



STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

1]THEOLOGICAL

While respecting the theological diversity that exists in the Body of Christ, we believe that the following truths are fundamental to Christian faith and practice and, as such are fundamental to Partnership in Ministry with Grace Community Baptist Church.

- a) The eternal and co-equal nature of the Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- b) The virgin birth, perfect life, sacrificial death, bodily resurrection and present Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- c) The person and work of the Holy Spirit in convicting, converting, indwelling and empowering God's people for Holy living and effective ministry.
- d) The divine inspiration and trustworthiness of the scriptures as the final authority for faith and practice.
- e) The sinfulness of mankind and his lost condition apart from God's salvation made effective by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance toward God and acceptance of God's gift of salvation and The Holy Spirit.
- f) The necessity of the new birth (regeneration) as the only means of entering the kingdom of God.
- g) The great commission to go and make disciples of all nations.
- h) The personal, physical, triumphant return of Jesus Christ...the resurrection of the dead involving the final judgement and the eternal state of rewards and punishment.
- i) The baptism of believers by immersion.
- j) The Lord's Supper as an ordinance of special significance, left by the Lord Jesus and open to all true believers.

2]FUNCTIONAL

All guidelines are to serve the Church and help facilitate the harmonious functioning of the life and ministry of the Church. Therefore what follows are seen as guidelines that are always subject to the will of the Church Partners in Ministry. They are provided to enable the organisational life of the Church to function in a way that will see the work of God being accomplished through the decision making processes that we employ. These guidelines are not finely detailed, exhaustive or absolute. Their implementation is to be determined by the Church according to the immediate circumstances at any particular time.

2.1 PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

2.1.1 Our Church is composed of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, who embrace this Statement of Faith and Practice, Covenant of Commitment, Vision Statement and who have confessed their commitment to Jesus Christ and to discipleship by their obedience in being baptised by immersion.



2.1.2 Where exceptional circumstances preclude baptism by immersion, an applicant may be received into partnership at the discretion of the church, upon an appropriate expression of faith by the applicant.

2.1.3 Application to become a Partner in Ministry shall normally be made through the Pastor(s) or Elders who shall arrange for the applicant to receive literature that identifies our faith and practice and shall arrange an interview with the applicant. Such an interview will result in a recommendation being brought to the church meeting where a majority vote will confirm partnership.

2.1.4 In the case of non-attendance for a period of greater than 3 months, the Pastor(s) or Elders shall be responsible to contact the member and make appropriate recommendations to the Church concerning that partners continued Partnership in Ministry.

2.1.5 Partners in Ministry shall be encouraged to fulfil the goals and principles of the "Covenant of Commitment" and the Vision of the Church.

2.1.6 Grace Community Baptist Church shall be affiliated with the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.

2.2 LEADERSHIP

2.2.1 We believe that Jesus Christ is the only head of the church and we will seek to always order the life and function of the church so that this truth is a practical reality. We further believe that Jesus Christ has gifted various people with leadership gifts and given them as leaders with various functions in the local church.

2.2.2 Pastors shall be appointed to the Church according to gifts and needs. Pastors may be paid or unpaid and may be "part time" or "full time".

2.2.3 The appointment of Pastor(s) shall be determined at a meeting called for that specific purpose, notice of such meeting having been circulated for a month prior to the meeting taking place. A 70% vote of Partners in Ministry present and entitled to vote shall be required for the appointment or dismissal of a Pastor(s).

2.2.4 In the event of a Pastor terminating his ministry, or the church initiating the end of his ministry, 3 months notice should be given.

2.2.5 Members of the Leadership Team - Pastors, Elders and Head Deacons shall be recommended by the existing Leadership Team and be endorsed by the church by simple majority vote using the Written Vote procedure. A recommended Elder or Head Deacon's name shall be presented to the church for their prayer and consideration two months before a vote is taken to endorse their ministry. The existing Leadership Team will be seeking to identify those with gifts and qualities consistent with biblical leadership. Those so identified and endorsed will serve three year terms and will be eligible to be recommended again. With the endorsement of the Pastor(s) the reelection of members of the Leadership Team shall be performed by the raising of hands procedure. The number of team members will be the Pastor(s) plus up to 4 Elders and up to 2 Head Deacons. This number may be reviewed by the team as appropriate. Other Deacons may be appointed by the leadership team to serve in specific roles but will not be part of the Leadership Team. Leadership Team not to exceed 8 members including the Pastoral Team.

2.2.6 See Appendix A for the model of the leadership of GCBC.



The Secretary and Treasurer may be appointed by the Leadership Team and need not be members of the Leadership Team.

2.3 PASTORAL TEAM

The Pastoral Team consists of the appointed ministers. Leadership Team can recommend to the body of the Church additional pastors, whether paid, unpaid, full or part time.

