

# CONSTITUTION AND MANUAL OF PROCEDURE FOR THE FELLOWSHIP OF GRACE BRETHREN CHURCHES, INC.

## CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I OFFICES

The principal office of the corporation shall be located at Winona Lake, Indiana. The corporation may have other offices as its business may require.

### ARTICLE II PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches exists to encourage and enable member churches in equipping and uniting the saints in fulfilling the Great Commission.

### ARTICLE III COVENANT AND STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section One. Covenant. The sovereign congregations which are members of this corporation are united in accepting the Holy Scriptures as the sole guide and authority in all matters of faith, doctrine and practice.

Section Two. Statement of Faith. The Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches has a corporate commitment to a basic body of beliefs founded on God's revealed truth. This Statement of Faith is the ~~current-1969~~ expression of a never ending effort to clarify an understanding of the primary doctrines we accept.

It is the understanding of this Fellowship that, although individual Grace Brethren Churches remain distinct, autonomous legal entities, congregational church government relates alone to the incidental affairs of the local congregation and not to doctrinal practices or tenets which must be general or universal -- the same in all congregations. ~~The basic doctrines of one congregation shall be the same as the basic doctrines in every other.~~

Accordingly, the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc., believing the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible to be the infallible rule of faith and of practice and feeling the responsibility to make known the divine message of the Bible, presents the following articles as a statement of those basic truths taught in the Bible which are common to our Christian faith and practice.

**Comment [DET1]:** We seem to have few vital structures in place to make this paragraph a reality. Saying it should be without a plan seems to actually prevent productive discussion. How can we discuss possible differences or changes when we are required to be the same. I recommend deleting this entire paragraph so the "never-ending effort to clarify" is not separated from the current statement of our common beliefs.

1. THE BIBLE. The Word of God, the sixty-six Books of the Old and New Testaments, verbally inspired in all parts, and therefore wholly without error as originally given of God (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
2. THE ONE TRUE GOD. Existing eternally as three persons -the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22; Matthew 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).
3. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. His preexistence and deity (John 1:1-3), incarnation by virgin birth (John 1:14; Matthew 1:18-23), sinless life (Heb. 4:15), substitutionary death (2 Cor. 5:21), bodily resurrection (Luke 24:36-43), ascension into heaven and present ministry (Heb. 4:14-16), and coming again (Acts 1:11).
4. THE HOLY SPIRIT. His personality (John 16:7-15), and deity (Acts 5:3-4), and His work in each believer: baptism and in-dwelling at the moment of regeneration (1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 8:9), and filling (Eph. 5:18) to empower for Christian life and service (Eph. 3:16; Acts 1:8; Gal. 5:22-23).
5. MAN. His direct creation in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28), his subsequent fall into sin resulting in spiritual death (Gen. 3:1-24; Rom. 5:12), and the necessity of the new birth for his salvation (John 3:3-5).
6. SALVATION. A complete and eternal salvation by God's grace alone received as the gift of God through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Peter 1:18-19).
7. THE CHURCH. One true church, the body and the bride of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-32), composed of all true believers of the present age (1 Cor. 12:12-13); and the organization of its

members in local churches for worship, for edification of believers, and for world-wide gospel witness, each local church being autonomous but cooperating in fellowship and work (Eph. 4:11-16).

8. CHRISTIAN LIFE. A life of righteousness, good works and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world (Rom. 12:1-2), manifested by speaking the truth (James 5:12), maintaining the sanctity of the home (Eph. 5:22-6:4), settling differences between Christians in accordance with the Word of God (1 Cor. 6:1-8), not engaging in carnal strife but showing a Christ-like attitude toward all men (Rom. 12:17-21), exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), and maintaining a life of prayer (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6), including the privilege, when sick, of calling for the elders of the church to pray and to anoint with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:13-18).
9. ORDINANCES. The Christians should observe the ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ which are (1)baptism of believers by triune immersion (Matt. 28:19) and (2)the threefold communion service, consisting of the washing of the saints' feet (John 13:1-17), the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20-22, 33-34; Jude 12), and the communion of the bread and the cup (1 Cor. 11:23-26).
10. SATAN. His existence and personality as the great adversary of God and His people (Rev. 12:1-10), his judgment (John 12:31), and final doom (Rev. 20:10).
11. SECOND COMING. The personal, visible, and imminent return of Christ to remove His church from the earth (1 Thess. 4:16-17) before the tribulation (1 Thess. 1:10; Rev. 3:10), and afterward to descend with the Church to establish His millennial kingdom upon the earth (Rev. 19:11-20:6).
12. FUTURE LIFE. The conscious existence of the dead (Phil. 1:21-23; Luke 16:19-31), the resurrection of the body (John 5:28-29), the judgment and reward of believers (Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10), the judgment and condemnation of unbelievers (Rev. 20:11-15), the eternal life of the saved (John 3:16), and the eternal punishment of the lost (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:15).

#### ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section One. Requirements. Any congregation of believers desiring membership in the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc., shall meet the following conditions:

1. It shall agree to live harmoniously under ~~subscribe to~~ the Covenant and Statement of Faith as stated in Article III of this Constitution or the Declaration of Common Identity as stated in Article III of this Constitution.
- ~~1-2. It shall actively pursue the purpose of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches in Article II~~
- ~~2-3. It shall have a basic organization consisting of elder(s) and deacon(s), or similar responsible officers.~~
- ~~3. It shall include the words "Grace Brethren" in its name or otherwise indicate clearly its affiliation with the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches.~~
- ~~4. In the performance of the ordinances it shall practice baptism by triune immersion only and threefold communion, consisting of feetwashing, the love feast and the bread and cup, the threefold communion service only.~~
- ~~5-4. Requirements and responsibilities for membership by the several local churches shall be established by each church and shall not determine the church's membership in the Fellowship.~~
5. No church shall be denied membership in the corporation because of failure to support any or all institutions, ministries, or boards, either district, national, or cooperating recognized by the Fellowship.
6. Failure to comply with these membership requirements may subject the offending church to dismissal. Only failure to comply with membership obligations as stated in Article II, Section Three, points #2, 3, and 5 of the Manual of Procedure may subject the offending church to dismissal.

**Comment [DET2]:** Clarification of what "subscribe" means

**Comment [T3]:** Adds an option for agreement.

**Comment [DET4]:** This is reason for membership and serves to curb attacking and divisive behavior.

**Comment [T5]:** This is hard to require in today's culture.

**Comment [DET6]:** The "only"s don't allow the very exceptions we have allowed for decades: hospital bed baptisms, feetwashing or fellowship meals apart from eucharist, and eucharist during special worship services.

**Comment [DET7]:** Cleaner to keep membership discussion in Constitution, not pointing to Manual.

Section Two. Voting Rights. Each member church shall be entitled to be represented at any meeting of the corporation through delegate(s) of its choosing.

- 110 1. Each member church shall be entitled to at least two delegates ~~as specified in the Manual of~~  
111 ~~Procedure. Additional delegates are designated as stated in Article II, Section Three, Point A of~~  
112 ~~the Manual of Procedure.~~
- 113 2. Only persons who are members of the Grace Brethren Church they represent shall be seated as  
114 delegates to any meeting of the corporation. Representation at National Conference is based on the  
115 average attendance at the largest regular gathering of the local church.
- 116 3. Each member church shall be entitled to one vote per delegate on each matter submitted to a vote  
117 at any meeting of the corporation. (Exception: delegates from churches which receive members  
118 without triune immersion may not vote on any matter involving the subject of water baptism in  
119 relation to church membership. This limitation does not apply to medical exceptions.)

Comment [T8]: Simpler and more clear.

121 **ARTICLE V**  
122 **MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

123 Section One. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of members shall be held at the time and place  
124 recommended by the Fellowship Council and approved at a previous annual meeting of members. This  
125 annual meeting is referred to in this Constitution and the Manual of Procedure as "the annual meeting of the  
126 corporation" and "conference."

127  
128 Section Two. Special Meetings. Special meetings of members may be called by the Fellowship  
129 Council for emergency needs at any time and place designated by it. Member churches shall be  
130 represented at any special meeting by the delegates who represented them at the last annual meeting or duly  
131 certified alternates.

132  
133 Section Three. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at  
134 any meeting of the corporation.

135  
136 Section Four. Delegates. The following shall be seated as delegates to any meeting of the corporation:

- 137  
138 1. Officers. Officers of the corporation shall be delegates *ex-officio with voting privileges*.  
139 2. Delegates shall be seated provided that the delegates meet the qualifications of Article IV, Section  
140 Two, points #1 and 2.

141 **ARTICLE VI**  
142 **FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)**

143  
144  
145 Section One. General Powers. The business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its  
146 board of directors which shall be known as the Fellowship Council.

147  
148 Section Two. Number and Term. The number of members of the Fellowship Council shall be  
149 seventeen. Fifteen members shall be elected by the corporation, and each ~~of the fifteen shall be elected and~~  
150 serve a term of five years. The fifteen elected members shall represent the three geographic regions of the  
151 United States described in Article V, Section Two, point #3 of the Manual of Procedure with five members  
152 to serve from each region. Only one member of any single church or two representatives from any single  
153 district shall serve on the Council at any one time, not including *ex-officio* members of the Council.

154 The remaining two members of the Fellowship Council shall be the ~~Executive Director~~ ~~moderator~~ and  
155 the ~~vice-moderator~~ ~~Assistant Director~~. ~~They~~ ~~The~~ ~~moderator~~ ~~and~~ ~~vice-moderator~~ shall serve a one, two or  
156 three-year term to which they are elected as ~~moderator~~ ~~Executive Director~~ and ~~vice-moderator~~ ~~Assistant~~  
157 ~~Director~~. Council members will begin their terms at the conclusion of the conference at which they are  
158 elected with the exception of the ~~moderator~~ ~~Executive Director~~ and ~~vice-moderator~~ ~~Assistant Director~~ who  
159 shall begin their term one year following the conference at which they are elected.

160  
161 Section Three. Qualifications. All nominees for Council membership must be triune-immersed  
162 members in good standing ~~of congregations who are members of~~ ~~affiliated with the FGBC of a member~~  
163 ~~church recognized by the corporation~~. They must be men who have met the spiritual qualifications for an  
164 elder as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9. ~~All nominees shall subscribe to the Covenant and~~  
165 ~~Statement of Faith or Declaration of Common Identity as stated in Article III of this Constitution.~~ They

Comment [DET9]: Capitalizations of fellowship council, council, secretary, treasurer, and the like have been adjusted throughout without notice.

