



**CONSTITUTION  
AND  
BY-LAWS  
OF  
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
Dallas, PA**

Original	1972
1 <sup>st</sup> Revision	1977
2 <sup>nd</sup> Revision	1979
3 <sup>rd</sup> Revision	1982
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# GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

## Dallas, PA

### **CHURCH CREED**

We believe in the inspiration of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments; the creation of man by the direct act of God; the incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; His identification as the Son of God; His vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind by the shedding of His blood on the cross; the resurrection of His body from the tomb; His power to save men from sin; the new birth through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit; the gift of eternal life by the Grace of God; the rapture of the church prior to the great seven year tribulation, and the return of Jesus Christ to set up His Millennial kingdom on earth.

### **CHURCH COVENANT**

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to attend services regularly as we are enabled, 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, discipline and doctrines; to give it sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children in the things of Christ; 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 deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ; to abstain from harmful habits remembering that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and that as Christ is our Lord, we should refrain from using our bodies in any way that might grieve the Holy Spirit.

We further engage 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 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 I – Name and Purpose**

### ***Section I – Name***

The name of this church shall be GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH, DALLAS, PA.

### ***Section 2 – Purpose***

The purpose for which the corporation is formed is furtherance of the cause and Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

More specifically, it aims:

- A. To bring those who are lost in sin to Christ by the message of Salvation by Grace through personal faith and conversion.
- B. To maintain regular services and programs for preaching and teaching the word of God for the perfecting of God’s people in their appointed service.
- C. To train, school, license, ordain (as the case may be), and send forth our people into the ministry of Christ; and to promote Bible-centered, Christ-honoring missionary efforts at home and abroad through evangelism, education, medicine, etc.
- D. To uphold and defend the Christian faith as set forth in the Holy Scriptures against all its enemies both religious and secular.
- E. To cooperate with such other Christian activity as in harmony with the word of God and the letter and spirit of this constitution. We agree with other believers on the ‘essentials’ of the Faith, we agree to disagree on what may be ‘non-essentials.’
- F. To encourage, comfort, strengthen and render assistance to needy people whenever and wherever Possible.

### ***Section 3 – Government***

- A. The government of this church is vested in its membership which constitutes the congregation and is facilitated through the Elders of the church.
- B. The church may at the annual meeting or at a special meeting overrule any decision made by the Elders of the church by two-thirds (2/3) of the active voting members present.

## **Article II – Membership**

### ***Section I – Procedure for Membership***

- A. Persons desiring membership in the *Grace Community Church*, having completed a “Request for Membership” form, shall be examined by the elders of the church as to their salvation, submission to believer’s baptism by immersion, their Christian growth, and their acceptance of the church creed, church covenant, and By-laws of the church.
- B. Upon examination by the Elders of the church, new members shall be presented to the congregation and publicly received into membership of the church.

### ***Section 2 – Categories of Membership***

The following categories of membership shall be recognized: Active, Associate, Youth, Non-Resident, and Inactive. The Church Clerk shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date roll of membership according to these categories.

- A. Active: An Active Member is one who meets the qualifications of membership indicated above, holds membership in no other church, and faithfully performs the following duties:
  - 1) attend the services of the church as regularly as possible;
  - 2) gives for the financial support of the church ministry; and
  - 3) takes active part in the life of the church.

