



**GREATER GRACE  
CHURCH**

# **BACK TO THE BASICS**

## **MEMBERSHIP ORIENTATION**

### **SESSION ONE**

#### **WHO IS GREATER GRACE?**

##### **Our Statement of Faith**

Greater Grace Church is a Bible preaching, teaching, believing church designed to evangelize to the lost and equip the saints of God for the perfecting of the ministry. We believe that God is a Spirit and we must worship him in Spirit and in Truth. Our foundation is the word of God and we believe it to be saved, read it to be wise, practice it to be holy, and memorize it to grow.

##### **Our Mission Statement**

The mission of Greater Grace Church is to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. It is our mission to Evangelize the Sinner, Educate and Edify the Saint, and Exalt the Savior.

##### **Our Vision Statement**

Greater Grace Church is to be a Christ-centered and Bible believing congregation that is committed to advancing the kingdom through authentic worship, powerful prayer, and biblical preaching. Greater Grace shall be a multi-cultural, multi-generational and family-oriented congregation that offers a vibrant and life-changing worship experience, extensive community outreach, and excellence in management and operations.

##### **Our Church Principles**

Evangelize the Sinner, Equip the Saint, Exalt the Savior, Empower the Servant, Elevate the Society, and Expand the Service.

#### **WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?**

##### ***We Believe...***

1. The entire Bible from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 as the inspired and infallible Word of God.
2. Jesus Christ was born of Mary the Virgin, and is the Son of God and is a part of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).
3. Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures. He died for the just as well as the unjust that He might bring us to God.
4. Jesus Christ arose from the grave on the Third day according to the scriptures.
5. Jesus is the only great High Priest and we need not the intercession of any man, but Christ ever lives to make intercession to the Father for us.
6. Christ will come again in person, bodily and visibly to establish His kingdom here on earth.
7. In order to be saved, the soul must be born again.
8. The Church is the body of Christ and when an individual has been born again, he becomes a member of the Body of Christ, which is the Church.
9. Our only Head is Jesus Christ.
10. Our only Administrator is the Holy Spirit.
11. Our only Message is the Word of God.
12. Our only Mission is the Salvation of Souls.

## **THE ARTICLES OF FAITH**

### **Article One: Of The Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (1); that it has God for its author, salvation for its end (2), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (3); that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (4); and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union (5), and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (6).

2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39; Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4; Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47-48; Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11; 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11

### **Article Two: Of The True God**

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth (1); inexpressibly glorious in holiness (2), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (3); that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (4); equal in every divine perfection (5), and executing distinct and harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (6).

John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; 83:18; Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10; Exod. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8; Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12-13; Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7; John 10:30; 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5

### **Article Three: Of The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker (1); but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state (2); in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners (3), not by constraint, but choice (4); being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore, under just condemnation to eternal ruin (5), without defense or excuse (6).

Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 16:26; Gen. 2:16; Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 5:19; John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7; Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15; Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22

### **Article Four: Of The Way of Salvation**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (1); through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (2); who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin (3); honored the divine law by his personal obedience (4); and by his death made a full atonement for our sins (5); that having risen from the death, he is now enthroned in heaven (6); and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour (7).

Eph. 2:5; Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11; John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24; Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21; Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21; Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15; Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4; Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26; Psa. 89:19; Psa. 14

### **Article Five: Of Justification**

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ (1) secures to such as believe in him is Justification (2); that Justification includes the pardon of sin (3), and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness (4); that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have

done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (5); by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God (6); that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (7).

John 1:16; Eph. 3:8; Acts 13:39; Isa. 3:11-12; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43; Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21; Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; 6:28; Phil. 3:7-9; Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12; Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8

### **Article Six: Of The Freeness of Salvation**

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (1); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith (2); and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (3); which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (4).

Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17; Rom. 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17; John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9:32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46; John 3:19; Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess. 1:8

### **Article Seven: Of Grace in Regeneration**

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (1); that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (2); that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth (3), so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel (4); and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life (5).

John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Cor. 1:14; Rev. 8:7-9; 21:27; 2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7; John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11; Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 3:8-10; 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18

### **Article Eight: Of Repentance and Faith**

We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (1); whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ (2), we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy (3); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour (4).

Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:1; John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31; Luke 18:13; 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12-13; Psa. 51; Rom. 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 4:14; Psa. 2:6; Heb. 1:8; 8:25; 2 Tim. 1:12

### **Article Nine: Of God's Purpose and Grace**

We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners (1); that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end (2); that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable (3); that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy (4); that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree (5); that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (6); that it is the foundation of Christian assurance (7); and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence (8).