Comment [DET10]: redundant

Comment [DET11]: Moderator has responsibility of CEO already (see Manual of Procedure) and Executive Director is a more understandable term to all those outside the Fellowship. Ditto for Assistant Director.

Comment [DET12]: Clearer than "recognized"

Comment [DET13]: Beliefs of Council members are important, more so than regular members.

must have given their consent to nomination and service. Members of the Council may not serve consecutive terms but may be re-elected after two years absence from the Council. This restriction shall not apply to members serving fewer than three years or to *ex-officio* members of the Council.

#### Section Four. Election.

1. Members of the Council shall be elected by majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at the Conference from a ballot presented by the Nominating Committee. In the event that no nominee receives a majority affirmative vote, there shall be an additional ballot presented with the two nominees who have received the highest number of votes.
2. Voting for nominees from each of the three regions shall be restricted to delegates from the churches in those regions.
3. Nominees elected to the Council shall be the one from each region receiving the majority affirmative vote of the delegates representing those regions present, entitled to vote, and voting.

### ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

Section One. Officers. The officers of the corporation shall be ~~a moderator~~ the Executive Director, ~~vice moderator~~ Assistant Director, Secretary, and Treasurer. The ~~moderator~~ Executive Director shall serve as chairman of the Fellowship Council, and the vice ~~moderator~~ Assistant Director as vice-chairman of the same body.

Section Two. Election. The ~~moderator~~ Executive Director and ~~vice moderator~~ Assistant Director shall be elected together on a single ballot question to a one, two, or three year term by majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at the annual meeting of the corporation one year prior to the beginning of their term. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected annually by majority vote of the Fellowship Council at its annual meeting. These elections shall be ratified by the corporation at the annual meeting immediately following the election.

Section Three. Term. The ~~moderator~~ Executive Director and ~~vice moderator~~ Assistant Director will be installed at the conclusion of the conference one year after they are elected and will serve for ~~three conference years~~ their elected term or until their successors are elected or appointed and installed. The Secretary and Treasurer will be installed at the conclusion of the conference at which they are elected and will serve for one conference year or until their successors are elected or appointed and installed.

Comment [DET14]: Correction, could be one, two, or three conference years

Section Four. Responsibilities and Duties. The officers shall have the powers and discharge the duties customarily and usually held and performed by like officers in similar corporations, including, but not limited to those outlined in the Manual of Procedure.

### ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

Section One. Committees. The Fellowship Council, by resolution of a majority of the Council members, may designate one or more committees or persons to exercise the authority of the Fellowship Council to the extent provided in the resolution. The resolution shall include a termination date for the committee's service which may be extended only by specific action of the Fellowship Council or the Conference.

#### Section Two. Nominating Committee.

1. A nominating committee of six members shall be elected annually by the conference from nominees suggested by the Fellowship Council. All nominees shall be members in good standing of congregations ~~that are members or affiliated with~~ the FGBC and have agreed to nomination and service. Additional nominations from the floor may be accepted.
2. The chair shall be selected by the Fellowship Council from among the elected committee members.

Comment [T15]: Affiliation is not well defined.

222 Section Three. Parliamentary Committee.

- 223 1. A parliamentary committee of three members shall be named by the Fellowship Council prior to
- 224 the conference.
- 225
- 226 2. It shall be the duty of this committee to interpret this Constitution and the Manual of Procedure
- 227 whenever questions concerning them shall arise and to assist the presiding officer in questions of
- 228 procedure and in the orderly conduct of the business sessions of the conference.
- 229

230 **ARTICLE IX**

231 **COOPERATING DISTRICTS**

**Comment [DET16]:** Moved this Article to Manual of Procedures and combined in same Article with National Ministries and Cooperating Ministries

232

233 **ARTICLE X**

234 ~~Section One. NATIONAL MINISTRIES~~

**Comment [DET17]:** Moved this entire Article to Manual of Procedures

235

236 ~~Section Two. COOPERATING MINISTRIES~~

237

238

239 **ARTICLE XI**

240 **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Comment [DET18]:** Moved entire Article to Manual of Procedures

241 ~~Section One. Continuing Resolutions.~~

242

243 ~~Section Two. Conference Year~~

244

245 ~~Section Three. Affiliations~~

246

247 **ARTICLE XII**

248 **AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

249 Section One. Amendments ~~in General.~~ This Constitution may be altered or repealed at any annual or

250 special meeting of the corporation by two-thirds majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled

251 to vote, and voting at said meeting, provided that the proposed amendment had been presented to the

252 delegates at a previous business session of the conference and to the Fellowship Council for study and

253 recommendation. ~~Provided further, that the Statement of Faith set forth in Section Two of Article III may~~

254 ~~be amended only by the procedure outlined in Section Two of this Article.~~

255

**Comment [DET19]:** Removed separate procedure for Statement of Faith. It is meaningless to have provisions in a Constitution harder to change than the Constitution itself. Plus it signals that we don't really believe the Statement of Faith should ever be adjusted.