Active members have all the rights, privileges, and obligations of membership set forth in this constitution.
- B. Associate: An Associate member is any person who meets the qualifications for membership and has completed the procedure for becoming a member, but who legitimately desires to maintain membership in another evangelical church. Examples of those eligible for Associate Membership would include missionaries or college students living in the area, or those temporarily located here for business purposes. The purpose of Associate membership is to allow such individuals to join with us in fellowship and ministry without relinquishing membership in a home or sending church. Associate members are without voting privileges and may not hold an elected office, but they may hold appointive position in the church when all other appropriate qualifications are met. Associate membership automatically terminates when the person permanently moves out of the area again. Associate members may be advanced to Active membership by requesting and receiving approval of the Elders and by relinquishing membership in the other church.
- C. Youth: A Youth member is any person who meets the qualifications for membership, and has completed the process for becoming a member, but has not yet attained the age of 18. Youth members may not vote but may hold appointive positions when all other appropriate qualifications are met. At age 18, the individual may request that the Elders review his or her status so that he or she may be advanced to active membership.
- D. Non-Resident: A Non-Resident member is one who continues to meet the qualifications of membership but lives at such a distance from the church as to be unable to take active part in its work or services. The Elders will be responsible for reviewing the status of such individuals, and for placing them on the Non-Resident member roll. Non-Resident members do not have a vote and cannot hold a position of responsibility. Students and serviceman living out of the area will be considered Non-Resident members until such time as they permanently relocate here. They can be

restored to Active membership by requesting and receiving approval from the Elders.

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- E. Inactive: Members may be placed on the inactive roll of the church by action of the Elders for unfaithful attendance and lack of participation. The Elders must attempt to contact such members before being placed on the inactive roll. Inactive members may be reinstated to Active membership by giving evidence to the elders of faithful attendance and participation. Inactive members may not vote or hold a position of responsibility.
- If a person has been on the Inactive roll for more than six months, the Elders will again attempt to make contact. If no satisfactory explanation is given for the individual's non-participation, he or she may be removed from the membership roll at the discretion of the Elders.

### ***Section 3 – Responsibilities and Privileges of Membership***

- A. It shall be the responsibility of each member to discharge his/her spiritual and temporal obligation to the church body as provided in the church covenant and By-laws.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of each member to faithfully observe the Lord's Table. Such observance with the church family is an indication of a member's obedience to the Lord.
- C. Each active member shall be privileged to vote on any proposal presented in a congregational meeting.
- D. An active member may hold any office to which he/she is elected or appointed. A man must have demonstrated faithfulness for a period of one year in membership before being considered for the office of Elder or the ministry of Deacon. A woman must have demonstrated faithfulness for a period of one year in membership before being considered for the ministry of deaconess.

### ***Section 4 – Discipline of Membership***

Whenever a believer's relationship with another believer, or, with the body as a whole is jeopardized by misunderstanding, or misconduct, or sin, such will be subject to the truths of Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-2 in the spirit of Ephesians 4:30-32. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God...Let all bitterness...be put away from you...And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:30-32).

#### **A. Grounds**

This church shall regard as grounds for discipline infractions regarding the following:

1. Immoral and unchristian conduct. I Cor. 5:11-13; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15.
2. Willfully promoting discord among the fellowship. Rom. 16:17; Prov. 6:16, 19b; 3 John 10
3. Promoting false teaching. Titus 3:10, 2 John 10
4. Unresolved conflict among brethren. Matt. 5:23, 24.

#### **B. Examining**

The Elders of the church shall examine each situation prayerfully with due regard for extenuating circumstances. The Elders shall upon investigating such infractions, follow the biblical pattern with the goal of restoring such a brother/sister. If this is unsuccessful, the Elders shall proceed by proposing discipline as they deem necessary. No member may suffer disciplinary action without having the privilege to appear before the Elders, and likewise appear before the church body at the time the church carries out such discipline.

Recommendations by the Elders and action taken by the church will be in writing and retained by the Church Clerk.

### ***Section 5 – Removal from Membership***

Membership may be terminated in any of the following ways:

- A. by Dismissal: Any member who wishes to join with another church will, upon request in writing from that church, be dismissed from the membership by the vote of the Elders. Notice of such action shall be sent by the Church Clerk to the church making the request;
- B. by Resignation: Any member who desires to resign from the membership may do so by a letter of Resignation presented to the Elders;
- C. by Removal: The Elders may remove a name from the inactive membership roll when that member's whereabouts have been known to the church for six months or more or no satisfactory answer has been given for the member's prolonged non-participation;
- D. by Expulsion: When the church, in the exercise of its biblical and constitutional authority in discipline, withdraws fellowship from one proven to be an unworthy member, the rights and privileges of a member cease immediately; and
- E. by Death: Membership automatically terminates at death.

