

Grace Reformed Baptist Church Constitution

PREAMBLE

We, the Board of Elders of Grace Reformed Baptist Church, establish the following principles by which we mutually agree to be governed in the affairs of this Church.

This Constitution and Bylaws are, among other things, religious documents primarily intended to detail the Board's belief about how the Church should be established and constructed according to the Bible. Every word in these documents is informed by and submitted to Holy Scripture. To that end, these documents frequently cite to scripture, but the absence of a scriptural reference does not imply the absence of a biblical precept. Nor does the presence of some scriptural references mean those are the only relevant verses.

Moreover, the Board believes that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and rules through His undershepherds—the elders of the Board. Consistent with that structure and the biblical precepts that underlie these documents, the elders are the final earthly authority for interpretation and construction of this Constitution and Bylaws. The interpretation of these documents, especially as they apply to the operations, management, and decision-making of the Church, is primarily a religious endeavor. Consequently, the Board of Elders objects to any court or other entity attempting to interpret or apply the Constitution or Bylaws as a violation of the Church's, Board's, church members', and regular attenders' rights. (Colossians 1:18, 1 Peter 5:2, Acts 14:23, 15:6-21, 20:28, 1 Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5, Hebrews 13:17).

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this church is Grace Reformed Baptist Church. It is a Virginia non-profit religious organization.

ARTICLE II

VISION AND MISSION

The Church's vision is to be a multi-generational community of saints, living as a unified body in covenant with Christ, and joyfully advancing the kingdom of God for His glory.

The Church's mission is to call and equip families to boldly worship Jesus by disciplining them in the whole counsel of God's Word.

ARTICLE III

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

We are a reformed baptist church. As protestants, we believe that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to Scripture alone, to the glory of God alone. As baptists, we believe that the visible church is comprised of regenerate believers who have been baptized by immersion on a credible profession of faith. And as a reformed church, our faith and beliefs are rooted in the protestant reformation. That means we are confessional, generally adhering to the 1689 Second London Baptist Confession of Faith. Two notable exceptions we take to the confession is regarding the Sabbath in chapter 22, and the pope being the antichrist in Chapter 26. Although we believe Sunday is the Lord's Day and is to be observed as a weekly day of worship, we do not believe that Christians must abstain from all worldly labor or recreation on that day. Also, we do not believe the Pope to be *the* antichrist/man of sin as referenced in 2 Thess 2:2-9. However, we would accept him as *an* antichrist as referenced in 1 John 2:18. We are also covenantal, meaning we believe God interacts with His people through a series of covenants.

We also generally adhere to the Baptist Faith & Message 2000, as it existed when the Church was founded in 2026.

Regardless of the above, scripture is the only sure foundation of our faith, but we believe that the above confessions and statements are generally helpful in explaining what we believe the Bible teaches.

In addition to the above, we believe the following principles and highlight them, not because they are more important than the above, but given their prominence in our culture:

1. That God creates each person in His own image with an immutable biological sex—male or female. As image bearers and co-heirs in Christ, men and women are equal in value and worth. (Genesis 1:26-27, Romans 8:17, Galatians 3:28-29, 1 Peter 3:7).
2. That God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for them to carry out the dominion mandate, for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression, and to reproduce after their own kind, bringing more image-bearers into life. (Genesis 1:28, 2:24, Malachi 2:14, Matthew 19, Romans 7:2, Ephesians 5:31-32).
3. That God has established hierarchy within all aspects of creation, which is a reflection of the hierarchy within Himself. To that end, we are patriarchal, meaning that we believe men should lead and rule their families, the church, and generally society. Women should submit to their biblical head and be primarily focused on working at home. (Genesis 3:16, Numbers 30:3-5, 1 Cor. 11:3, Ephesians 5:22-24, Colossians 3:18, 1 Timothy 2:12-14, 3:2-5, 1 Peter 3:1, Titus 2:5).
4. That every elder of the Church is a "pastor" and therefore biblically qualified to perform all the functions of that office. But no elder, officer, or asset of the Church may officiate or be used during a marriage that is not between one Christian man and one Christian woman. (Acts 20:17, 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-2, Titus 1:5,7).
5. That abortion is the unjustified taking of human life and should therefore be regarded as murder. (Psalm 139:13-16, Proverbs 6:17, Romans 9:10-13).

6. That Christ is reigning now over heaven and earth and advancing the gospel and His Kingdom through His body—the Church. Although unity in eschatological beliefs is not essential to membership in the Church or even eldership, the elders of the Church are unified in an optimistic view of the end times. Therefore, though Christians will suffer persecution in this present age, the gospel will continue to grow the Church to the ends of the earth, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. (Habakkuk 2:14, Psalm 2, Psalm 72:8, Isaiah 9:7, Matthew 16:18, 24:14, 28:18, Mark 10:30, Acts 1:8, 1 Cor. 15:25, Hebrews 1:3, 2 Timothy 3:12, 1 Peter 4:10).

The above is not an exhaustive list of our beliefs or what we teach from the Bible. Moreover, as noted, the Board is the final earthly authority for what the Church believes the Bible teaches and how those beliefs should be manifest in our life and practice.

ARTICLE IV AMENDMENTS

The Board of Elders may propose an amendment to this Constitution or the Bylaws only by unanimous vote. And they must amend these documents to the extent doing so is necessary to conform the Church's practice with the Bible. If the elders unanimously vote to a proposed amendment, they must publish the proposed amendment to the Church members, inviting response and comment. After a reasonable time, the elders must again vote on the amendment. If the elders again vote unanimously to approve the same amendment, it is effective as of the date of the second vote.

If after publication, the elders decide to change the proposed amendment in any way, they must republish the proposed amendment, including the changes, to the Church, which restarts the waiting period.