2.4 ELDERS

2.4.1 This role is to lead the visionary, prayer and pastoral ministries of the church. Meets Biblical Standards. 3 Year term renewable.

2.4.2 Election Process: Recommended by the Pastoral Team and ratified by a majority vote of the active Partners in Ministry and active Cell Members as identified by Cell Leaders.

2.4.3 Recommendation Criterion: Must be an active Cell Member (greater than 50% attendance) within GCBC for a minimum of 2 years and active attendee of Celebration Services (greater than 50% attendance). Must have Partners in Ministry status.

2.4.4 Elders Ministry Descriptions

Pastors also fulfill the same functions as Elders as well as more specific and involved roles according to their calling, gifting and appointed position.

a) Prayer: For the sick

General (monthly prayer meetings)

Mission of the church

b) Teaching: Guarding the teaching in GCBC

c) Oversight: Ruling (as Servants)

Managing/Directing the affairs of the church.

d) Hospitality: Practicing this.

e) Pastoral Care: exhort the Church Body to use gifting (Romans 12) to build up GCBC

Nurture of individuals in the faith

Purposeful contact with the congregation.

Correction/rebuke as needed to promote Holy living.

f) Develop/Implement Vision:

Spiritual Growth

Evaluation of church life

Setting measurable goals to achieve vision

Establish Values

g) Live Exemplary Life: Manage own family according to Biblical Standards



2.5 DEACONS

2.5.1 Administrative Deacons - These roles are for the administrative work of the Leadership Team and Church. The roles may consist of Head Deacon, Treasurer and Church Administrator being for a 3 year term, renewable and appointable at any time as needed.

2.5.2 Election Process: Recommended by the Pastoral Team and ratified by a majority vote of the active Partners in Ministry and active Cell Members as identified by Cell Leaders.

2.5.3 Recommendation Criterion: Must be an active member of a Cell (greater than 50% attendance). within GCBC and active attendee of Celebration Services (greater than 50% attendance). Must have Partners in Ministry status. Meets Biblical Standard.

2.5.4 Deacons: Other Deacons can be appointed at any time for specific roles but will not be part of the Leadership Team

2.6 CHURCH PLANNING MEETINGS

2.6.1 An annual general meeting of the Church family shall be convened prior to the end of the financial year to facilitate the presentation and adoption of the budget and reports.

2.6.2 Other meetings i.e., ordinary or extraordinary, may be called as required. Ordinary meetings may be as often as bi-monthly or as few as once a year.

2.6.3 The Leadership Team may call ordinary planning meetings as and when required, extraordinary meetings when applicable.

2.6.4 Any business pertaining to the life of the Church should be submitted to the Leadership Team for their consideration fourteen days prior to a congregation meeting, for possible inclusion in the agenda of that meeting.

2.6.5 Where special circumstances exist, after complying with clause 6.4, an extraordinary meeting may be called by 15% of the Partners in Ministry.

2.6.6 All Partners in Ministry and regular attendees of home churches associated with Grace Community Baptist Church (16 years and older) shall be entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting and at other meetings called by the Leadership Team and in the endorsing of the members of the Leadership Team. Only Partners in Ministry may vote on applications to become Partners in Ministry and alterations to the Statement of Faith and Practice.

2.6.7 A quorum for such meetings will be 25%. However if the meeting is postponed on two occasions due to lack of quorum, the meeting shall proceed on the third occasion as though the quorum was present.

2.6.8 The Leadership Team shall be responsible for due consultation with the church body on major issues (e.g. Through special meetings, surveys, home church discussions etc.)

2.7 VOTING.

The Leadership Team at it's discretion shall choose between the 2 voting procedures:

2.7.1. Written Vote Procedure – Issues related to the appointment, dismissal of a Pastor or Pastors, Financial Issues (other than budget), significant issues within our church community.



a) Procedure – the motions for voting shall be distributed in or with the Church Bulletin for four weeks before the vote will take place. All Partners in Ministry and regular cell members (where applicable) shall be given a notarised voting form no less than 7 days before the closing date of the vote. Wherever possible the Leadership Team must make every effort to ensure delivery. All votes must be placed in a sealed collection box and opened only in the presence of one member of the Leadership Team and one Partner in Ministry. These 2 people shall become the scrutineers for the vote. The vote is closed at 6pm on the date of the vote. Any form returned without the notarised mark must be disregarded. Any form received after 6pm on the closing date of the vote must be disregarded. Proxy votes are not permitted.

2.7.2 Raising of Hands Voting Procedure. This procedure shall be used for any other issues that need to be voted upon.

a) Procedure, after reading of the motion, a call for a yes vote – counting of the votes and then a call for a no vote and a counting of the votes. One member of the Leadership Team and one Partner in Ministry shall become the scrutineers for the vote. Proxy votes are not permitted.

