



**BYLAWS**

**OF**

**THE GROVE CHURCH**

A Tennessee Nonprofit Religious Corporation

These Bylaws have been adopted as required by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act. However, when the religious doctrine governing the affairs of The Grove Church is inconsistent with the provisions of the Tennessee Nonprofit Act, then our religious doctrine shall take precedence and shall control the governance of The Grove Church.

**ARTICLE 1**

**OFFICES**

1.1. **Location.** The principal office of the corporation in the state of Tennessee shall be located at 2122 Tom Austin Highway (HWY 431) Greenbrier, Tennessee 37073 in Robertson County, Tennessee. The corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Tennessee, as the board of Elders may designate or as the business of the corporation may require from time to time.

**ARTICLE 2**

**MEMBERS**

2.1. **Membership.** The membership of this church shall consist of persons who confess faith on the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who give evidence of regeneration by a living consistent with their profession and with the views of faith, doctrine, and practice of this church, who have been baptized by immersion and who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership role, which is indicated by a signed copy on file in the church office, and evidence of adherence to the membership covenant.

2.2. **Membership Privileges.** Membership shall provide the opportunity to serve in the area of leadership and teaching in the ministries of the church, as well as the privilege of voting in members' meetings.

**2.3. Oversight of Membership.** In order to properly identify the membership of the church, the membership shall be updated periodically as determined by the membership team. The membership team, consisting of elders and members, has the vested responsibility to research and recommend new member candidates. The membership team is also responsible for the termination of a member at any time if it is the decision of the membership team that a member is not fulfilling his/her covenant responsibilities.

**2.4. Place of Meeting.** The board of elders may designate any place within or without the state of Tennessee as a place of meeting for any meeting called by the Board of Elders. If no designation is made, or if the meeting is called by the members or the President, the place of meeting shall be the principal office of the corporation in the state of Tennessee.

**2.5. Notice of Regular Members' Meeting.** Whenever a regular members' meeting takes place notice shall be given to members no less than two (2) weeks prior to a meeting. Notification of regular members' meetings shall be given in any of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a regular members' meeting:

- a. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a regular weekend service;
- b. Announcement of the meeting in the church newsletter, either electronic or printed;
- c. Oral announcement to the congregation at a weekend service; or
- d. Delivery by United States mail to each member identified on the membership roll.

**2.6. Members Entitled to Notice and Vote.** The record date for determining the members entitled to notice of a meeting shall be the date which is 60 calendar days before the date of the meeting. If notice is waived, such waiver can be made by the members of record as of the day prior to the meeting for which the waiver of notice is made. The record date for determining the members entitled to vote at any meeting shall be the day prior to the meeting.

**2.7. List of Members Entitled to Vote.** A list of members entitled to vote at a meeting, certified by the Secretary, shall be open for inspection at any meeting of members. If the right to vote at any meeting is challenged, the person presiding there may rely on such list as evidence of the right of the persons challenged to vote at such meeting.

**2.8. Voting Rights of Membership.** Every member in good standing above the age of 16 years old shall have the right to vote on the following matters:

- 2.8.1. Purchases by the Church of \$5000 or greater;

2.8.2. Decisions involving building or real estate purchase;

2.8.3. Decisions involving the discipline and restoration of covenant members;

2.8.4. Decisions that impact significant areas of ministry in the church and the ministry efforts of the body together (missions, programs, key documents, etc.); and

2.8.5. All other matters of the Church shall be decided by the elders of the church unless the Board of Elders feels it necessary to bring it back to active membership of the local assembly at The Grove Church.

2.9. **Quorum.** (35%) Thirty-five percent of the members entitled to vote at a meeting of the members shall constitute a quorum at that meeting. A meeting will be adjourned because of the absence of a quorum.

2.10. **Proxies.** All members must be present in person to vote at any meeting of the members. No proxies shall be permitted.

2.11. **Passing Vote Percentage.** In order for a vote to pass there must be at least 75% in favor of a motion.

