agenda shall be voted upon.
- B. All items for church action shall first be submitted to the pastor and deacons for their consideration and recommendations. If an item is rejected by the pastor and deacons, it may be re-submitted with the signatures of ten (10) unrelated voting members and shall be placed on the agenda of the next quarterly business meeting.
- C. The pastor shall moderate all business meetings (In his absence, see Section III, The Polity of Grace Baptist Church, The Elected and Appointed Officers, Pastor, Article E, Page 24)
- D. All business meetings shall be conducted decently and in order. Absolutely no hostility, verbal abuse, or any unkind attitude shall be tolerated by anyone. The moderator shall use his judgment as to when the meeting should be adjourned in the event of uncontrolled carnality. Roberts Rules of Order shall be resorted to only when a matter of business cannot be decided upon and an impasse is obvious.

### **Voting at Business Meetings**

- A. The presence of fifty (50) percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. Only active members eighteen (18) years of age and older shall be eligible to vote, on corporate matters or otherwise.
- B. All elections and matters of business shall be decided by a majority vote of members voting unless otherwise stated in this constitution.
- C. The election of deacons shall take place at the annual business meeting. Special elections to complete unexpired terms shall be held as the need arises. Newly elected deacons shall assume their responsibilities at the close of the business meeting during which they were elected.

## **Finances**

### **General Policy**

- A. This church and its ministries shall be financially supported through tithes and offerings, with all monies being placed in a General Fund. Additional monies may be borrowed when approved by a vote of the church.

- B. The salaries of the pastor and staff personnel shall be paid from the General Fund and shall be reviewed at least once a year, with consideration being given to the rising cost of living.
- C. All expenses for special meetings and speakers shall be paid from the General Fund, with speakers being reimbursed for their travel expenses. They shall receive honorariums determined by the pastor and deacons.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEM**  
**A Non-Constitutional Financial Policy Clarification**  
**Authorized by church vote, APRIL 19, 2000**

- A. Budgeted expenses as stated and voted on by the church at the fall budget meeting constitute blanket authorization for specified items.
- B. Miscellaneous expenses not specifically mentioned in the budget, but deemed necessary (gifts and unanticipated items, etc.) shall require at least prior notification and a purchase authorization from the deacons with pastoral and business manager consultation whenever feasible and/or possible. The deacons may backdate any exception as warranted.
- C. Visiting speakers shall receive no less than \$50 per message delivered as well as expenses per current I.R.S. standards. "Free Will Love Gifts" above and beyond the stated minimum are always appropriate and will be included with the established minimum. Such offerings will be deposited in the General Fund and credited to the appropriate budgetary category. The business manager is authorized to make budget adjustments as required concerning special offerings.
- D. Deacons hereby request the implementation of a "double-check signing system." Authorized are: treasurer-business manager with a deacon as an alternate.

At the October quarterly business meeting, a budget shall be presented to the church for its consideration. It shall serve as a guideline for financial disbursement for the New Year beginning January 1. Major and expensive deviations from the budget shall be brought before the church before any disbursement.

- D. The systematic giving of money for the support of the work of the Lord is worship as well as duty. It must be kept on the plane of voluntary, free-will offerings, untarnished by any hope of material gain. All members are expected to give regular financial support to the church and to the advancement of the projects it shall sponsor.

- E. The missionary support of this church shall be divided equally between foreign and home missions. Missionaries supported by this church shall receive equal amounts of financial aid unless they are members of the church, in which case they shall receive double the amount set for other missionaries.
- F. Missionary support levels shall be reviewed and determined at least once a year, with consideration being given to the rising cost of living.

### **Property and Dissolution**

#### **Property**

- A. This church shall have the right to own, buy, and sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its name and through properly elected officials, when authorized by vote of the church.
- B. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any individual from the assets, holdings, or other transactions in which this church may become involved.

#### **Dissolution**

- A. In the event of the dissolution of this church, all of its debts shall be paid in full. None of its remaining assets or holdings shall be divided among the members or other individuals but shall be irrevocably designated by corporate vote before dissolution to non-profit fundamental Baptist organizations which are in agreement with the Articles of Faith adopted by this church and in conformity with the requirements of the United States Internal Revenue Service Code of 1954 (Section 501 G-3) and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

### **Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of the members voting at a business meeting of this church called for that purpose. The proposed amendment(s) shall be posted on the church bulletin board for at least two (2) weeks before said meeting.

