

# **CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS OF RIVER CITY GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH**

The Constitution/Bylaws of River City Grace Community Church are based on the Bible, God's Word, comprised of sixty-six books that are inspired and inerrant in the original manuscripts. As God's perfect and complete written Word, the Bible cannot and shall not be amended (Proverbs 30:6; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 22:18-19).

The practical understanding and application of this Constitution/Bylaws to the life and ministry of River City Grace Community Church shall be under the leadership and direction of the Elders (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17), in keeping with the church's Statement of Faith.

*Approved May 2007*  
*Revised February 2011*

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

*ARTICLE I: Name.....Page 3*

*ARTICLE II: Purpose, Objectives, & Priorities.....Page 3-4*

*ARTICLE III: Authority.....Page 4*

*ARTICLE IV: Membership.....Page 5-7*

*ARTICLE V: Church Organization.....Page 7-13*

*ARTICLE VI: Ministry Staff.....Page 13-15*

*ARTICLE VII: Committees & Ministry Groups.....Page 15*

*ARTICLE VIII: Use of Facilities/Meetings.....Page 16*

*ARTICLE IX: Amendments & Changes.....Page 16*

# CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS OF RIVER CITY GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

## ***ARTICLE I: Name***

The name of this church will be known as “River City Grace Community Church”, a not-for-profit organization, registered and recognized by the State of California.

## ***ARTICLE II: Purpose, Objectives, & Priorities***

### ***Section 1: Purpose***

To see God exalted as His grace and truth in Jesus Christ abounds in and overflows to more and more people. (1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Matthew 28:19-20; John 1:14-17, 7:37-39; 2 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Timothy 1:12-17)

### ***Section 2: Objectives***

The broad objectives of this church are:

1. To see God so work in the lives of unbelievers that they would become ***OBSERVERS*** of His grace and truth in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 5:13-16; Philippians 2:14-16; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:15) Our desire is to see the grace of God active in touching and arousing the curiosity of unbelievers.
2. To see God so work in the lives of unbelievers that they would become ***RECEIVERS*** of His grace and truth in Jesus Christ. (John 1:12, 3:36; Ephesians 2:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-9; 1 Timothy 2:3-4) Our desire is to see the grace of God active in convicting and saving those who are perishing.
3. To see God so work in the lives of believers that they would grow as life-long ***STUDENTS*** of His grace and truth in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 12:1-2; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:17-18) Our desire is to see the grace of God active in teaching and transforming those who are saved.
4. To see God so work in the lives of believers that they would become increasingly fruitful ***MINISTERS*** of His grace and truth in Jesus Christ. (Romans 12:3-8; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10-11) Our desire is to see the grace of God active in equipping and empowering believers for service to the Lord.
5. To see God so work in the lives of believers and whole churches that they would become powerful ***EXTENDERS*** of His grace and truth in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8, 13:2; 2 Corinthians 4:15) Our desire is to see the grace of God active in expanding and multiplying His church in a spiritually dark and dying world.

### ***Section 3: Priorities***

The core priorities of this church are:

1. **Exaltation:** Expository preaching (Psalm 19:7-10; Acts 20:27; Romans 10:14-17; 2 Timothy 4:1-5); authentic worship (Psalm 96:145, 150; John 4:24; Romans 12:1-2); constant prayer (Psalm 105:3-4; Matthew 6:5-15; Philippians 4:4-7; Hebrews 4:14-16); and faith-driven obedience (John 14:21; Hebrews 11:6; James 2:14-26).
2. **Equipping:** Systematic teaching (Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 4:11-12; Colossians 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:16-17); Godly modeling (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:8; 1 Timothy 4:12); and leadership training (Matthew 9:39, 28:19-20; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 2:2).
3. **Encouragement:** Biblical shepherding (Matthew 9:36-38; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3); agape fellowship (John 13:34-35; Philippians 2:1-11; Hebrews 10:23-25); and gracious confrontation (Proverbs 27:6; Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:19-20).
4. **Evangelism:** Pure motivation (Psalm 145:1-7; Matthew 9:36-38; 2 Corinthians 5:11-15; 1 Thessalonians 2:4); ambassador lifestyle (2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:14-16); and worldwide mindset (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8, 17:24-28).