2.12. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings (being distinct from regular members' meetings) of the members for a purpose consistent with membership voting rights as defined in these bylaws may be held at any time at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

2.13. **Termination of Membership.** Members shall be removed from the church roll for the following reasons:

2.13.1. Death;

2.13.2. Transfer of membership to another church;

2.13.3. By personal request of the member, which is made in person before the membership team; or

2.13.4. Proposal of dismissal by the membership team according to the following conditions:

a. The member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the membership covenant in such a way that the member hinders the ministry and/or the influence of the church in the community.

b. The church body agrees with the membership team's recommendation for the person's dismissal by a vote at a member's meeting. This is a connecting process between the second and third steps described in Matthew 18.

c. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

2.13.5. The Inactive Member List may consist of those who are not able to fulfill their covenant but are actively seeking to correct sin or rightly engage with the church through a process of healing and restoration.

A member, at the discretion of the membership team, may be placed on an Inactive Member List when a member is not fulfilling his/her covenant responsibilities. The membership team will then seek to meet with the individual in the effort to restore him/her to active membership.

Note: A member that is placed on an Inactive Member List loses his/her rights as a member in good standing, meaning they are unable to teach, lead, or serve in ministry areas, or vote in members' meetings.

## **2.14. Restoration of Membership**

2.14.1. Members dismissed by the membership team or the church body shall be restored by the church according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when their lifestyle is judged to be in accordance with the membership covenant.

2.14.2. The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, understand that The Grove Church is an autonomous church comprised of members who have voluntarily joined together to carry out the vision for The Grove Church as given by God and led by the elders. All members, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, covenant and agree that any appeal of a termination of membership or any request for restoration of membership shall be made, in writing, to the membership team and agree to abide by their decision and shall not seek an appeal to any outside ecclesiastical or governmental body, including but not limited to a county association, state or national convention or a local, state or federal judicial system.

2.14.3. Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights or property rights in the Corporation.

## ARTICLE 3

### BOARD OF ELDERS

3.1. **Board of Elders.** The Board of Elders of the church shall be the directors of the corporation and shall be known as the Board of The Grove Church. Any reference to the terms “Board,” “Elder Board,” “directors,” “elders,” and “board of directors” shall refer to the Board of The Grove Church. The business and affairs of the corporation shall be overseen by the Board of Elders, and each elder shall be of legal age.

3.2. **Biblical Offices of the Church.** The biblical offices in the church are elders, deacons, and the membership. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions of secretary and treasurer under these bylaws. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities. Elders are responsible for the oversight of the church, finances, capital improvements, and facilities. The elders are also responsible for shepherding the local assembly in spiritual matters outlined in 3.2.2..

3.2.1. The Elder Board shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. If the number of elders decreases to less than three, the deacon body shall be the substitute for the lack of an elder, until such an elder is added to the Elder Board.

3.2.2. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I Peter 5:1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock. The elders will do this to cast vision, guide the local assembly, and facilitate ministry in the church. They will likewise give oversight to programs, teaching material, and the development of ministry teams.

3.2.3. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. In recognition of this church affirmation, elders will serve on the board for four years. After an elder, other than the lead or associate staff pastor(s) (who is an elder) has served the four years, he will rotate off the board for one year and enter a sabbatical from his service on the board. He will remain an elder and may serve the body in any other capacity as seen fit for his position as an elder during that sabbatical year.

3.2.4. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders (see 2.13.4.) and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew

18:15–17 and 1 Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a 75% vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church per 2.11..

3.2.5. Any elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the elders, or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19. Any vote to remove an elder shall be made consistent with paragraph 2.11. and 3.4. of these Bylaws except that the elder who is the subject of removal shall not be allowed to vote on such removal and said vote, or lack thereof, shall not be considered for a vote of unity. When an elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service as prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:20.

3.2.6. The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members of the Elder Board, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and ministry teams, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, provide counsel in the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions.

3.2.7. Further, the elders should seek to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, affirm our fundamental gospel convictions and do not teach our church anything contrary to the Core Beliefs. The elders may establish ministry teams and ministry leaders to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill ministry positions. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the personnel ministry team. Furthermore, the personnel ministry team has the authority to approve support staff positions.