256 ~~Section Two. Amendment of Statement of Faith. The Statement of Faith set forth in Section Two of~~

257 ~~Article III may be amended only through the following procedure:~~

258

- 259 1. ~~Any delegate wishing to see the Statement of Faith amended must present a written copy of the~~
- 260 ~~proposed amendment to the secretary of the conference in a previous session of the conference~~
- 261 ~~before the proposal is presented in the form of a motion. The conference shall have the right to~~
- 262 ~~request that printed copies of the proposal be provided for the delegates before further action is~~
- 263 ~~taken.~~
- 264 2. ~~If an amendment is sustained by a two thirds majority affirmative vote of the delegates present,~~
- 265 ~~entitled to vote, and voting in favor of the proposed amendment to the Statement of Faith, the~~
- 266 ~~proposal shall then be sent by the secretary to all churches which have been approved as member~~
- 267 ~~churches in that year's conference.~~
- 268 3. ~~Each local church receiving a copy of the proposed amendment shall vote on the proposal within~~
- 269 ~~twenty three months.~~
- 270 4. ~~Before the call to order of the first business session in the second year following the offering of the~~
- 271 ~~amendment, each church receiving a copy of the proposed amendment to the Statement of Faith~~
- 272 ~~shall have submitted one vote per church to the secretary.~~
- 273 5. ~~At least two thirds of the churches responding must favor the proposed amendment before a~~
- 274 ~~second reading of the amendment is permitted, thereby allowing the conference delegates to place~~
- 275 ~~on the floor a properly supported motion calling for the adoption of the amendment to the~~
- 276 ~~Statement of Faith. A two thirds majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to~~

277 ~~vote, and voting shall be required to sustain the motion, thereby incorporating the amendment into~~  
278 ~~the Statement of Faith.~~

## 282 MANUAL OF PROCEDURE

283 Adopted by Conference - July 1997

### 286 ARTICLE I 287 MEMBERSHIP

#### 288 Section One. Procedure.

- 290 1. Application for membership shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Fellowship  
291 Council accompanied by evidence of compliance with the conditions set forth in Section One,  
292 Article IV of the Constitution. Applications must be received before the first day of January 1st  
293 preceding the annual meeting of the corporation. The Fellowship Council may extend this  
294 deadline up to two months before the annual meeting if there is a written request for the extension  
295 from ~~Grace Brethren North American Missions a national ministry, a cooperating ministry, a~~  
296 ~~cooperating district, or~~ a sponsoring church that is already a member of the FGBC, ~~or a District~~  
297 ~~Missions board.~~
- 298 2. The Fellowship Council will publish the names and locations of churches who are applying for  
299 membership at least one month in advance of the next annual meeting of the corporation.
- 300 3. A check for membership fees shall accompany the application.
- 301 4. The Fellowship Council ~~(see Article III, Section One, point # 3 of this Manual of Procedure)~~ shall  
302 recommend the appropriate action to be taken regarding the application at the next annual meeting  
303 of the corporation.
- 304 5. Upon recommendation of the Fellowship Council, a congregation may be received by majority  
305 affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at the annual meeting of the  
306 corporation.

Comment [DET20]: Better English

Comment [DET21]: Better to refer to groups defined in other sections of the Constitution and Manual of Procedures.

Comment [DET22]: Unnecessary, redundant

307  
308 Section Two. Termination of Membership. Should a member church fail to adhere to the requirements  
309 of Article IV, Section One of the Constitution at anytime or fail to submit statistical reports or pay  
310 membership fees for a period of three successive years, it shall be subject to dismissal from the Fellowship  
311 in the following manner:

- 313 1. Upon report of such failure, the Fellowship Council shall investigate the report and determine the  
314 validity of the charge. It shall be the intent of the Council to offer assistance to the offending  
315 church to enable it to comply with its membership obligations.
- 316 2. Upon satisfactory resolution of the problem, a report of the church's compliance shall be entered  
317 into the records of the Fellowship Council and may be announced to the Corporation at the  
318 discretion of the Council.
- 319 3. If no satisfactory resolution of the problem is agreed upon, the finding of the Fellowship Council  
320 shall be reported to the next annual meeting of the Corporation.
- 321 3. Upon the recommendation of the Fellowship Council the offending church shall be dismissed from  
322 the Fellowship by majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at  
323 the annual meeting of the corporation.

324  
325 Section Three: Procedure for the Re-Instatement of Dismissed Churches. Should a church that was  
326 previously dismissed from the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches desire to become a member again of  
327 the FGBC, the following procedures should be followed:

- 328  
329 1. The Church seeking re-instatement should comply with all of the procedures for membership as  
330 outlined in Section 1 of ~~the Manual of Procedure~~ this Article.

Comment [DET23]: Clearer



2. The only additional requirement of a church to be re-instated is that along with the application for membership there must be a written statement signed by at least three local church leaders/members that:
- a. Describe the resolution to any past issues that lead to the dismissal.
  - b. Explain the church's reasons to become faithful members again with the FGBC.

**ARTICLE II**  
**MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

Section One. Place of Meeting. The Fellowship Council may designate any place within or without the State of Indiana as the place of the annual meeting or any special meeting.

Section Two. Notice of Meetings. Written or printed notice stating the time and place of the meeting shall be given by the Secretary of the Fellowship Council to each member church at least thirty days prior to the meeting. The notice of any special meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting.

Section Three. Delegates. In order to seat delegates, each church must meet the following requirements.