### ***Section 6 – Readmission to Membership***

Any former member of the Grace Community Church may again become a member in the same manner as any other non-member. In the event of readmission of disciplined members, the Elders will consider such in view of disciplinary action taken, repentance, restitution, and other steps necessary for restoration.

### ***Section 7 – Pastor's Membership***

When a Pastor and/or Associate/Assistant Pastor(s) has been installed, he and his spouse shall become active members of the church.

## **ARTICLE III – Elders**

### ***Section I – Selection***

There shall be as many Elders of the church as there are scripturally qualified men appointed by the Holy Spirit and willing to serve. The Elders of the church shall carefully examine a man by the scriptural qualifications. If there is unanimous agreement among the Elders of the church, the man's name will be brought before the next congregational meeting by the elders to have his appointment ratified. The Elders will weigh the vote of the congregation. If an overwhelming majority of the congregation approves the candidate and the Elders are still in unanimous agreement that the Holy Spirit has so led, the individual shall be set apart to the position of Elder in public service of the church.

### ***Section II – Qualifications***

An Elder must be a man of mature spiritual experience and understanding, capable of shepherding God's people and overseeing God's work. Each Elder must be an active member of the church, and must meet the scriptural qualifications found in I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9 and I Peter 5:1-4.

### ***Section III – Scripturally defined Duties of Elders***

1. The Elders shall consult together regarding doctrinal questions that arise in the church (Acts 15:4-6).
2. The Elders shall seek to protect the church from those who would teach false doctrine (Acts 20:29-31).
3. The Elders shall lead the way in helping the needy (Acts 20:35).
4. The Elders shall admonish those who stir up trouble in the church (I Thess. 5:12).
5. The Elders are to direct the affairs of the church (I Timothy 3:5, 5:17).
6. The Elders shall oversee the preaching and teaching ministry of the church (I Timothy 5:17).
7. The Elders are to keep watch over the spiritual well-being of individuals within the church (Hebrews 13:17).
8. The Elders are to pray for the sick (James 5:14).
9. The Elders are to care for the church the way a shepherd cares for his flock (I Peter 5:1,2).
10. The Elders are to be examples to the flock (I Peter 5:3).



*Section 4 – Organizationally Defined Duties*

1. The Elders are responsible to lead the church in such a way as to equip the church to fulfill its stated purpose.
2. The Elders shall coordinate goals for the church and plan for their realization.
3. The Elders shall share responsibility for the pastoral oversight and care of the congregation.
4. The Elders shall oversee the work of the committees of the church. They shall annually appoint one of their own number to chair each committee of the church, except where that responsibility has been delegated to a qualified Deacon/Deaconess.
5. When it is expedient to do so, the Elders of the church may delegate responsibilities to qualified Deacons or Deaconesses.
6. The Elders shall prepare an annual budget for congregational approval. They shall see to the orderly execution of the budget, and may authorize expenditures beyond approved budget limits up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per expenditure without congregational approval, except in case of emergency.
7. The Elders shall assist in administering the church ordinances.
8. The Elders shall meet at least monthly, and as often as necessary, to effectively carry out their work. A quorum shall consist of two thirds of the active Elders.
9. The Elders shall annually elect their own chairman and secretary. The chairman shall serve as moderator of the church in absence of the pastor. The Elders shall serve as ex-officio members of all committees.
10. The Elders shall consider the question of additional ministerial staff when the need arises and present their findings to the congregation for approval.
11. The Elders shall develop and administer policies consistent with this Constitution.
12. The Elders shall receive, consider, and recommend to the church all amendments to the Constitution.
13. The Elders shall assume responsibility regarding the reception, care, and termination of members.
14. The Elders shall examine and recommend to the church all candidates for commissioning, licensing, and ordaining.
15. The Elders shall consider recommendations regarding the support of new missionary candidates and organizations, and bring such before the church as they deem wise.