## ***ARTICLE III: Authority***

### ***Section 1: Primary Authority***

The primary authority in this church rests in Jesus Christ, as the living head of the church (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18). This authority has been transmitted by and is expressed within the 66 books of the completed Holy Scriptures, which are inerrant, infallible, and completely sufficient (Psalm 19:7-14; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21).

### ***Section 2: Secondary Authority***

The secondary authority in this church rests in the Elders who exercise their authority by carrying out their responsibilities as given in Scripture and outlined in this Constitution/Bylaws. The Elders are accountable to Jesus Christ and one another, along with the members of the church body (1 Timothy 5:17-20).

### ***Section 3: Corporation***

The church is incorporated and chartered under the laws of the State of California.

### ***Section 4: Liquidation, Dissolution, or Abandonment***

The property and facilities of this church are dedicated to its purpose and objectives. Upon liquidation, dissolution or abandonment of the corporation; the property, facilities, and funds will not inure to the benefit of any private individual, but rather to a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for like religious or charitable purposes.

## ***ARTICLE IV: Membership***

### ***Section 1: Church Membership***

Church membership is understood as a public affirmation of a mutual commitment to Jesus Christ and one

another. While every genuine believer in Jesus Christ is already a member in His body universal, formal membership with the local body of River City Grace Community Church is limited to those who:

1. Give clear confession of Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
2. Have been baptized as believers in water by immersion in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. Are willing to submit to the authority of the church Elders in matters of spiritual life and practice.
4. Are at least 14 years of age.
5. Have been regularly attending River City Grace Community Church for at least 6 months.
6. Have submitted a written application for membership.
7. Have attended the Membership Training class.
8. Have been approved by the Elders.

## ***Section 2: Membership Rights and Responsibilities***

All church members have certain rights and responsibilities. They include:

1. Obeying the commands of God's Word in demonstrating a growing, maturing relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Being actively involved in service to others in the church body using their respective gifts and abilities.
3. Faithfully, regularly, and cheerfully giving their financial offerings to support the progress of the Gospel in and through the ministry of the church.
4. Seeking to evangelize and minister to those who are spiritually lost.
5. Making every reasonable effort to attend and participate in all regularly scheduled gatherings of the church, such as Corporate Worship on Sundays, Equipping Classes, Communion Celebrations, Prayer Meetings, Church Family Business Meetings, Special Events, Seminars, etc.
6. All church members are responsible to abide by this Constitution/Bylaws and submit to any policies and procedures duly developed in support of the same.
7. If any member has concerns related to the life and practices of River City Grace Community Church, as reflected in these Constitution/Bylaws and supporting procedures, he/she is expected to address his/her concerns with the Elders.

## ***Section 3: Discipline & Restoration***

Church members, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, who exhibit a continuing, unrepentant lifestyle of sin in regard to doctrine or conduct, shall be pursued by others in the church according to the biblical process outlined in Matthew 18:15-18; Galatians 6:1,2; and James 5:16-20.

This is always to be done with the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the church, restoring the individual to fellowship with God and His church, and edifying believers by deterring sin.

1. This process begins with fervent, continual prayer being made on behalf of the erring individual by the one who has knowledge of the sin. It is then the responsibility of the one who has knowledge of the erring individual's misconduct to lovingly confront the erring individual in private, seeking repentance and restoration (Matthew 18:15). If the erring individual does not heed this reproof, then the reproving individual shall again go to the erring individual accompanied by one or two witnesses who will confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. They will again reprove and correct the erring individual, and seek his or her repentance (Matthew 18:16). (These first and second warnings may occur within no specified time interval.) If the erring individual still refuses to heed this reproof, the Elders are to be informed.

If the Elders determine, after a thorough investigation in accordance with the procedures prescribed by pertinent scripture, that there is corroborating evidence the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted, and that the erring individual has refused to repent, then the Elders will oversee the process of making the matter known to the church membership (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3). This will be done verbally at a regularly scheduled gathering of the church. The intent of making the matter known to church members is so that they can collectively pray and call the erring individual to repentance.

If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then verbal notice to that effect will be given at a regularly scheduled gathering of the church. If, however, the erring individual still refuses to repent in response to the church's collective call to repentance, the Elders shall verbally announce the erring individual's dismissal from church fellowship and/or membership at a regularly scheduled church gathering. At this point, the erring individual is to be regarded as an unbeliever (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15). If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Elders, then the erring individual shall be publicly and joyfully restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of church fellowship and/or membership (Luke 17:3-4; 2 Corinthians 2:6-9).