- 1. The appropriate credential form must be filed with the Fellowship Coordinator by the date specified.
- 2. The assigned membership fees, assessed by the previous annual meeting of members, shall be received by the Fellowship Coordinator by the date specified.
- 3. The annual statistical report shall be submitted and received by the date specified.
- 4. Delegates whose churches fail to meet these requirements shall be seated only upon a two-thirds majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at any meeting based upon extenuating circumstances deemed worthy of exception.
- 5. Member churches are expected to ~~assume definite financial responsibility~~ pay membership fees whether or not they send delegates to any meeting of the corporation, and the treasurer is directed to notify delinquent members of this responsibility.
- 6. Each member church shall be entitled to at least two delegates. Additional delegates are based on the average attendance at the largest regular gathering of the member church according to the following schedule:

Average Attendance	Number of delegates
0-50	2
51-100	3
101-200	5
201-300	10
301-500	20
501-1000	25
1001-2000	30
2001+	35

**Comment [DET24]:** Clearer, membership fees are only financial responsibility

Section Four. Transaction of Business. The agenda for the opening session of the conference shall include the report of the Membership Committee, presentation of new churches for membership, approval of an agenda for the business sessions, and the election of officers for the next conference year. Additional reports of the Membership Committee shall be made only at the beginning of each session's business. The agenda of any special meeting shall be an early order of business at the first session.

Any member of a member church, not a delegate, shall have all privileges of a delegate, except that he shall not be allowed to make a motion or to vote upon any question. Persons desiring to speak in the conference must first address the Moderator and be recognized. No person shall speak upon the same question more than twice until others have had ample opportunity to speak. Debate shall be limited to ten

minutes per speech. Standard rules of order, such as Robert's, shall be followed in all points not specifically provided for herein.

Section Five. Dissent. In the event that divisive issues threaten to disrupt business sessions and subvert the purposes of the Conference, the ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director shall:

1. Stop all further debate on the issue for that business session.
2. Call for a meeting of the Fellowship Council to be held before the next business session to formulate a recommendation on further procedures concerning this issue.
3. Present this recommendation as the first item of business at the next business session.
4. Call for an immediate vote on the recommendation of the Fellowship Council without further debate. Should a recommendation to stop debate fail to pass, debate shall resume.

### ARTICLE III FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

Section One. Responsibilities. Specific duties of the Council include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. It shall be the duty of the Council to make full and complete arrangements for the conference (and any special meetings), including the preparation of the proposed agenda. The Council shall consult recognized National Ministries in its conference planning and may invite representatives of National and Cooperating Ministries to its planning sessions. (Expenses for these representatives shall be borne by their respective ministries.)
2. The Council shall select the time and place for the conference and shall report its plans to the conference at least two years in advance.
3. The Council shall receive and evaluate applications from churches seeking membership in the corporation, recommending the appropriate action to be taken by the conference.
4. The Council shall investigate reports concerning a member church's failure to adhere to the requirements for membership in the corporation, determine the validity of the charges, and recommend the appropriate action to be taken, if any, by the conference.
5. The Council shall convene any special meetings of the Fellowship for emergency purposes.
6. The Council shall receive and evaluate applications for recognition from prospective districts of churches and recommend the appropriate action, if any, to be taken by the conference.
7. The Council shall receive and evaluate the requests of groups desiring recognition as national or cooperating ministries of the corporation, recommending the appropriate action to be taken by the conference.
8. The Council shall serve as the finance committee for the Fellowship, reporting to the conference the financial condition of the corporation and proposing an annual budget for the conference's approval.
9. At each annual meeting of the corporation, the Council shall report on its own activity, its plans, and recommendations for progress in the Fellowship. It shall alert the conference to potential problems, areas of concern, opportunities for ministry, etc., and shall recommend appropriate action with regard to these matters. Such suggestions may be conveyed to the conference, in consultation with the ~~moderator~~ Executive Director, through his annual address.
10. The Council shall name the endorsing agents of the Fellowship for the military chaplaincy.
11. The Council may serve as an advisory board to ~~the Fellowship~~, its member churches, recognized districts, national and cooperating ministries, and other bodies who seek its counsel with no authority other than to offer counsel to these bodies.
12. Each elected member of the Council shall be responsible to communicate with one or more districts in his region as determined by the Council.
13. The Council shall be responsible for the soliciting and the receiving of statistical reports. It shall report significant statistical information at the annual meeting of the corporation.
14. When the ~~moderator~~ Executive Director stops debate on a divisive issue at a business session of the conference, the Council shall meet to make a recommendation to the next business session. It

**Comment [DET25]:** Should not include Fellowship in this list, since Council does have authority in the FGBC, with much more than just a counseling role.



shall include in this recommendation: 1) whether or not to invoke a moratorium and, 2) if a moratorium is recommended, it shall also recommend procedures for conflict resolution.

15. The Fellowship Council and Nominating Committee shall make reasonable effort to include qualified laity in leadership positions in the Fellowship.
16. The Fellowship Council shall present a name for ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director to the conference one year prior to the expiration of the current term for affirmation by the delegates. That ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director shall select ~~a Vice Moderator~~ an Assistant Director, that is approved by the Fellowship Council to be affirmed by the delegates on a single question ballot for a one, two or three year term.
16. Contracts shall be established for employees of the Fellowship Council. Each employee shall be subject to periodic review.
17. The Fellowship Council may consult National and Cooperating ministries in the development and implementation of strategic plans as appropriate to the mission of the FGBC, Inc.