### ***Section 5 – Tenure of Elders***

An Elder's term of office shall be indefinite. An Elder May resign his office by giving written notice of such to the other Elders of the church. He may also be removed from office by vote of the active members of the church for serious neglect of duties. Prior to such action the Elders shall provide him with a written statement of the complaints against him and allow him a reasonable time to improve in the performance of his duties. If there is not a satisfactory improvement the Elders shall recommend his dismissal to the active members at a special meeting of the church called for that purpose. A majority vote of the active members present at this meeting shall be required for his removal.

An Elder may be relieved of his duties immediately when charges against him of immorality or doctrinal infidelity have been thoroughly investigated and proved to the satisfaction of a majority of the Elders of the church. In such a case, the Elders shall provide a written statement of the charges against him and allow opportunity for him to speak in his own defense.

An Elder may be temporarily relieved of his official duties by taking a sabbatical with the approval of the other Elders. An Elder who has served with distinction for a number of years may be given the title Elder Emeritus by the other Elders. An Elder Emeritus will retain his standing as an Elder of the church but will be relieved of his organizational defined duties (see Article III, Section 4), and will not have a vote at meetings of the Elders of the church.

## **ARTICLE IV – PASTOR**

### ***Section 1 – Call of the Pastor***

When it has been determined that the office of Pastor will become vacant, the Elders of the church shall appoint a Search Committee. This committee shall consist of a majority of the remaining Elders and at least two other active members of high standing in the church.

The Search Committee shall thoroughly investigate and prayerfully consider all candidates. As the Holy Spirit leads, they shall present the name of one candidate at a time to the full body of Elders. The Elders shall undertake similar prayerful consideration of the candidate. If there is unanimous agreement among the Elders of the church, the candidate will be brought before the church for consideration. A special meeting of the church shall be called for the purpose of voting by secret ballot whether to call the candidate. The Elders shall weight the vote of the church. If an overwhelming majority approves the candidate, and the Elders are still unanimous in their agreement that the Holy Spirit has so led, the church shall extend a call on behalf of the church. Should the call be accepted, the Pastor shall be installed in a public service of the church. Should the candidate not be extended a call or should the call be refused, the Search Committee shall seek out another acceptable candidate.

### ***Section 2 – Qualifications***

A Pastor must be a man of mature spiritual experience and understanding, capable of shepherding God's people and overseeing God's work. He must meet the scriptural qualifications found in I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-4.

### ***Section 3 – Duties***

The Pastor will serve as an Elder of the Church (See Article III). In addition to those duties, the Pastor shall:

1. Feed the flock by reading, expounding, and preaching the Word;
2. Administer the ordinances;
3. Prepare candidates for church membership by instruction in the Word, and to guide the educational/discipleship program of the church;
4. Visit officially the people, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the dying;
5. Pray for and with his flock;
6. Serve as moderator of the congregation or designate an elder alternate.

### ***Section 4 – Tenure of the Pastor***

The Pastor's term shall be indefinite. The Pastor may resign his office by giving at least one month written notice to the Elders of the church. He may be removed from office by vote of the active members of the church for serious neglect of duties. Prior to such action the Elders shall provide him with a written statement of the complaints against him and allow him a reasonable time to improve in the performance of his duties. If there is not satisfactory improvement the Elders shall recommend his dismissal to the active members at a special meeting of the church called for that purpose. A majority vote of the active members present at this meeting shall be required for his removal.

The Pastor may be relieved of his duties immediately when charges against him of immorality or doctrinal infidelity have been thoroughly investigated and proved to the satisfaction of a majority of the Elders of the church. In such a case, the Elders shall provide a written statement of the charges against the Pastor and allow opportunity for him to speak in his own defense. Termination of the Pastor by the Elders shall be immediate. When such action is taken, a discreet explanation will be made to the membership as soon as possible at a special meeting called for that purpose.