2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Elders, in the exercise of their discretion, may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline (informing the church body at a regularly scheduled church gathering of the need to call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage (dismissal from fellowship and/or membership in the church) when one or more of the following have occurred:
  - a) Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public (i.e., openly and to the offense of the whole church (1 Corinthians 5:1-5)).
  - b) Where the disciplined individual has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the Elders, then chooses to disregard the direction and reproof of the Elders (Romans 16:17).
  - c) Where the disciplined individual has been warned twice already to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard the warnings (Titus 3:10-11).
3. The members of River City Grace Community Church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements made to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by members who are in good standing, and who are not under any disciplinary action.

4. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders, a church member, a non-member regular attendee, or any other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present on church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that individual.

The actions described in this section must at all times be carried out with a prayerful, gentle, loving, and humble attitude, and with sensitivity to God's timing in how the process should proceed.

#### ***Section 4: Removal from the Membership Roll***

A member may be removed from the membership roll for any of the following reasons:

1. Upon the member's written request for transfer or withdrawal from the membership roll. This is only for those members who are in good standing and are not under church discipline.
2. Continued lack of interest and attendance at services of the church (illness, old age, or military service excluded). When such conditions continue for a period of six months or longer without any comment from the member involved, removal may take place upon the decision of the Elders.
3. A member persists in teaching doctrine or distributing literature contrary to the essential elements of the church's statement of faith. Removal of such a member will occur only after reasonable efforts have been made by the Elders to determine if the doctrine in question is of an essential nature, and the member is unresponsive to correction.
4. A member continues in sinful practices without repentance.

It shall be the responsibility of all church members to care for those who are noticeably absent from the ministry and services of the church (Hebrews 10:23-25). Attention should be given to them in a spirit of loving concern. Attempts should be made to determine the reason(s) for their absence, and a way to restore them back into active fellowship and ministry.

### ***ARTICLE V- Church Organization***

#### ***Section 1- Elders***

The term "Elders" refers to a group of both salaried and non-salaried men. This term is used interchangeably in Scripture with the terms "Overseers", "Pastors", "Shepherds", and "Bishops" (Acts 20:17, 28; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Timothy 3:1,2; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

##### **1. Qualifications:**

A man whose life manifests the qualities and characteristics of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 may serve as an Elder. A candidate for Elder must also be willing to make the necessary time commitments to fulfill his responsibilities to the church. Finally, any candidate for Elder (other than paid pastoral staff) must have been a member of the church for at least one year.

## 2. Responsibilities:

The primary work of the Elders shall be to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word and oversee all matters of the church. Their responsibilities shall include the following:

- Provide general oversight and direction for the flock in practical matters, in matters of doctrine, and in matters of discipline and character.
- Bear responsibility for the oversight and direction of specific, assigned ministries within the church.
- Shepherd the flock.
- Equip the saints for the work of the ministry.
- Teach the flock.
- Exhort in sound doctrine.
- Refute those who contradict sound doctrine.
- Exemplify Godly living.

At times, the Elders may gather the entire congregation together for open discussions, information sharing, and prayer. All decisions will, however, be made solely by the Elders in the administration of their responsibilities. Decisions must be made on the basis of unanimity, and not on the basis of majority vote.

At all times, the Elders are responsible to help promote and develop an educated, involved, and well informed congregation. All members are encouraged to bring input and/or questions to any of the Elders at any time.

The Elders are responsible to oversee and promote a high level of financial accountability with the congregation, through such means as presentation of the annual budget and regular financial reporting.

While the Pastor-Teacher is an Elder, and holds no greater authority than the other Elders, he is to exercise primary leadership among the Elders. He shall be responsible for oversight of the primary preaching/teaching ministries of the church and the conduct of all public and regular services.

## 3. Selection:

The selection of church Elders involves three steps: 1) identification/nomination of possible candidates, 2) evaluation of those candidates, and 3) affirmation of new Elders.

### a) Identification/Nomination

The identification/nomination of potential Elder candidates can be made at any time by existing Elders, Deacons, or by any member in the church. A potential Elder candidate can identify/nominate himself. The names of potential Elders are to be submitted to the existing Elders in writing, with a brief explanation of why the individual submitting the name believes the candidate meets the qualifications of an Elder as given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

### b) Evaluation

- The Elders will initially review the qualifications of each candidate who has been identified/nominated. If they determine a candidate does not sufficiently meet the qualifications as noted above, his name will be removed from further consideration.
- If a candidate is initially seen to meet the biblical qualifications, the existing Elders will meet with

the candidate for an interview to determine his desire for becoming an Elder.