Section Two. Meetings. The Council will hold an annual meeting just prior to the conference at the place designated for the annual meeting of the corporation. A mid-year meeting of the Council will be held approximately six months after each annual meeting of the corporation at a time and place specified by the Council. The mid-year meeting shall not be held if there is insufficient business to merit the expense and time. Other special meetings of the Council may be called by the chairman in consultation with the other Council members.

Section Three. Board Decisions. All actions of the Council must be sustained by a majority vote of the Council membership (nine or more affirmative votes).

Section Four. Notice. Notice of any meeting of the Fellowship Council must be given to each member of the Council ~~and all member churches~~ at least thirty days prior to the meeting. ~~They shall be notified by mail to all the membership.~~ The notice of any special meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting.

Section Five. Removal. Any member of the Fellowship Council who ceases to fulfill the Biblical guidelines for leadership as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 shall be removed from office by majority vote of the remaining Council members. This action shall be ratified by the corporation at its next annual meeting. If a member leaves the region he represents, his position on the Fellowship Council is vacated.

Section Six. Vacancies. In case a vacancy occurs on the Council, the remaining members of the Council shall fill this vacancy by appointing a qualified representative from the region represented by the member being replaced. If the unexpired portion of the term remaining extends beyond the next annual meeting of the corporation, the Council's appointment shall be ratified at that meeting.

## ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section One. Responsibilities and Duties. The officers shall have the powers and discharge the duties customarily and usually held and performed by like officers in similar corporations, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director.
  - a. He is the chief executive officer of the corporation during the years for which he is elected
  - b. He is a member, *ex-officio*, of the Fellowship Council and shall serve as chairman of the Council for the years of his term as ~~moderator~~ Executive Director.
  - c. He will serve as moderator, presiding over any and all business meetings of the conference, or he may select another person to serve as moderator. Should he choose another to serve as moderator, the Executive Director shall retain all rights, responsibilities, and authorities described in this Constitution and the Manual of Procedure. Anyone acting as mModerator, if he is personally involved in a matter, shall defer to the Executive Director or Assistant Director. He may choose a Parliamentary Chairman to preside over any and all business meetings of the conference, or he shall preside at all sessions of the conference except when

**Comment [DET26]:** Current practice of notice in routine web and email news, not a special communication, is adequate.

**Comment [DET27]:** Term Moderator is a better term for this than Parliamentary Chairman.

~~he is personally involved in a matter, in which case he shall defer to the first moderator elect. Should he choose a Parliamentary Chairman, the Moderator shall retain all rights, responsibilities, and authorities described in this Constitution and the Manual of Procedure.~~

- d. He shall present the annual ~~moderator~~ Executive Director's address on the general theme of the spiritual state of the churches and the challenges facing the Fellowship. He may incorporate recommendations to the Fellowship Council from the Fellowship Council.
- e. Represent the FGBC as its official spokesperson for all matters related to the official communication, public press releases, or other informational opportunities presented during his term.
- f. Adequately prepare the newly elected ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director for the position through education and communication as deemed necessary to provide a smooth transition between administrations.
- g. The ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director must agree to the Statement of Faith of the FGBC, be a member in good standing in one of the member churches in the FGBC and be committed to the welfare and health of the FGBC.

2. ~~Vice Moderator~~ Assistant Director.

- a. He is a member, *ex-officio*, of the Fellowship Council and shall serve as vice-chairman of the Council for the years of his term as ~~vice-moderator~~ Assistant Director.
- b. He shall fulfill the functions of the ~~moderator~~ Executive Director in the latter's absence or illness or when called upon by the ~~moderator~~ Executive Director to do so.
- c. He shall assume the office of ~~moderator~~ Executive Director in the event of his resignation, decease or inability to serve as the ~~moderator~~ Executive Director upon notification by ~~the chairman or~~ secretary of the Fellowship Council.
- d. ~~He shall present the annual moderator elect's message at the annual meeting of the corporation on the subject suggested by the Fellowship Council.~~
- e. Represent the FGBC when delegated to do so by the ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director in areas deemed helpful by the ~~Moderator~~ Executive Director.
- f. Adequately prepare the newly elected ~~Vice Moderator~~ Assistant Director for the position through education and communication as deemed necessary to provide a smooth transition between administrations.
- g. The ~~Vice Moderator~~ Assistant Director must agree to the Statement of Faith of the FGBC, be a member in good standing in one of the member churches in the FGBC and be committed to the welfare and health of the FGBC.

Comment [DET28]: This should be left as an option based on goals of the conference and giftedness of the person, not a requirement.

4. Secretary.

- a. He shall make and keep an accurate, written record of all Fellowship Council and conference business and make records available for annual publication in a form approved by the Fellowship Council.
- b. He shall secure the service of an assistant secretary to facilitate the execution of his duties.
- c. With the cooperation of the Minutes Review Committee he shall provide printed copies of the minutes of each conference business session for publication.  
The Conference may choose to amend published minutes at the first business session succeeding publication.