3.2.8. Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons, ministry teams, and the membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a designated regular member's meeting and voted upon. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

3.2.9. The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of regular members' meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Tennessee, the elders shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

3.3. **The Lead Pastor.** The Lead Pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in 3.2.2. and 3.2.3., above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

3.3.1. The Lead Pastor shall have primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

3.3.2. In the absence or incapacity of the Lead Pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

3.3.3. The Lead Pastor, in keeping with the spirit of 3.2.3. and his role as an elder, shall be given at least 4 weeks of sabbatical leave per year and encouraged to take the time of sabbatical during which time he is relieved from board responsibilities. The sabbatical time is distinctly different from vacation time. Likewise, associate staff who are elders will be given at least 2 weeks of sabbatical per year.

3.4. **Voting of the Board.** The goal of all decisions by the elders (Board) shall pursue the unity of spirit towards a bond of peace as described in Ephesians 4. If after prayer and Bible study on any given issue, unity is not reached, the Board will table the issue for further prayer and discussion at the next meeting. If matters of doctrine are at the center of disunity, they must be brought before the church body for prayer, discussion, and direction. If any elder is absent from a Board meeting, it is the absent elder's responsibility to respond in a timely manner on any decisions. If any elder is incapacitated, by physical or mental disability, the decision will not be delayed as a result of their absence.

3.5. **Day to Day Operations.** The Board will delegate appropriate staff to facilitate the day to day operation of directing non-elder staff in their duties and to ensure job responsibilities are being met. The Board is empowered to assist in the development and assignment of teaching responsibilities of the Pastoral staff. The Board will empower a staff member with the responsibility of facilitating the day-to-day financial decisions up to \$1000 without having to receive approval from the Board.

3.6. **Election of Elders.** The membership of The Grove Church shall be able to nominate men whom they believe meet the qualifications set forth in this document. The present elders shall identify men whom they believe meet the qualifications set forth in this document for consideration as well.

3.6.1. Using Acts 20:28 as our scripture guidance the present elders shall review and pray over all those nominated and shall approach those whom they determine meet the qualifications set forth in this document.

3.6.2. Those men who are determined to meet the qualifications of an elder will be asked if they would consider the position. They will be asked to review, pray over and sign a statement affirming that they believe they meet the qualifications of an elder as set forth in this document. They will be interviewed at length and if after the interview believe they still aspire to the position and if the present elders still believe they meet the qualifications set forth in this document, they will be presented to the congregation as candidates for the position of elder.

3.6.3. The members of The Grove Church will have the opportunity to meet with the present elders at the next scheduled elders meeting to voice any concerns or objections to any man nominated, based on biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy and Titus. It is the members' responsibility to make an appointment with the office administration in order to meet with the elders in such cases.

3.6.4. The then present elders shall vote on the election of any new elder in accordance with paragraph 3.4. of these Bylaws. This vote shall be taken after the above provisions have been satisfied and the candidates have been carefully examined, interviewed and prayerfully considered.

3.6.5. In the calling of any man to the position of Lead Pastor, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Lead Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Constitution, Core Beliefs, Church Covenant, and Bylaws. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as Lead Pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

3.7. **Regular Meeting.** The elders shall hold a regular meeting at such place and on such day as may be set by the elders, at which time the elders shall transact any business as may properly be brought before the meeting.

3.8. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the elders may be called by or at the request of the Lead Pastor, Chairperson, President, or by a majority of the elders.



3.9. **Notice.** Notice of any special meeting shall be given at least two (2) days before the date of such meeting by written notice delivered personally, by telephone, by mail, or by email. Except as specifically provided by these Bylaws, neither the business to be transacted at nor the purpose of any special or regular meeting of the elders need be specified in the notice of such meeting.

3.10. **Notice of Special Actions.** Any meeting of the elders at which one or more of the following actions shall be taken must be preceded by seven (7) days written notice to each elder that the matter will be voted upon, unless notice is waived. Actions requiring such notice are: removal of an elder; amendment or restatement of the Charter and amendment of the Bylaws.

## ARTICLE 4

### Office of Deacon

4.1. **Election of Deacons.** The membership of The Grove Church shall be able to nominate men whom they believe meet the qualifications set forth in this document. The present elders shall identify those nominated men whom they believe meet the qualifications set forth in this document for consideration as well.

