

Grace Covenant Church

Organizational Manual

[In addition to the church officers and Leadership Council, whose duties are spelled out in the Bylaws, the following Commissions, Resource Offices and Committees are charged with enabling the mission and ministry of Grace Covenant Church].

Commissions

General responsibilities and procedures

Commissions shall

- a) Meet at the beginning of the new program year to select a vice-chair, establish a regular meeting time and begin planning for the new year.
- b) Post meeting dates on the church calendar.
- c) Hold open meetings, welcoming Covenant Members to attend and with permission of the chair, to speak. Commissions may enter executive session to discuss personnel matters, anonymous gifts and, by majority vote of the Commission, other matters deemed to be of a sensitive nature.
- d) Ensure the presence of the chair, vice-chair, or a specially designated Commission member at all Leadership Council meetings.
- e) Report Commission plans and activities to the Leadership Council and, except in cases of emergency, seek Council's support for recommendations coming to the Congregation.
- f) In collaboration with the Stewardship Commission, be responsible for the expenditure of funds budgeted for the Commission's work.
- g) Assist annual budget preparation by submitting to the Stewardship Commission estimated Commission related expenses for the coming year.
- h) Work in full partnership with others to fulfill the church's mission.

Specific Assignments and Procedures

Christian Education Commission.

The Christian Education Commission may include a Chair and at least one representative of the church's ministry with pre-school and elementary children, youth and adults and others as needed. The Commission shall

- a) Work in cooperation with the Pastor(s) to shape an education program encouraging Christian growth and maturity.
- b) Coordinate education programs for children, youth and adults throughout the church year.
- c) Enlist, support, and train advisors and instructors for education programs.
- d) Guide program leaders/instructors in reviewing and selecting literature in keeping with the faith and mission of the church as set forth in the Covenant.
- e) Coordinate new educational opportunities for the membership and community.
- f) Be responsible for acquiring and coordinating the storage, maintenance and use of audio-visual equipment and other educational resource equipment, materials and supplies.

Covenant Shepherds Commission.

Covenant Shepherds will minister to the emotional and spiritual life of the Congregation, focusing on individual ministry needs and nurturing caring, supportive relationships. Covenant Shepherds will

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- a) Work with the Pastors to minister to persons undergoing the trauma of grief, illness, family or work-related crises, and other sources of distress.
 - b) Share with the Covenant Care Commission responsibility for discovering and evoking the gifts of Covenant Members and Friends, recruiting them to active participation in the church's life and ministry.
 - c) Work with the Covenant Care Commission in identifying and seeking to re-engage members and friends at risk of becoming inactive.
 - d) Lead in a program of ministry to members and friends unable to attend services.
 - e) Lead in a program of outreach, welcoming and making follow-up contacts with visitors while working to strengthen within the membership a spirit of openness, welcome, and hospitality.
 - f) Work with the Pastors in preparing Communion. Enlist those who will serve and arrange for Communion to be taken to persons unable to attend services. Gather, clean and store communion ware.
 - g) Assist in the preparation and administration of baptism.

Faith in Action Commission.

The Faith in Action Commission will lead the membership in finding visible expressions of its commitment *to live in the world as servants of God*. The Commission will

- a) Alert the Congregation to changing community and global ministry needs and lead in shaping an appropriate ministry response.
- b) Plan and coordinate opportunities for Covenant Members and Friends to be involved in hands-on ministry.
- c) Make recommendations for the allocation of mission funds.
- d) Facilitate the church's collaboration with those civic, ecumenical and interfaith organizations whose efforts promote charity, peace and justice.
- e) Work with the Leadership Council in selecting and promoting special offerings.
- f) Work with the Pastor(s) in drawing up guidelines to be approved by the Congregation identifying how the church and individuals or groups within the church may speak to divisive and/or political issues while respecting the diversity of the fellowship and the separation of church and state.
- g) In keeping with the guidelines mentioned above, plan actions whereby the church may bear witness on issues such as those impacting peace, justice, separation of church and state, and stewardship of creation.

Stewardship Commission.

Consisting of the chair, Treasurer, Recording Treasurer, and at least two other Covenant Members, the Stewardship Commission shall supervise the financial affairs of the church and promote in the Congregation a spirit of responsible stewardship consistent with the church's faith and mission in the Church Covenant.

- a) Plan and implement an annual stewardship campaign and other emphases designed to encourage the spirit of giving.
- b) Work with Commissions and church leadership to develop an annual budget for approval by the Leadership Council and final affirmation by the Congregation.
- c) Schedule weekly counting teams of no less than two persons to receive, count, and deposit weekly contributions and to provide contributions information to the Recording Treasurer for data entry.
- d) Select depositories for church funds.
- e) Develop and maintain a financial policy statement to guide the church in receipt, deposit, requisition, disbursement, and recording of all funds.
- f) Bookkeeping records shall be available to any church member for good cause through the Stewardship Commission or Leadership Council.
- g) Assure the maintenance of adequate property insurance including the bonding of appropriate financial managers.
- h) In cooperation with Treasurers conduct an annual review of financial records and provide a timely report of findings to the Congregation.