### **Leadership and Service Standards**

Realizing the importance, privilege, and responsibility of each aspect of the ministry of the Grace Baptist Church, and to maintain the highest possible level of Christian service, every member of Grace Baptist Church who is now serving or seeking to serve in any official capacity, elected or appointed, shall agree with and adhere to the following stipulations:

- A. **SALVATION** Successful Christian service is contingent upon the ministry of the Holy Spirit through a life adjusted to God by salvation through faith.

- B. **BAPTISM** In evidence of obedience, each worker should be immersed, significant of the new life in Christ
- C. **CHURCH ATTENDANCE** That each worker shall faithfully attend every service of the Grace Baptist Church unless providentially hindered (sickness, disability, work, etc.) and that he shall urge those to whom he ministers to be present as well, realizing that all the services of our church are inseparable. Active membership tells people that he believes in the ministry of the Grace Baptist Church, supports its officers, and subscribes to the Articles of Faith, etc.
- D. **EXEMPLARY LIFE** A Christian worker's life gives evidence of the superintendency of the Holy Spirit and is continually maturing in Christ. It is also characterized by faithful attendance at all services of the church, a daily strengthening through prayer and God's word, and a personal separation from worldliness.
- E. **CONCERN FOR SERVICE** Each worker should demonstrate a concern for the souls of the unsaved and the spiritual maturity of saints. A sympathetic understanding of and love for people is basic equipment.
- F. **FAITHFUL SERVICE** It is expected of each worker to be regular in his place of service during the period of his appointment, visit the homes of those to whom he ministers; cooperate with his agency supervisor, and attend all agency planning, training, and prayer meetings.
- G. **TRAINING** He continues to train as he strives for excellence in his service to God. He avails himself of training classes, periodicals, conferences, clinics, and workshops to stimulate and encourage his growth for greater effectiveness.
- H. **PRAYER** His intercessory investment on behalf of the total education effort of the church will pay high spiritual dividends.

## **Watch Care**

**Amended: 1-13-88 Added to Constitution:  
Membership Watch care**

**Members of this church who find it necessary to reside elsewhere for medical reasons during certain times of the year shall be afforded "Watch care Membership" status during their absence, so long as they retain a permanent home address locally and reside here for the majority of the calendar year. The church shall consider this status effective only when members worship in one church of like-precious faith. It shall be understood that they will continue to faithfully maintain their covenant obligations to the home church while on Watch care status. Members under Watch**

**care status will not be used to compute needed quorum for business meetings during their absence.**

### **Additional Regulations**

- A. Only active members eighteen (18) years of age or over shall be entitled to vote.
- B. Only active members appointed by the Pastor, after consultation with the deacons, shall serve as teachers in the church education program.
- C. It shall be deemed proper to receive members or grant letters of recommendation at any meeting of the church.
- D. Where disciplinary action is involved, it shall require a special business meeting of the church, announced two (2) Sundays in advance from the pulpit.

### **Termination**

- A. Members who unite with other churches shall be removed from membership. Letters of recommendation may be sent upon request to other fundamental Baptist churches for those members in good standing.
- B. Members who have been on the inactive list for three (3) months shall be removed from membership.
- C. Members who are disciplined by exclusion shall be removed from membership.
- D. Members who have died shall be removed from membership.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEM: The Church and Its Obligation**

#### **A Non-Constitutional Resolution passed unanimously on October 21, 1992 by the Grace Baptist Church concerning THE LORD'S DAY**

This resolution is a call to reaffirm the centrality of the Lord's Day in the lives of the people of God. By way of introduction, we note the following observation given by H. Halley, author of Halley's Bible Handbook:

“The fundamental weakness of Protestantism is said to be indifference to the institution that stands for Christ...is without doubt the very greatest hindrance to the progress of Christ’s work. The great body of church people who are...fairly regular...hold the key to the present pitiful situation. If they would become...altogether regular...then our churches would overflow every Sunday. Every Sunday belongs to Christ; ...every Sunday. The grand need of Protestantism is that our people make this thing (worship) a matter of conscience rather than of convenience.”

**Whereas:** We have affiliated ourselves with one another in the spirit of the church covenant and since we have as our stated purpose: “To glorify God by conducting a Baptist church following the Word of God as the sole and final authority,” we shall promote the worship of our God, edify believers, teach the whole counsel of God, administer the ordinances and Biblical discipline, and seek to win the lost to Christ.