2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19; Hos. 12:9; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14; Exod. 33:18-19; Matt. 20:15; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:9;

Rom. 11:32-36; 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7, 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10; 1 Thess. 1:4-10; Rom. 8:28-30; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29; 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

### **Article Ten: Of Sanctification**

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness (1); that it is a progressive work (2); that it is begun in regeneration (3); and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means-especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (4).

1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4; Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16; John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14; Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30

### **Article Eleven: Of the Perseverance of Saints**

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end (1); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (2); that a special Providence watches over their welfare (3); and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (4).

John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18; 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9; Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb. 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4

### **Article Twelve: Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government (1); that it is holy, just, and good (2); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin (3); to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church (4).

Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:15; Rom. 7:12, 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119; Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44; Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb. 12:14; Matt. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:28

### **Article Thirteen: Of a Gospel Church**

We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers (1), associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (2); observing the ordinances of Christ (3); governed by his laws (4), and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word (5); that its only scriptural officers are Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons (6), whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5; Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:12-13; 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:6; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17; Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4.2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles; Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14 Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1

### **Article Fourteen: Of Baptism And The Lord's Supper**

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer (1), into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost (2); to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (3); that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a Church relation; and to the Lord's Supper (4), in which the members of the

Church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ (5); preceded always by solemn self-examination (6).

Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8; Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27-28; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles; 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:28; 5:1, 8; 10:3-32; 11:17-32; John 6:26-71

### **Article Fifteen: Of The Christian Sabbath**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath (1); and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes (2), by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations (3); by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private (4) and public (5); and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God (6).

Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Psa. 118:24; Isa. 58:13-14; 56:2-8; Psa. 119:15; Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Exod. 46:3; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Psa. 26:8; 87:3; Heb. 4:3-11

### **Article Sixteen: Of Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (1); and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (2); except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (3) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (4).

Rom. 13:1-7; Deut. 16:18; 1 Sam. 23:3; Exod. 18:23; Jer. 30:21; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8; Acts 5:29; Matt. 10:28; Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20; Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Psa. 72:11; Psa. 2; Rom. 14:9-13

### **Article Seventeen: Of the Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (1); that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem (2); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse (3); and this distinction holds among men both in and after death (4).

Mal. 3:18; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16; Rom. 1:17; 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18; 1 John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Psa. 10:4; Isa. 55:6-7; Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14

### **Article Eighteen: Of the World to Come**

We believe that the end of the world is approaching (1); that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven (2), and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution (3); that a solemn separation will then take place (4); that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy (5); and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness (6).

1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-40; 2 Pet. 3:3-13; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29, 6:40; 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42; Matt. 13:49, 37-43; 24:30-31; 25:31-33; Matt. 25:35-41; Rev. 22:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:32; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18; Rom. 3:5-6; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17

## **THE CHURCH COVENANT**

### 1. Why do we need a Church Covenant?

#### 1a. A Church Covenant provides a basis for our unity.

Those who are members of the church must agree not only with her doctrinal statement, but also with the standards set for membership and service. The church covenant spells out those duties while leaving much flexibility in how they are carried out. People must be taught that they have responsibilities toward the church and their brothers and sisters in the church and so shown what is expected of them in church membership to accomplish those duties.

#### 1b. A Church Covenant provides a guide for teaching and discipleship.

The church has a responsibility to see each member grow to maturity in Jesus Christ. This responsibility is not the sole responsibility of the Pastor, as if one can pay another to complete one's own spiritual obligations. The church covenant establishes a goal toward which the church may work with regard to each of her members while also providing guidance with regard to how these goals may be accomplished. In working toward these goals, we acknowledge the necessity of the Holy Spirit to effect change and growth in the lives of believers but also acknowledge our responsibilities in this regard.

#### 1c. A Church Covenant provides a standard for discipline

Church discipline has fallen by the wayside in most churches today, but it is an important, though painful, part of the church's responsibilities. However, people cannot be faulted for not doing what they do not realize they ought to do. The church covenant guides the members in encouraging each other toward spiritual growth and explains the basic elements of Christian growth. When someone is disciplined, it should not come as a shock to them because they have understood from the very beginning what they must do to contribute to the spiritual growth of the church.

### 2. What does it mean to be "in Covenant" with the church?

To be in covenant with the church is to recognize and fulfill our responsibilities toward the church and so our brothers and sisters in Christ. Our consumerist culture assumes that even church members are consumers who expect certain services out of the church. This is contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures, which place the burden and responsibility upon every member under the leadership of the elders.

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 in the presence of God, and this assembly host 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 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 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 bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; 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 abstain from the sale of, and use of intoxicating

drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian 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.