Comment [DET29]: Clarify conference, not council, business

5. Treasurer.

- a. He shall receive and dispense all funds coming to the Fellowship and shall establish and maintain a bank account in which said funds are to be kept.
- b. He shall report to the Council as requested and annually at the annual meeting of the corporation delineating the financial status of the corporation.
- c. He shall invest available funds in such a way as to provide additional income to the Fellowship.

Section Two. Fellowship Coordinator & Administrative Staff.

1. The Council shall employ a Fellowship Coordinator and Administrative Staff as needed. Their remuneration shall be included in the budget proposed to the annual meeting. The Fellowship Council shall establish necessary guidelines.

- 544 | 2. They shall be directly responsible to the ~~Moderator~~Executive Director and the Fellowship Council  
545 | and ultimately to the corporation.  
546 | 3. They may sit with the Fellowship Council by invitation but shall not have a vote in its  
547 | proceedings.  
548 |

549 | Section Three. Removal. Any officer who ceases to fulfill the Biblical guidelines for leadership as set  
550 | forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 shall be removed from office by majority vote of the Council. This action  
551 | shall be ratified by the corporation at its next annual meeting.  
552 |

553 | Section Four. Vacancies. Other than the office of ~~moderator~~Executive Director, a vacancy may be  
554 | filled by the Fellowship Council for the unexpired portion of the term. In the case of a vacancy in the  
555 | office of ~~moderator~~Executive Director, the ~~first-moderator elect~~ Assistant Director will immediately  
556 | succeed to the office and responsibility of ~~moderator~~Executive Director upon notification by the ~~chairman~~  
557 | ~~or~~secretary.  
558 |

Comment [DET30]: Chairman doesn't seem to work here, since chairman would be the vacant Executive Director

## 559 | ARTICLE V 560 | COMMITTEES 561 |

### 562 | Section One. Membership Committee.

- 563 | 1. A Membership Committee, consisting of three members, shall be appointed by the Fellowship  
564 | Council. Members shall serve three year terms, arranged so that one new member is appointed  
565 | each conference year.  
566 | 2. The chairman shall be named annually by the Fellowship Council.  
567 | 3. It shall be the duty of the Committee to provide appropriate credential forms to member churches  
568 | and a place at which these forms and membership fees shall be received.  
569 | 4. This Committee shall have no authority to withhold any delegate with properly executed  
570 | credentials from the conference.  
571 | 5. In the event of disputed delegations from member churches, the membership committee shall refer  
572 | the question to the Fellowship Council which, in turn, shall make recommendation of the  
573 | appropriate action to be taken by the conference.  
574 |

### 575 | Section Two. Nominating Committee.

- 576 | 1. The Nominating Committee shall present nominees to the conference for the annual election of the  
577 | Fellowship Council.  
578 | 2. Nominees shall be triune immersed members in good standing of congregations ~~that are members~~  
579 | ~~of affiliated with~~ the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc. and shall give their consent to  
580 | nomination and shall agree to serve, if elected.  
581 | 3. The geographical regions which nominees are to represent on the Fellowship Council shall include  
582 | the following recognized Districts:  
583 | a. Western: Arctic, Hawaii, Mountain-Plains, Nor-Cal, ~~Pacific~~Northwest, and Southern  
584 | California-Arizona.  
585 | b. Central: Great Lakes Area, Heartland, Indiana, Iowa-Midlands, Northcentral Ohio,  
586 | Northeastern Ohio, and ~~Southern Ohio~~Tri-States.  
587 | c. Eastern: Allegheny, Blue Ridge, Chesapeake, East Central Florida, Florida Suncoast,  
588 | Mid-Atlantic, Northern Atlantic, South Florida-Caribbean, Southern, and Western  
589 | Pennsylvania.  
590 | 4. Each cooperating district may annually submit to the Nominating Committee the name of one  
591 | member of a church within its district as nominees for the Fellowship Council. These names shall  
592 | be placed on the ballot. If a district fails to submit a name in timely fashion, the committee may  
593 | add a nominee of its own choosing from that particular district.  
594 | 5. This committee shall submit nominations to the Fellowship Coordinator to be included on a  
595 | printed ballot. The ballot is to be so arranged that only one nominee from each region shall be  
596 | elected to the Fellowship Council.  
597 |

Comment [DET31]: Update District names

### 598 | Section Three. Parliamentary Committee.

The duties of this committee are stated in the FGBC Constitution, ~~ARTICLE VIII.~~ ~~ARTICLE VII.~~ Section Three.

Comment [DET32]: Correction

#### Section Four. Minutes Review Committee

A Minutes Review committee shall be appointed annually by the Fellowship Council to review and approve the minutes of the Conference before they are published.

Section Five. Committee Expenses. Expenses of any committee shall be defrayed by the corporation upon receipt of proper reports to the treasurer.

### ARTICLE VII

#### Section One. NATIONAL MINISTRIES

Comment [DET33]: This entire Article is moved from Constitution to Manual of Procedure.