### ***Section 5 – Other Ministry Staff***

At the recommendation of the Elders, and by vote of the membership, other ministry staff; e.g. Assistant or Associate Pastors; Youth Pastor, etc., may be employed by the church.

Individuals holding the title of "Pastor" must fulfill the scriptural qualifications of an Elder, and will serve as an Elder of the church (see Article III). All other ministry staff must fulfill the qualifications of Deacon or Deaconess.

The term of office for ministry staff personnel shall be indefinite. Employment may be terminated by either party under the same provisions as stated above in Section 4.

## **ARTICLE V – Deacons and Deaconesses**

Following the New Testament pattern, Deacons and Deaconesses are those who perform various services of a practical, temporal, or material nature to the body of Christ, relieving the elders of responsibilities which might detract from their ministry of spiritual oversight.

- A. Qualifications: Deacons/Deaconesses shall be active members of the church and meet the qualifications found in I Timothy 3:8-13.
- B. Selection: There shall be as many Deacons/Deaconesses as necessary to aid the Elders of the church in effectively carrying out the work of the church. According to the need determined by the Elders, names of qualified individuals shall be brought before the membership for a vote. A Deacon or Deaconess shall be elected to perform ministries as defined by the elders.
- C. Duties: A Deacon/Deaconess's function is one of service, specifically, meeting the physical needs of God's people. They are ministers of mercy to the body of Christ.
- D. Tenure: All Deacon/Deaconess shall be elected each year at the annual business meeting. A Deacon/Deaconess may be relieved of duties by the Elders of the church for inappropriate conduct or serious neglect of duties.

## **ARTICLE VI – Other Officers**

### ***Section I – Church Treasurer***

The Treasurer shall be elected by the church to service for one year. He/she shall keep separate accounts of the money received by him/her from the Financial Secretary for the support of the church, for building and repair, and for benevolent purposes, together with any other moneys or legacies entrusted to his/her care. He/she shall be directly answerable to the Elders of the church to whom he/she shall make written reports. He/she shall make available to the auditing committee his/her accounts upon request. He/she shall pay all bills on authorization by the Elders of the church on receipt of vouchers from the Financial Secretary.

### ***Section II – Financial Secretary***

The Financial Secretary shall be elected by the church annually to serve for one year. He/she shall receive all moneys for church expenses and benevolences, keep an accurate account of the same and see to it that the money is given to the Treasurer. The Financial Secretary, or his/her assistant, shall count the moneys in the presence of the Treasurer, or his/her assistant, and shall keep records of the offerings received.

He/she shall present to the Treasurer vouchers for expenditures as authorized by the Elders of the church and shall keep records of the same. He/she shall keep a financial record of those who give by envelope or check and shall send a report to the individual giver in January of each year or at other times upon request. No one except the Financial Secretary shall have access to the personal contribution records.

***Section 3 – Church Clerk***

The Church Clerk shall be appointed by the Elders of the church. He/she shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the church in the business meetings, take custody of church records and documents, keep an accurate register of all members of the church, conduct the correspondence of the church and perform such other secretarial duties as may be indicated.

***Section 4 – Sunday School Superintendent***

A Sunday School Superintendent shall be appointed annually by the Elders of the church to supervise and coordinate the ministry of the Sunday School.

***Section 6 – Assistants***

Assistants to elected officers may be appointed by the Elders of the church upon recommendation by the elected officer.

***Section 7 – Vacancies***

Should a vacancy occur in any elected office, the Elders may appoint a member of the church to fill that vacancy until the time of the annual meeting of the church.

**ARTICLE VII – Meetings*****Section 1 – Worship and Ministry***

- A. The church shall meet each Lord’s Day for worship and instruction.
- B. The church shall meet regularly for mid-week prayer.
- C. The church shall operate a Sunday School.
- D. Other meetings will be held as the Elders decide for the purposes of worship, instruction, fellowship, and prayer.
- E. The church shall provide regular meetings for our youth for the purpose of Christian education, leadership training and Christian fellowship.