- If the candidate affirms his desire to become an Elder, he will be asked to complete a written application. This application contains questions related to all of the spiritual qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9; questions related to biblical knowledge and doctrinal convictions; questions related to ministry gifts, skills and experience; and identification of personal references both inside and outside the church. The completed application is to be turned into the Elders for their review.
- Following review of the candidate's application and corresponding references, the existing Elders will again meet with the candidate as a group. This interview will focus on questions related to the content of the candidate's application and references.
- Following this interview, the existing Elders will determine if the candidate is still qualified to move forward in the selection process.
- If the Elders determine that the candidate is not qualified to be an Elder, they will inform the candidate of this decision and the reasons why.
- If the Elders determine that the candidate is qualified to be an Elder, they will decide on a date for the candidate's name to be submitted to the members of the church. The purpose of this is to solicit prayer from the members regarding the potential candidate, and to ask members to pursue the candidate and/or the Elders if they have any concerns about the candidate's qualifications as an elder. A minimum of 2 weeks will be given for this to occur.
- At the end of this time, the candidate will have a final interview with the Elders to discuss any feedback received from the members of the church.
- The Elders will then make a final decision regarding whether or not the candidate is indeed being called by God to be an Elder at River City Grace Community Church.
- If the decision is no, the Elders will inform the candidate of this decision and the reasons why.
- If the decision is yes, the Elders will inform the candidate and set a day for the public affirmation of the candidate as an Elder at River City Grace Community Church.

#### c) Affirmation

If a candidate has been evaluated by the Elders and church members as outlined above, and has been shown to indeed be called and equipped by God to serve in this capacity, he will be publicly affirmed and installed in this office at a regular, corporate gathering of the church members. At the discretion of the Elders, this could occur during a Sunday morning Corporate Worship Service, a Communion Celebration, or a Family Business Meeting.

The public affirmation will include an overview of the man and his qualifications, a pledge of commitment from the man regarding the role and responsibilities of the office he is assuming, a brief word of testimony from the man, and prayer for the man with the laying on of hands from the existing Elders.

#### d) Selection and Resignation or Dismissal of Pastor-Teacher

The Pastor-Teacher shall be selected by the Elders and affirmed by the members of the church at a special business meeting. He shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservation: the Elders (excluding the Pastor-Teacher) reserve the right to dismiss the Pastor-Teacher upon giving him one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss. The Pastor-Teacher must give at least one month's notice if he intends to resign. The time limit for a Pastor-Teacher's resignation or

dismissal is subject to a lesser time if both the Pastor-Teacher and the Elders by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

4. Number:

There should always be a minimum plurality of 3 Elders to lead the church, provided they are biblically qualified. There will be no set limit. To the extent possible, the Elders should include a majority of active lay Elders, in distinction from staff Elders.

5. Term:

An Elder may serve continuously as long as he desires, possesses the character qualifications, and fulfills the responsibilities of leadership and service as described above. Accordingly, all of the Elders are continually accountable to one another and the church body in the fulfillment of their calling.

An Elder may take a leave of absence for a designated period of time, if he so desires. A 30 day written notification to the other Elders is requested.

6. Termination:

Any Elder may resign if they so desire. A 30 day written notification to the Elders is requested. Based on any of the reasons listed below, any Elder may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the remaining Elders:

- Inability to fulfill his responsibilities.
- Spiritually or morally unqualified.
- Fails to meet his responsibilities or the qualifications as outlined in the Bible.
- Fails to agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

In the event of an Elder's resignation or removal, the Elders shall inform the church membership of this fact within one week.

Any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline, according to the pattern of Matthew 18:15-17, toward an Elder who is not exhibiting the required character traits, or who is embracing and/or teaching false doctrine, or who is not fulfilling his responsibilities as an Elder. No accusation against an Elder will be received by the other Elders unless it is made on the basis of two or three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19).

7. Corporate Officers:

The corporate officers of the church shall be the Elders. The Pastor-Teacher of the church shall serve as Chairperson of the Elders and Chief Executive Officer of the corporation. The Pastor-Teacher may appoint another Elder to serve in this capacity in his stead. All other corporate officers (such as Chief Financial Officer and Secretary) shall be appointed by the Elders.

