

# **Church Constitution and By-laws**

**Adopted August 19, 2024**

**Amended April 21, 2025-see “Ministry Leaders Team”**

**Adjusted to reflect “Ministry Team Leaders” language April 13, 2026**

**Updated to include “Grievance Policy” by Board action June 15, 2026**

Grace on the Hill Church, Inc. is a Kentucky nonprofit corporation that operates under the name (and is referred to herein as) Grace on the Hill Community Church.

This document (including its appendices) serves as the Constitution and By-laws of Grace on the Hill Community Church, a church of the Christian faith located at 1632 Cumberland Falls Highway in Corbin, Kentucky 40701, and formerly known as Grace on the Hill United Methodist Church. On the twentieth of February 2022, the church voted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. The Final date set for disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church being June 30, 2022. This Church Constitution and By-laws shall become effective on that date.

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of Grace on the Hill Community Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who let God’s GRACE shine through Growing, Reaching, Assisting, Caring, and Exalting. Grace on the Hill Community Church seeks to serve God by serving others in the tri-county area, state, country, and world. We will do this through community service, cooperation with local businesses, local officials, and other local ministries, as well as through missions endeavors. It is the desire of Grace on the Hill Community Church to make the community a better place because the church is here. Specifically, the church will conduct regular church worship services, provide Bible teaching and spiritual growth opportunities, conduct weddings and funerals, provide recreational programs, and other ministries in keeping with the mission and vision of the church.

## **Beliefs of Grace on the Hill Community Church**

The statement of beliefs at Grace on the Hill Community are documented in the Appendix on Doctrine.

## **Membership**

### **Membership/Partner Qualification**

All Christians who have been baptized and are devoted to growing in their Christian commitment and agree with the fundamental mission and purpose of

Grace on the Hill Community Church are welcome to take the vows of membership/partnership. These vows include a promise to support the church with their time, talents, and treasure.

#### Membership/Partner Process

Each person who was a member in good standing of Grace on the Hill United Methodist Church immediately prior to its disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church shall automatically become a member of Grace on the Hill Community Church on the effective date of the disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church.

Going forward, qualified persons may request membership/partnership following their baptism or by a transfer of their membership from another Christian church and with the Sr. Pastor's approval. Those wishing to become members/partners should approach the Senior Pastor (or other authorized staff minister) to request membership/partnership. Those requesting membership/partnership will be asked to take a membership/partners orientation after which they will be presented to the church in any regular service of the whole congregation to take the vows of membership/partnership. The candidate for membership/partnership will then be added to the membership/partnership roll by the church administrative assistant.

#### Membership/Partnership Responsibilities

All members/partners are valued and encouraged to fulfill their membership/partnership vows to support the church by their participation in whatever service and ministry they are fit to fulfill according to their knowledge, talents, and spiritual gifts. A membership/partnership covenant is also presented at the membership/partnership class which outlines expectations of membership/partnership.

#### Membership Termination

Members/partners who request that their membership/partnership be moved to another church or be terminated due to a move out of the area, or any other request for termination, will have their names recommended for removal from the membership/partnership roll. The membership/partnership roll will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors (i.e., the Administrative Board) and an attempt will be made to contact those persons who are thought to longer be involved in the church. Any who indicate that they desire to be removed from the membership/partnership roll will be recommended for removal by the Administrative Board. Names of members/partners who have died will be removed from the membership/partnership roll.

## **Selection of Officers**

The selection process for Senior Pastor is described below. The Senior Pastor and Administrative Board are charged with filling positions of hired ministers, office workers, and other employees of the church. Instruction on the composition and appointment of the Board of Directors (referred to as the “Administrative Board”) will be provided in the Appendix on Church Governance.

## **Church Governance**

Governance roles and procedures are included in the Appendix on Church Governance.

## **Annual Church Conference**

The Senior Pastor or Administrative Board may call a conference of the members/partners of the church when the voice of the entire membership/partnership is deemed necessary to deliberate on vital church business or significant matters on which the Administrative Board seeks the advice of the members/partners. A church conference may be held at the principal office of the church or such other place as the Administrative Board may approve. Notice of a church conference may be given to members/partners by public announcement of the date, time, place and purpose (or purposes) of the church conference, including by announcement at any regularly scheduled worship service of the church, occurring at least 10 days prior to the date of the conference. Depending on the purpose of the church conference, the officiating of such conferences may fall to the Senior Pastor or the President of the Administrative Board, as determined by the Administrative Board. Any matter approved by a majority of the members/partners present at a church conference will constitute an act of the membership/partnership of the church provided at least ten percent (10%) of the members/partners in good standing of the church are present (in person or by proxy) at such conference.

An Annual Church Conference in the fall of each year is highly recommended to celebrate what God has done in the past year and also to cast vision for the year ahead. This is to be a time of worship, celebration, sharing of testimonies, and encouragement to the church family.