***Section 2 – Business***

- A. Quorum: A quorum at any church business meeting shall be twenty percent of the active membership.
- B. Voting: A majority vote of the active members in attendance shall decide all matters except: amending the Constitution; or purchase, sale, or mortgaging of church property, in which instance a two-thirds majority is required. For the calling of a Pastor or Elder, see Article III-Section 1 and Article IV-Section 1 respectively.

- C. Regular Meetings: The church will meet quarterly to conduct business on the first Sunday of March, June, September, and December. Exceptions shall be duly announced. The fourth quarterly business meeting in December will include the annual election of officers and adoption of the annual budget. The Elders of the church shall present a tentative list of candidates for indicated officers and/or ministries during the first week of November. Church members shall be invited to suggest in writing to the Elders of the church any additional names to be considered no later than the third Sunday of November. The Elders of the church shall present a final list of candidates the Sunday prior to the annual business meeting along with a copy of the proposed budget.
- D. Special Meetings: Special business meetings may be called by the Elders of the church or by the Church Clerk upon written, signed request of at least ten percent of the active members. All special business meetings must be announced to the congregation two Sundays prior to the meeting. Only the announced business can be considered at any special meeting.
- E. Items of Business: The Elders shall bring the following matters before the congregation for decision:
1. Non-budgeted expenditures out of the General Fund in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) except in the case of emergency;
  2. Approval of the annual budget;
  3. The call of a Pastor or Elder, and election of Deacons/Deaconesses and other officers of the Church;
  4. The purchase, sale, or mortgaging of church property;
  5. Appropriate matters of church discipline;
  6. Support of all new missionary candidates;
  7. Amendments to the Constitution;
  8. Approval of candidates commissioning, licensing, and ordaining; and
  9. Any other matters on which they deem wise to have the church act.

## **ARTICLE VIII – Ordinances**

### ***Section 1 – Baptism***

Baptismal services shall be held in connection with a regular service of the church, whenever candidates are prepared for it.

### ***Section 2 – The Lord’s Supper***

The church shall meet for the observance of the Lord's Supper at least once a month, and at such other times as the Elders may determine.

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## **ARTICLE IX – Committees**

### ***Section 1 – Standing Committees***

As they deem necessary, The Elders of the church may establish (or disband) standing committees to ensure that those ministries are being effectually performed which are necessary to fulfill the purpose of the church. The Elders of the church will provide information regarding committee composition, officers, purpose, and procedures at the time of committee installation.

### ***Section 2 – Special Committees***

As they deem necessary, the Elders of the church shall establish special committees to do work of a temporary nature important to the function of the church.

The Elders of the church will provide information regarding committee composition, officers, purpose, and procedures at the time of committee installation. Special committees shall be disbanded upon completion of assigned work.

## **ARTICLE X – Corporate Provisions**

### ***Section 1 – Officers***

For corporate and legal purposes the following shall be considered officers of the church: the Elders, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.

### ***Section 2 – Financial Support***

Church funds shall be raised by the freewill offerings of the people.

### ***Section 3 – Dissolution***

If, in the future, *Grace Community Church, Dallas, PA* votes to disband, the assets shall be sold and the proceeds placed into a trust for the support of the Church's individual missionaries to be paid at the then current annual support rate until funds are depleted. In the event that such funds should outlast the missionary's term of service, the remaining funds shall be divided evenly among the *Moody Bible Institute, Chicago Ill*; *Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX*; *Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, MI*; and *Grace College and Seminary, Winona Lake, IN*.

## **ARTICLE XI – Amendments**

These By-laws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present at the annual meeting or a special meeting, providing that an exact copy of the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in the church and copies made available to each member on four Sundays immediately preceding said meeting.