## ***Section 2: Deacons***

The term "Deacon" is used to designate men within the church who have been appointed to a specific ministry leadership function. As such, they are "overseers of servants" in the many areas of practical need within the church body.

### 1. Qualifications:

Deacons must be men who exhibit the character qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They must also be willing to make the necessary time commitment to fulfill their responsibilities. No individual shall be chosen as a Deacon without a minimum of one year membership in the church.

### 2. Responsibilities:

Deacons are “overseers of servants” in the church. Each Deacon shall serve under the direction and oversight of the Elders. Deacons are not responsible for the spiritual or general oversight of the church, but rather for particular and specific areas of ministry, nurture, and service, as designated by the Elders. They are to provide spiritual leadership in overseeing the many practical and functional needs of the church body, doing so in a way that promotes the unity of the body, and that supports and enables the Elders to be focused on their God-given responsibilities of the ministry of the Word of God and prayer.

### 3. Selection:

On at least an annual basis, the Elders will evaluate the current practical ministry needs among the church body and determine the need for additional Deacons. The selection of church Deacons is similar to that of Elders and involves three steps: 1) identification/nomination of possible candidates, 2) evaluation of those candidates, and 3) affirmation of new Deacons.

#### a) Identification/Nomination

The identification/nomination of potential Deacon candidates can be made at any time by Elders, existing Deacons, or by any member in the church. A potential Deacon candidate can identify/nominate himself. The names of potential Deacons are to be submitted to the existing Elders in writing, with a brief explanation of why the individual submitting the name believes the candidate meets the qualifications of a Deacon as given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

#### b) Evaluation

- The Elders will initially review the qualifications of each candidate who has been identified/nominated. If they determine a candidate does not sufficiently meet the qualifications as noted above, his name will be removed from further consideration without comment. If the candidate nominated himself, the Elders will discuss their decision with him.
- If a candidate is initially seen to meet the biblical qualifications, the Elders will meet with the candidate for an interview to determine his desire for becoming a Deacon.
- If the candidate affirms his desire to become a Deacon, he will be asked to complete a written application. This application contains questions related to all of the spiritual qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13; questions related to biblical knowledge and doctrinal convictions; questions related to ministry gifts, skill and experience; and questions related to personal references both inside and outside the church. The completed application is to be turned into the Elders for their review.
- Following review of the candidate’s application and corresponding references, the Elder’s will again meet with the candidate as a group. This interview will focus on questions related to the content of the candidate’s application and references.
- Following this interview, the Elders will determine if the candidate is still qualified to move forward in the selection process.

- If the Elders determine that the candidate is not qualified to be a Deacon, they will inform the candidate of this decision and the reasons why.
- If the Elders determine that the candidate is qualified to be a Deacon, they will decide on a date for the candidate's name to be submitted to the members of the church. The purpose of this is to solicit prayer from the members regarding the potential candidate, and to ask members to pursue the candidate and/or the Elders if they have any concerns about the candidate's qualifications as a Deacon. A minimum of 2 weeks will be given for this to occur.
- At the end of this time, the candidate will have a final interview with the Elders to discuss any feedback received from the members of the church.
- The Elders will then make a final decision regarding whether or not the candidate is indeed being called by God to be a Deacon at River City Grace Community Church.
- If the decision is no, the Elders will inform the candidate of this decision and the reasons why.
- If the decision is yes, the Elders will inform the candidate and set a day for the public affirmation of the candidate as a Deacon at River City Grace Community Church.

#### c) Affirmation

If a candidate has been evaluated by the Elders and church members as outlined above, and has been shown to indeed be called and equipped by God to serve in this capacity, he will be publicly affirmed and installed in this office at a regular, corporate gathering of the church members. At the discretion of the Elders, this could occur during a Sunday morning Corporate Worship Service, a Communion Celebration, or a Family Business Meeting.

The public affirmation will include an overview of the man and his qualifications, a pledge of commitment from the man regarding the role and responsibilities of the office he is assuming, a brief word of testimony from the man, and prayer for the man with the laying on of hands from the Elders.

#### 4. Number:

There shall be no specified number of Deacons. The number of qualified individuals willing and available to serve, hand-in-hand with the current needs of the church at any given time, will determine the number.