4.1.1. The members of The Grove Church will have the opportunity to meet with the current elders at the next scheduled elders meeting to voice any concerns or objections to any man nominated, based on biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy and Titus. It is the member's responsibility to make an appointment in order to meet with the elders in such cases.

4.1.2. Using Acts 20:28 as our Scriptural guidance, the current elders shall review and pray over all those nominated and shall approach those whom they determine meet the qualifications set forth in this document.

4.1.3. Those men who are determined to meet the qualifications of a deacon will be asked if they would consider the position. Each nominee will be interviewed at length and if, after the interview, he is willing to serve as a deacon and if the current elders still believe the nominee meets the qualifications set forth in this document the nominee will be presented to the congregation as a candidate for the position of deacon.

4.1.4. The Board of Elders shall vote on the election of any new deacon in accordance with paragraph 3.2. of these Bylaws. This vote shall be taken after the above provisions have been satisfied and the candidate(s) have been carefully examined and it is determined that any candidate meets that biblical requirements found in 1 Timothy 3:8ff, is interviewed and prayerfully considered.

4.2. **Tenure of Deacons.** The term of service for deacons shall reflect that of the elders according to 3.2.3..

4.3. **Removal of Deacons.** Any deacon may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Elders if that deacon is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:8 ff.), after thorough corroborating investigation by the elders, or a duly appointed Committee of the Board of Elders, in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19. Any vote to remove a deacon shall be made consistent with paragraph 3.2. of these Bylaws. When a deacon is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from serving, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service as prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:20.

## ARTICLE 5

### ELECTED LEADERSHIP

5.1. **Procedure.** Whenever the elders or the members determine that there is to be an expansion of leadership in The Grove Church, they will present this to the church body offering them the opportunity to nominate candidates for the office. This recommendation will happen at a regular members' meeting, unless done after an elders meeting upon which the membership is then called together at a meeting for a vote (2.6.; 2.11.4.).

## ARTICLE 6

### ACTION BY WRITTEN CONSENT

6.1. **Procedure.** Whenever the elders are required or permitted to take any action by vote, such action may be taken without a meeting on written consent, setting forth the action so taken and signed by all of the elders. Unless the consent specifies a different effective date, the action taken by such consent shall be effective when signed by all of the elders.

## ARTICLE 7

### WAIVER OF NOTICE

7.1. **Procedure.** Any notice required to be given to any elder under these Bylaws, the Charter, or the laws of Tennessee may be waived. The waiver shall be in writing and signed by the elder entitled to notice either before or after the time the notice was due to be given. Neither the business to be transacted at the meeting nor the purpose of any special or regular meeting need be specified in the waiver of notice of such meeting.

7.2. **Waiver By Attendance.** The attendance of a member or elder at any annual, regular, or special meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a member or elder attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened.

## ARTICLE 8

### OFFICERS

8.1. **Officers.** The corporation shall have three officers: a President, a Vice President, a Secretary. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of President and Secretary.

8.2. **Election and Term of Office.** The officers of the corporation shall be elected annually at the September meeting of the Board of Elders. Each officer shall hold office until the expiration of the term for which he is elected and thereafter until his successor has been duly elected and qualified, except that the term of office of any officer who dies, resigns, or is removed shall end immediately upon such event.

8.3. **Removal.** Any officer elected by the Board of Elders may be removed by the board of Elders whenever in its judgment the removal would serve the best interests of the corporation.

8.4. **Vacancies.** A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise may be filled by the Board of Elders for the unexpired portion of the term.

8.5. **Chairman of the Board.** The Chairman of the Board shall be chosen from among the elders. He shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the members and of the Board of Elders. He shall, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of Chairman of the Board and such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Board of Elders.

8.6. **President.** The President shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation and, subject to the control of the Board of Elders, shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Board of Elders are carried into effect. He shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders in the absence of the Chairman of the Board. The President has the authority to sign any deeds, mortgages, bonds, or other instruments and any contracts or documents made, executed and delivered in the ordinary course of business as authorized by the Board of Elders, except in cases where the signing and the execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Elders to some other officer or agent of the corporation, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed. The President shall perform any other duties which may be prescribed by the Board of Elders from time to time.