1. Requirements. Although FGBC national ministries remain distinct, autonomous legal entities, such ministries seeking recognition by the corporation and desiring to serve the Fellowship as a national ministry shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. The ministry and its governing body must subscribe to the Statement of Faith set forth in Section Two of Article III of this Constitution.
  - b. The ministry must be sponsored and controlled by members of FGBC churches. The ministry shall not be a subsidiary of only one local church; it shall have representation on its governing board from each of the geographical regions of the Fellowship as identified in Article V, Section Two, Point #3 of the Manual of Procedure.
  - c. The ministry must have a scope of ministry broader than the immediate local church ministries and exist to serve other Grace Brethren Churches.
  - d. The ministry must meet a recognized need related to the fulfilling of the Great Commission.
  - e. The ministry must be able to demonstrate a tradition of national influence that has consistently advanced the mission of the FGBC.
2. Procedure. National Ministries meeting the requirements of Section One of this Article may be recognized by the Fellowship, upon recommendation of the Fellowship Council, by two-thirds affirmative majority vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting.
3. Recognized National Ministries. Ministries recognized as national ministries of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc. are not creations of the Fellowship, nor are they an integral part of its organization. While FGBC, Inc. requests an annual report as a courtesy, it does not in any way control any of the recognized national ministries.
4. Review: The Fellowship Council has the responsibility to review national ministries regarding the above qualifications. Recommendations for removal of a National Ministry's recognition shall be approved by the delegates by a ~~2/3rds affirmative majority~~ vote.

Comment [DET34]: The problem of the negative motion – if it takes 2/3<sup>ths</sup> to remove him, that means it only takes 1/3 to keep him. Better to only require a majority for this action. (It would be different if this were requiring a 2/3rds vote of confidence, but that doesn't fit the situation.)

#### Section Two: COOPERATING MINISTRIES

1. Requirements. Although FGBC cooperating ministries remain distinct, autonomous legal entities, such ministries seeking recognition by the corporation and desiring to serve the Fellowship as a cooperating ministry shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. The ministry and its governing body must subscribe to the Statement of Faith set forth in Section Two of Article III of this Constitution.
  - b. The ministry must be sponsored ~~and or~~ controlled by members of FGBC churches. If a majority of the board of directors are members of churches who are members of the FGBC, that satisfies this requirement.
  - c. The ministry must have a scope of ministry broader than the immediate local church ministries ~~and exist to serve other Grace Brethren Churches.~~
  - d. The ministry must meet a recognized need related to the fulfilling of the Great Commission.
2. Procedure. Ministries meeting the ~~above~~ requirements of ~~Section Two of this Article~~ may be recognized by the Fellowship, upon recommendation of the Fellowship Council, by an affirmative majority vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting.
3. Recognized Cooperating Ministries. Ministries recognized as cooperating ministries of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc. are not creations of the Fellowship, nor are they an

Comment [DET35]: This clarifies one simple slam dunk way to meet the requirement. The ministry may also try to demonstrate GBC sponsorship or control some other way.

Comment [DET36]: This sounds inward focused. A ministry might have total outward focus in church planting or evangelism and be a valid cooperating ministry.

Comment [DET37]: simpler

integral part of its organization. While FGBC, Inc. requests an annual report as a courtesy, it does not in any way control any of the recognized cooperating ministries.

4. Review: The Cooperating Ministry has the responsibility to demonstrate that it desires and qualifies for Cooperating Ministry status at least every ~~three~~five years. The Fellowship Council has the responsibility to review cooperating ministries regarding the above qualifications. Recommendations for removal of a Cooperating Ministry's recognition shall be approved by the delegates by a majority affirmative vote.

**Comment [DET38]:** This adds a needed mechanism to achieve this periodic review.

### Section Three: COOPERATING DISTRICTS

Requirements. Although FGBC Cooperating Districts remain distinct, autonomous legal entities, in order to be granted and to maintain the status of a FGBC Cooperating District, the following requirements must be met.

**Comment [DET39]:** This Section is moved from being a separate Article in the Constitution to being combined with National Ministries and Cooperating Ministries in one Article in the Manual of Procedure.

1. A district may be formed with a minimum of three churches.
2. The district may be organized for fellowship and cooperative ministry with area churches and the FGBC.
3. The district and district officers shall subscribe to the FGBC Statement of Faith or the Declaration of Common Identity.
- ~~4. All member churches of a district must be in good standing with FGBC.~~
5. The district shall have made application with FGBC for recognition as a cooperating district.

**Comment [DET40]:** Need room here for the district to include developing churches, mission points, cell churches, ethnic churches, and other groups who might not (yet) be full members of the FGBC.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### MISCELLANEOUS

Section One. Continuing Resolutions. Continuing resolutions may be submitted at the annual meeting of the corporation by the Fellowship Council or from the floor. The resolution must be in writing. If the resolution is submitted from the floor, a written presentation must be given to the secretary during the same business session at which the resolution is presented.

**Comment [DET41]:** Sections One, Two, and Four of this Article were moved from the Constitution to the Manual of Procedure.

Section Two. Conference Year. The conference year shall begin with the conclusion of the conference and continue to the conclusion of the succeeding conference.

Section Three. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the corporation shall be November 1 through October 31.

Section Four. Affiliations. The Fellowship may affiliate with other fraternal, evangelical organizations only with the adoption of an appropriate resolution by the Conference. Cooperation with such organizations, without formal membership, may be approved by the Executive Committee of the Fellowship Council.

## **ARTICLE ~~VII~~ IX**

### AMENDMENTS TO MANUAL OF PROCEDURE

This Manual of Procedure may be amended by a majority affirmative vote of the delegates present, entitled to vote, and voting at any business session.