#### 5. Term:

Deacons will serve continuously as long as they desire, possess the character qualities, and fulfill the standards of ministry and service as described above. Accordingly, all of the Deacons are continually accountable to one another, the Elders, and the church body in the fulfillment of their calling. A Deacon must, however, be serving in a specific, designated area of ministry in order to remain a Deacon. Occasionally, a Deacon's ministry may end because the given need that he is overseeing no longer exists.

A Deacon may take a leave of absence for a designated period of time, if he so desires. A 30 day written notification to the Elders is requested.

#### 6. Termination:

Any Deacon of River City Grace Community Church may resign if they so desire. A 30 day written notification to the Elder team is requested. Any Deacon may be removed from their role by the unanimous decision of the Elders for any of the following reasons:

- Inability to fulfill responsibilities.
- Spiritually or morally unqualified.
- Doctrinally unqualified.
- Fails to agree with the church's Statement of Faith.
- Fails to meet his assigned responsibilities or meet the qualifications as outlined in the Bible.
- Ceases to serve in a designated area of ministry.

Any member of the church may and should initiate church discipline, according to the pattern of Matthew 18:15-17, against a Deacon who is not exhibiting the required character traits or fulfilling the responsibilities of a Deacon.

## ***ARTICLE VI - Ministry Staff***

### ***Section 1 – Church Staff***

The Church Staff is composed of those paid individuals, pastoral and support staff, who are regularly employed by the church on either a full-time or part-time basis.

#### 1. Qualifications:

Specific qualification requirements for each paid Church Staff member shall be outlined in a job description for that position. They shall be a member in good standing of the church.

#### 2. Selection and Hiring:

The Elders may act as a search committee, or they may delegate that responsibility to another member of the Church Staff, or an appointed committee. For the selection of Pastoral Staff, the Elders will usually serve as the search committee. For all Non-Pastoral Staff, either the Pastor-Teacher or another member of the Church Staff will typically assume this responsibility.

The process for hiring **Pastoral Staff** shall generally follow these steps:

- With or without input from the church membership, the Elders identify ministry needs and develop a specific job description for the position to be filled in response to those needs.
- The Elders communicate these needs and the job description to the church membership, with encouragement for all to pray regarding God's will and direction.
- The Elders initiate a search for potential candidates.
- Potential candidates must meet the qualifications of Elders as identified in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- The Elders screen and interview potential candidates, selecting a final candidate to be presented to the church membership for introduction and interaction.
- The church membership is asked to prayerfully consider the candidate for a minimum of two weeks, and bring any input to the Elders regarding the candidate within that period of time.
- If a candidate has been evaluated by the Elders and church members as outlined above, and has been shown to indeed be called and equipped by God to serve in this capacity, he will be publicly affirmed and installed in this office at a regular, corporate gathering of the church members. At the discretion of the Elders, this could occur during a Sunday morning Corporate Worship Service, a Communion Celebration, or a Family Business Meeting.

- The public affirmation would include an overview of the man and his qualifications, a pledge of commitment from the man regarding the role and responsibilities of the office he is assuming, a brief word of testimony from the man, and prayer for the man with the laying on of hands from the existing Elders.

The process for hiring *Non-Pastoral Staff* shall generally follow these steps:

- With or without input from the church membership, the Elders identify ministry needs and develop a specific job description for the position to be filled in response to those needs.
- The Elders or a church staff member designated by them shall prayerfully pursue individual church members for consideration of a designated position. If necessary, the Elders may choose to solicit inquiries regarding the position from the church membership as a whole.
- Applications for the position are submitted to the Church Office.
- The Elders or another member of the Church Staff reviews the applications and determines the most qualified candidates.
- Qualified candidates are then invited for an interview with the appropriate Church Staff and Elders.
- The Elders or another member of the Church Staff selects the best candidate for the job based on the individual's interview and qualifications.

### 3. Responsibilities:

The Elders shall determine the responsibilities and job descriptions for Church Staff with input from the Pastor-Teacher and other existing Church Staff. The Elders shall provide general oversight for all the Church Staff, but may delegate day-to-day supervision to appropriate personnel as determined necessary.

The expectation is that any Pastoral Staff person would also be recognized as an Elder. However, a new Pastoral Staff person (other than a new Pastor-Teacher) would not be affirmed as an Elder automatically when hired, but he would minister alongside the Elders and under their authority. Identification, evaluation and affirmation as an Elder would occur subsequent to hiring, and follow the process outlined in this document. This maintains the priorities of allowing time for a man to be tested and not laying hands too quickly on a man (1 Timothy 3:10; 5:22).