3] ALTERATIONS TO "STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE"

3.1 It is to be emphasised that this document is a servant of the church body. The guidelines may therefore be altered as is appropriate for the functioning of the body.

3.2 Four weeks notice in writing of the proposed changes should be given prior to the business meeting so that the Church Body has time to prayerfully consider such changes. Alterations will then require a simple majority vote.

4] COVENANT OF COMMITMENT

4.1 We believe that belonging to a local christian church involves both privilege and responsibility - both of which will be expressed in commitment to Christ and to His people. The general nature of that commitment is summarised in a covenant, the terms of which are considered to be the reasonable expectations which believers ought to have of themselves and of each other in the outworking of our discipleship together. As a Church, we encourage all our people to freely fulfil our "Covenant of Commitment".

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God and I gladly acknowledge that He is Lord of my life. As a Christian, I believe that the Lord Jesus has made me a part of His body the Christian Church, and I affirm my desire and intention to serve Him in that part of His body known as Grace Community Baptist Church. I acknowledge and embrace my privilege and responsibility of being committed to Christ in His local church in the following terms:

- a) I commit myself today to becoming a mature, disciplined and serving Christian.
- b) Wherever possible and practical, I will actively support and share in the worship and ministry life of our local Church.
- c) I will seek to be loving in all my relationships with my fellow believers and my fellow man.
- d) I will seek to know and exercise the spiritual gifts which God has given me for the benefit and encouragement of all the members of the Church.



e] I will seek to be available to the Lord Jesus so that He can use me in the task of reaching the world with the gospel.

f] God is the owner of my total life and resources and because of this I will seek to be a faithful steward of all my possessions and will be cheerful and regular in my giving to Him.

Trusting in the Lord for strength and vision (and within the context of my personal circumstances), I commit myself this day to the Lord and to His people known as Grace Community Baptist Church.

5] VISION STATEMENT OF GCBC

5.1 Mission Statement:

Grace Community Baptist Church exists to: Love God, Love people, make disciples across the Central Coast and beyond.

Mission = Overriding ministry calling of the Church

Fundamental requirements for any church:

The Great Commandments and the Great Commission.

- Love the Lord your God.
- Love your Neighbour.
- Make disciples.
- Teaching the disciples to obey.

5.2 Vision

“Grace Community Baptist Church aims to serve, equip and empower people to reach their Godly potential in an atmosphere of grace within the context of community.”

5.3 Our Values

All values apply to every aspect of GCBC ministry, all departments, cells etc.

5.3.1 We value Small Group Relationships

Explanation: Cell structure and values (worship, teaching, outreach and ministry all in a relational environment) applied to all ministries.

Biblical References: Acts 2: 42-47. Matt. 18:20

5.3.2 We value Body Life Ministry

Explanation: We believe every Christian has gifts and talents that should be used for ministry and outreach. Every believer equipped and released to minister.

Biblical References: 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12:6-15

5.3.4 We value Servanthood

Explanation: Honouring Christ by serving one another and our community in love and humility with acts of kindness and good works.

Biblical References: Phil 2:1-11; Luke 4:8

5.3.5 We value Empowering

Explanation: - restoration, healing, enabling, encouraging, caring, counselling for wholeness so that people can be free to fulfil their God ordained purpose and pursue their own hopes and dreams.



Biblical References: John 10:10; Jer. 29:11; Is. 61

5.3.6 We value Freedom

Explanation: Freedom - to be real. Freedom of expression and creativity under pastoral leadership. Free to explore and grow in giftedness and as unique individuals.

Biblical References: John 8:30-36; Gal. 5:1,13; Eph. 3:12; 1 Peter 2:16

5.3.7 We value Facilitating

Explanation: Support with resources and spiritual input, visions for ministry that individuals or groups may have, that are complimentary to our Vision, Values and Goals.

Biblical References: Eph. 2:10; Eph. 4:10-13;

5.3.8 We value Inter Generation Fellowship

Explanation: We value all age groups and encourage interaction, communication and support between generations.

Biblical References: Mark 10:13-14; 1 Cor.12:14-27.

5.3.9 We value Grace

Explanation: Acceptance, Forgiveness, Love, Patience, Graciousness.

Biblical References: Gal. 5:22-23; Gal. 6:1-5; Eph. 2:8-9

5.3.10 We value Community

Explanation: Effective communication, relationship building events, mutual support and accountability, safe environment. Christ centred.

Biblical References: 1 Thess. 5:11-14; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Peter 3:8; 1 John 1:7

Appendix A

LEADERSHIP TEAM