8.7. **Vice President.** In the absence of the President or in the event of his death, inability,

or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions on the President. The Vice President shall also perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Board of Elders.

8.8. **Secretary.** The Secretary: shall keep the minutes of meetings of the members or elders in one or more books provided for that purpose; shall see that all notices of meetings are duly given according to these Bylaws; shall be custodian of the corporate records; shall keep a register of the post office address of each member and elder as furnished by the member or elder to the Secretary; and shall in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the President or by the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE 9

### CONTRACTS, LOANS, CHECKS, AND DEPOSITS

9.1. **Contracts.** The Board of Elders may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract and to execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation; and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

9.2. **Loans.** No loan shall be contracted on behalf of the corporation and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authority is specifically given by a resolution of the Board of Elders. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

9.3. **Checks, Drafts, Etc.** All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, of the corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Elders.

9.4. **Deposits.** All funds of the corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board of Elders may select.

9.5. **Annual Audit of Church Finances.** The corporate treasurer shall engage a certified public accounting firm at the conclusion of each fiscal year to conduct an audit of the church's finances. A representative of the CPA firm shall submit a summary of its annual audit report to the elders at one of their regular meetings.

## ARTICLE 10

### INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND ELDERS

10.1. **Indemnification.** The corporation shall indemnify any elder or officer who was, is, or is threatened to be made a party to a completed, pending, or threatened action or proceeding from any liability arising from the elder's or officer's official capacity with the corporation. This indemnification shall extend to the personal representative of a deceased elder or officer if the elder or officer would, if living, be entitled to indemnification under these Bylaws.

10.2. **Costs and Expenses Covered by Indemnification.** Indemnification provided under these Bylaws shall extend to the payment of a judgment, settlement, penalty, or fine, as well as attorneys' fees, court costs, and other reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by the elder or officer with respect to the action or proceeding.

10.3. **Limitation on Indemnification.** No indemnification shall be made to or on behalf of any elder or officer if a judgment or other final adjudication adverse to the elder or officer establishes his or her liability:

- (a) for any breach of the duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members;
- (b) for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law; or
- (c) for any distribution of the assets of the corporation which is unlawful under Tennessee law.

## ARTICLE 11

### FISCAL YEAR

11.1. **Determination.** The fiscal year of the corporation shall be fixed by resolution of the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE 12

### PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

12.1. **Designation.** The parliamentary authority of the corporation in all meetings shall be the latest revised edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

## ARTICLE 13

### MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

13.1. **Marriage.** We believe that the term ‘marriage’ has only one meaning: it is that relationship sanctioned by God in which He joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive covenant union for a lifetime, as defined by Scripture. The church does recognize contractual marriages that exist between a man and a woman outside of the biblical covenant of marriage and because these marriages have the potential to become biblical covenantal relationships they are to be recognized as legitimate unions (1 Corinthians 7:12-17).

13.2. **Privileges of Refusal.** Accordingly, The Grove Church, its elders, and staff will not officiate, or participate in, same sex unions and same sex marriages that contradict the biblical definition of marriage (13.1.). We encourage the membership to refrain from acknowledging unbiblical marriages as biblical covenantal relationships. We do encourage members to minister to individuals by sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a complex matter that may demand extensive prayer, grace, and counsel, if and when encountered.

Nor shall the church’s property or resources be used for such purposes. Each staff member also has the privilege to decline to officiate or perform any marriage at his discretion after counseling with any couple. The staff can refuse the use of the facility for any prospective wedding after agreement with the elders.

## ARTICLE 14

### AMENDMENTS

14.1. **Procedure.** The Constitution, Core Beliefs, Church Covenant, and Bylaws may be amended by a 75% vote of the members present and voting at a regular members’ meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members’ meeting, or is announced in accordance with paragraph 2.5. of these Bylaws. The revised version(s) of the aforementioned documents shall be made available to all church members by the church in accordance with paragraph 2.5. of these Bylaws.