The Pastor-Teacher shall maintain spiritual oversight, either directly or indirectly, of all Church Staff. While the Pastor-Teacher shall also be accountable to the Elders, they shall give an appropriate amount of deference to his decisions.

The specific responsibilities for each Church Staff position are outlined in the respective job description. In addition, the Pastor-Teacher and Elders may assign additional responsibilities, as long as they are within the general framework and scope of the individual's job description.

The policies and requirements under which the Church Staff work will be determined by the Elders, the Pastor-Teacher, and other members of the Church Staff.

### 4. Number:

The size of the Church Staff will be determined by the needs of the church, as identified by the Elders.

## 5. Termination:

Any member of the Church Staff may resign by written notification to the Elders. At least two weeks notice is desired. Any member of the Church Staff may be removed from their position by unanimous decision of the Elders for any of the following reasons:

- Inability to fulfill responsibilities.
- Spiritually or morally unqualified.
- Fails to fulfill the responsibilities or meet the qualifications outlined in the job description for their ministry assignment.
- Doctrinally unqualified.
- Fails to agree with the church's Statement of Faith.
- The position is determined to be no longer necessary.

## ***ARTICLE VII – Committees & Ministry Groups***

The Elders shall organize, or delegate the authority to organize, committees and other ministry groups for any reason deemed necessary for the proper functioning of the church. These committees and ministry groups shall perform responsibilities specifically assigned or approved by the Elders. Other requirements include:

1. Unless otherwise authorized by the Elders, all committees and ministry groups shall be supervised by an Elder or Deacon.
2. Only those committees and ministry groups that are approved by the Elders of the church shall be recognized as a part of the church program and ministry.
3. These committees and ministry groups have no authority in themselves, except that which is delegated to them by the Elders.
4. All committees and ministry groups must be committed to the purpose, objectives, and priorities of the church and be supportive of the Statement of Faith. The Elders shall ensure that such commitment exists.
5. The membership of any committee or ministry group shall be overseen by the Elders.

All recommendations of the committees involving the expenditure of funds must have prior approval of the Elders unless previously approved, or unless this responsibility has been specifically delegated to the committee or ministry group.

## ***ARTICLE VIII – Use of Facilities/Meetings***

### ***Section 1 - Use of Facilities***

The Elders, or someone identified by the Elders, will determine who may or may not use the church facilities. No meetings, gatherings, events, or activities shall be conducted in the facilities of the church which are inconsistent with the purpose and objectives of the church, or which are in conflict with the church's Statement of Faith.

## ***Section 2 – Church Family Business Meetings***

All church family business meetings will be conducted in the manner outlined below:

1. The need for family business meetings of the church shall be determined by the Elders. If any church member believes there is a legitimate need for a business meeting, they are expected to bring their concern to the Elders. Business meetings shall be held no less frequently than once per year. Public announcement of the meeting shall be made in a regular Sunday service of the church at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, specifying the time, location, and proposed agenda.
2. A special business meeting of the church may be called by the Elders at any time. To the extent possible, public announcement of the meeting shall be made in the church's regular Sunday service at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. In the event of a genuine emergency, a special business meeting may be called with less than one week's notice, provided a reasonable effort is made to contact each member of the church to provide notification of the meeting. Any announcement or notification of a special business meeting shall specify the time, location, and proposed agenda of the meeting.
3. One of the Elders shall moderate all business meetings of the church.
4. While all decisions regarding the oversight and direction of the church are made solely by the Elders, input and discussion will be sought from the church members for major decisions. Such major decisions include items related to finances, facilities, pastoral and support staff, the affirmation of new Elders and Deacons, and possible amendments to the church Constitution/Bylaws. Within these and other possible major decisions, the Elders may, at their discretion, ask for an advisory vote from the members present.
5. In case of a question regarding parliamentary procedure, "Roberts Rules of Order" shall serve as a guideline but shall not be considered binding on the Elders or church members.

## ***ARTICLE IX - Amendments & Changes***

This document shall be reviewed periodically by the Elders, or by a committee or individual specifically appointed by the Elders for this purpose. Any amendments and changes may be made at any time by the Elders in the exercise of their responsibilities as outlined in this document. However, all proposed amendments will be made public for review, input, and discussion from church members prior to the proposed amendment being finalized.