**OF NECESSITY THEN:** We re-affirm our covenant promise to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talents in its activities: and to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, to the support of the ministry.

**FURTHERMORE:** We believe that the CHURCH is manifested through the local church which is a congregation of immersed believers associated by the covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ and governed by his laws.

**THEREFORE:** In recognition of the importance, privilege, and responsibility of each aspect of the ministry of Grace Baptist Church, and to maintain the highest possible level of Christian service, every member of the Grace Baptist Church who is now serving or seeking to serve in any official capacity, elected or appointed, shall faithfully attend every service of the Grace Baptist Church unless providentially hindered (sickness, disability, work, etc.). He shall urge those to whom he ministers to be present as well, realizing that all the services of our church are inseparable. Realizing the folly of expecting more of our leaders than we do of ourselves, we purpose to apply this same standard to ourselves. We wish to make public our resolve to honor the Lord on the Lord’s Day as expressed in the words of the following resolution, a blending of words taken from the Second London Confession of 1677 and the New Hampshire Confession of 1833;

“ We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord’s Day or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, where men after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe a holy rest all the day, from their works and sinful recreations, but also are up the whole time, in the public and private exercises of His worship...observing and availing oneself to all the means of grace, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.”



While no device of man is appropriate to bind the conscience of any man, let all who commit themselves to the implementation of this resolution do so only as prompted by the Holy Spirit through the grace of God in light of His word, that word is how one's life is brought into conformity with the will of God.

Offered as partial support for your consideration in acting upon this document are the following verses and concluding comment:

Matthew 6:33 "Seek ye first the kingdom of God..."

John 5:30 "I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which sent me..."

Colossians 3:1 "Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth..."

Hebrews 11:6 "He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him..."

Matthew 22:37 "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...whosever loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me..."

Exodus 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy..."

In conclusion, we do not tithe because the law demands it, for tithing predates the law. Nor do we observe a Christian Sabbath because the law demands it, for it, too, predates the law. The Lord's Day is the Lord's Day all day long. It should be central in the affairs of our lives.

### **The God-Given Right of Marriage**

Whereas, Marriage has been designed and defined by God as the lifelong bond exclusively between one Man and one Woman, as Husband and Wife, respectively (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; I Corinthians 7:2; Ephesians 5:31) and,

Whereas, Marriage has been instituted by God and sanctified by Him, as a unique picture of the relationship existing between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:21-33) and,

Whereas, Homosexual behavior, by either men or women, is condemned by God both the Old (Leviticus 18:22) and New Testaments (Romans 1:26, 27; Luke 17:29), even using the word "abomination" to describe it as a great offense against God, and for which God has condemned and destroyed nations that accepted such behavior (Leviticus 18:24, 27-29), and

Whereas, under the pressures of those organized for the acceptance of perverse sexual conduct, elected persons in local, state, and national governments have presumed to pass laws making sexual perversion, as defined by the Bible, acceptable conduct in American society and would redefine marriage as a civil right to which homosexuals are entitled, which laws are beyond the purview of human government and stand in open defiance to the Will and Work of God,

Be it therefore resolved, that we the members of Grace Baptist Church, Kittanning, PA on July 23, 2014, do hereby affirm their agreement with this statement and officially adopt the same. It is a reflection of this Church family's historical scriptural conviction. So, then we stand absolutely opposed to any legislation, by any government, that supports homosexual conduct and seeks to redefine Marriage to include any union other than one man married to one woman, which God has ordained in His Word (Genesis 2:4; Matthew 19:4-6; I Corinthians 7:2-3; Ephesians 5:31),

Be it further resolved, that we oppose the adoption of children into homosexual homes, which contradicts the Biblical pattern for homes and families, as well as the Biblical model for parents and children,

Be it finally resolved, that: Because there are no genetic markers to demonstrate that homosexuality is inborn, it must be a result of environment and learned behavior; therefore, we support any opportunity for men and women to turn from homosexual practices and lifestyle, because behavioral change is possible, beginning with their trust in Jesus Christ as a personal Savior, by Whom "old things are passed away" and "...all things are become new (II Corinthians 5:17; I Corinthians 6:9-11). 7/23/14