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- I) With the exception of recurring expenses such as salaries and rent, checks in excess of \$1000 shall have Stewardship Commission authorization signed by the chair.

FINANCIAL POLICY

It is the policy of Grace Covenant Church (GCC) that financial responsibility of the church is to be a wise steward of the resources God has entrusted to this fellowship. The church is accountable to its membership to make sure the resources of the church are handled with the highest possible level of trust and integrity. Ultimately, the church is responsible to God for the stewardship of its funds.

Stewardship Emphasis

The church needs to emphasize on-going stewardship. The emphasis can be delivered through special programs, sermon series, or campaigns.

Unrestricted Gifts

Members are encouraged to support the ministry of Grace Covenant Church through regular gifts and offerings to the general operating budget of the church. The general operating budget is a comprehensive spending plan for the church's ministries. Unless specifically designated or restricted, all gifts shall be considered unrestricted.

Designated Gifts

By State Law, designated gifts must be used for the purpose(s) for which they were designated (or reallocated) by the giver. Designated gifts are defined as those funds which are 1) so designated by the giver, 2) are established by the church, 3) are not unrestricted gifts, and 4) designated gifts for those agencies included in our mission budget, special offerings approved by the Stewardship Commission, and those given in memory or in honor of a church member when so designated.

Individuals can give designated gifts for the ministry of the church. However, the designated fund must be established by the Stewardship Commission before the church receives the cash or a cash equivalent designated gift.

Approval of payment to the designated fund's organization will usually be done at the end of the calendar year or as otherwise approved by the Stewardship Commission and the Treasurer. All designated funds will be paid upon the concurrence of the responsible commission or authority.

Gifts designated for the GCC Capital Building Fund will be placed into a designated Certificate of Deposit or other agreed upon, interest bearing fund. The status of the GCC Capital Building fund shall be reviewed in August 2011 and a decision made to extend or terminate the fund. If terminated, the givers may withdraw their gift. Since some of the CDs are not due until 2012, givers will be asked to wait if possible until the funds are available. The interest earned on the CDs will be prorated among the givers. The Stewardship Commission will review the sources of the approximately \$ 23,000 in the Capital Building Fund prior to the start of the two year building fund drive. Where possible, givers donating prior to the start of the fund will be contacted and asked if they have an alternate designation for their gift. In the case of those funds that can not be associated with an individual, the Stewardship Commission and the Faith in Action Commission shall agree upon a recommendation(s) for use of the funds. This/these recommendation(s) will be presented to the Leadership Council for concurrence.”

If a designated gift is property, not cash or cash equivalent, then the church reserves the right to use the property for the purpose of the church. The church will try to honor the intention of the donor, but reserves the authority to use or dispose of the property in such ways that best foster the church's ministry.

Stewardship Commission

The duties of the Stewardship Commission are as defined in the current Grace Covenant Church Constitution and Bylaws. The weekly counting team and its counting responsibilities are defined by the procedure, “Counting Procedure and Responsibilities.”

The weekly counting team will count the morning worship attendance and indicate this number on the form 'GCC Contributions Received'. Both members of the counting team sign the form once it is completed. Once the weekly offering is counted and the deposit slip is completed it will be placed in the bank deposit bag, and given to the GCC Recording Treasurer for deposit into the Church's bank account.

Annually the Stewardship Commission will provide a review of the Church's yearly financial records provided by the Treasurer and Recording Treasurer. This action should be documented and a copy of the noted review placed into the church's permanent records

BENEVOLENCE POLICY

1. In order to provide aid for crisis needs within the community, Grace Covenant Church shall include Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties or a comparable agency in the Missions Budget and refer daily calls for aid to community help agencies. *The Stewardship Commission shall establish a designated Benevolence Fund from which direct aid may be given at the direction of one pastor and the FIA Chair.*
2. Direct crisis aid to individuals or institutions may be provided with the concurrence of the pastors, the Moderator, the Treasurer, and the Faith in Action Commission (FIA) and taken directly from the FIA budget.
3. When a benevolence need arises within the Grace Covenant Church family involving a crisis of life and/or health, the following policy and procedure shall apply:
 - a. With commitment to pastoral confidentiality, a pastor shall interview the person and verify the need.
 - b. If the pastor determines that church assistance is needed, three other persons - the moderator, treasurer, and Faith in Action Commission chair shall be advised of the anonymous need within the church family.
 - c. With the concurrence of pastor, moderator, treasurer, and Faith in Action Commission chair, assistance may be provided from the FIA budget in an amount not to exceed \$1000.00. Amounts larger than \$1000.00 taken from the FIA budget shall require approval of the FIA Commission.
 - d. Cash, a check made to cash, or a check made to an employee of the church, is prohibited. Where possible, the check shall be payable to an institution on behalf of the person in need. If the check must be made directly to the church member, all parties involved shall maintain the confidentiality committed by the pastor.

Covenant Care Commission.

The Covenant Care Commission will work with the Pastors, the Leadership Council and the Commissions to keep the Church Covenant at the center of the church's life and ministry. The Commission will

- a) Coordinate with the Pastors and Leadership Council in planning for the annual reaffirmation of the Covenant.
- b) Assist the Leadership Council in annual determination of church membership.
- c) Collaborate with the Christian Education Commission for occasional focuses on the Covenant or aspects of the Covenant.
- d) Collaborate with the Fellowship Commission to nurture supportive relationships through which covenant community may be realized.
- e) Coordinate with the Pastors and Covenant Shepherds to acquaint newcomers with the covenant nature of the church's identity.
- f) With the Pastors, plan and lead orientation sessions for prospective Covenant Members and for Covenant Children approaching church membership.
- g) Present the names of persons completing the process for church membership to the Leadership Council.
- h) With the Pastors, counsel persons requesting the status of Covenant Friend, orienting them to the Covenant and the life of the church and presenting their names to the Leadership Council.
- i) Assist new Covenant Members and Friends in finding places of fellowship and service.

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- j) Seeking input from the Congregation, annually nominate to the Congregation the chair and members of the Nominating Committee.
 - k) Annually provide the Nominating Committee an updated listing of Covenant Members and Friends.

Fellowship Commission.

The Fellowship Commission will work to create and sustain a strong sense of community in the church by providing opportunities for church-wide fellowship. The Fellowship Commission will

- a) Plan occasional fellowships, such as dinners, picnics, and receptions for special events and seasons, including Advent and Lent.
- b) Oversee ongoing fellowship opportunities, such as weekly fellowship meals or Sunday morning fellowship time, scheduling volunteer support staff as needed.
- c) Oversee preparation, maintenance and distribution of nametags for members and guests.
- d) Plan for recreational activities for varying ages as need and opportunity arise.
- e) Supervise care and use of the kitchen.
- f) In consultation with the Stewardship Commission and/or Leadership Council, oversee the purchase and maintenance of kitchen equipment.

Staff Support Commission.

The Staff Support Commission will work to empower the church's employees to do their best work. [Specific duties to be defined at a later time].

Property Care Commission. [Duties to be defined later].

RESOURCE OFFICES AND COMMITTEES

Librarian.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate a Librarian to the Congregation to serve a term of three years. The Librarian may serve unlimited successive terms, enlisting assistants as needed and overseeing purchasing, organization and maintenance for the church library.

Historian.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate a Historian to the Congregation to serve a term of three years. The Historian may serve unlimited successive terms, enlisting assistants as needed and maintaining archives relevant to the history of the church.

Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least four persons. The chair and members shall be nominated to the Congregation by the Covenant Care Commission to serve two year terms. Members shall not serve successive terms, but may be elected again after the lapse of one year. The Committee shall

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- a) Prepare a slate of candidates, representative of the Congregation, for expiring and temporarily filled elected positions, including Officers, Committee and Commission chairs and members (except for chair and members of the Nominating Committee), Librarian, and Historian for election by the Congregation.
 - b) Consult with the ministerial staff and congregation in seeking persons best qualified to serve.
 - c) Ensure that each candidate to be nominated has reviewed a full description of the responsibilities of the position and has accepted the nomination.
 - d) Through the year, present for congregational approval, names of persons to fill vacated unexpired terms.

Worship Support Committee.

The Worship Support Committee will meet as needed to facilitate communication and coordination among those involved in planning, leading and assisting in worship. It may consist of the chair, the Pastor(s) and persons coordinating or representing ushers, music, audio-visuals and decoration, altar and communion coordinators and others. The Committee will

- a) Assist the Pastor(s) in preparations for special worship services
- b) Assist in preparations for regular services as requested.
- c) Work in close cooperation with the Pastor(s) in acquiring, storing, maintaining, and training others for equipment used in worship services, including light, sound, and taping systems, paraments, banners, decorations and special equipment used for weddings, funerals, and music/drama programs.
- d) Recruit, train and schedule ushers for all services in which they will be needed. The ushers will count attendance at each service, providing the church office with the information.
- e) Be responsible for decorating the worship area, including flowers, and assure that all furnishings, decorations and equipment are properly stored and/or cared for following each use.
- f) Assist the Stewardship Commission in preparing an annual budget including worship needs.