The only matter on which the members/partners have a right to vote is an amendment of the articles of incorporation of the church, as described below. A meeting of members/partners to vote on an amendment to the articles of incorporation may be held at the principal office of the church or such other place as the Administrative Board may approve, and written notice shall be provided as required by Kentucky law. At a meeting of members/partners to vote on an

amendment to the articles of incorporation, the President (or, in the President's absence, the Vice President) of the Administrative Board shall be the presiding officer, each member/partner in good standing of the church shall be entitled to one vote, and the presence (in person or by proxy) of members/partners holding one-tenth (1/10) of the votes entitled to be cast shall constitute a quorum.

### **Transparency and Communication**

Decisions regarding selection of personnel, finances, changes to by-laws, changes to governance documents, statements of doctrinal beliefs, purpose, and mission statements, shall be distributed through appropriate channels as determined by the Administrative Board, whether by pulpit announcements, email, social media, or web site.

### **Confidentiality of Financial Contributions**

Financial contributions to the church shall be kept confidential by those responsible for collecting, processing, and recording private contributions. The Senior Pastor, staff members, church officers and volunteers shall not have access to private giving records and shall not inquire regarding the contributions of private individuals.

There may be occasions when it is necessary to determine if a person is a regular financial contributor in order to determine if they can be named to the Administrative Board or a ministry leadership role. In such cases the inquiry will be either a "yes" or "no" answer as to whether the person is a consistent financial contributor who is practicing the discipline of tithing and generosity.

### **Confidentiality of Personnel Records**

Performance reviews and records of disciplinary actions of employees are to be kept confidential by those responsible for overseeing the review of employees.

### **Selection of a Senior Pastor**

When there is an opening for the position of Senior Pastor the Administrative Board will appoint a search team to seek out and present preferred candidates to the Administrative Board. The search team shall consist of one representative from the Administrative Board and at least two at large members. Appropriate pastoral candidates may then be observed, interviewed,

and evaluated. The selected candidate will then meet with the Administrative Board to establish their compatibility with Grace on the Hill Community Church before reviewing and signing the Pastoral Contract.

### **Pastoral Contract**

The Pastoral Contract serves as a covenant between the senior pastor and the church family to achieve the ministries of the church. The Pastoral Contract will be open to review and change by the Administrative Board when a new Senior Pastor is hired and annually in November of each year.

### **Amendments Process**

The by-laws of the church will be open to amendments as needed, as determined by the Administrative Board. Proposals for amendment are welcome from any member/partner of the church and subject to review by the Senior Pastor and the Administrative Board. Amendments require the approval of both the Senior Pastor and a two-thirds majority of the Administrative Board. Members/partners of the church do not vote on amendments to the bylaws.

Amendments to the articles of incorporation of the church must be proposed by the Administrative Board, submitted to a vote at a meeting of members/partners entitled to vote thereon and adopted upon receiving two-thirds (2/3) of the votes which members/partners present at such meeting or represented by proxy are entitled to cast. No amendment shall be allowed which would in any way jeopardize the church's tax exemption under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **Dissolution Provisions**

In the event of a dissolution of Grace on the Hill Community Church the property and possessions of the church will be transferred to another nonprofit ministry or service organization approved by the Administrative Board. Any payment received for the property and possessions will be applied to unpaid debt and other approved post-dissolution ministries agreed upon by the Administrative Board as allowed by the IRS under the church's 501c3 status.

### **Electronic Communications**

Communications, notices, and other communications to members of the Administrative Board and to members/partners of the church generally may be given by electronic transmission. Meetings of the Administrative Board may be held by remote communication.

## **Appendix on Church Governance**

The affairs of Grace on the Hill Church, Inc. (Grace On The Hill Community Church) are managed by its Board of Directors, which is referred to as its “Administrative Board.”

### **Administrative Board**

The Administrative Board is the administrative agency of Grace on the Hill Community Church charged with envisioning, planning, implementing, and annually evaluating the ministries of the congregation. Members of the Administrative Board shall be involved in the vision, mission and ministries of the church. The membership of the board shall consist of nine members: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sr. Pastor, and 4 At Large members all nominated by the Administrative Board each afforded a vote on any voting matter. *(The Administrative Board reserves the privilege of expanding the Board with additional At Large members representing a church growth of 75-100 additional attendees per 1 additional At Large member. The Administrative Board should not exceed 15 total members.)*

The functions of the Administrative Board will include, but are not limited to:

- Oversight of the Sr. Pastor

- Financial Oversight of the Church including budget planning and management

- Building Issues and Maintenance

  - \*one member of the Administrative Board will be designated overseer of a team that will handle these areas in conjunction with the Building Supervisor

- Nominations of Administrative Board Members and Officers

- Staff Relations and Hirings

The Senior Pastor will work with the Administrative Board in a covenant relationship with each other to achieve the stated vision, mission and goals of Grace on the Hill Community Church. The Senior Pastor shall be accountable to the Administrative Board. The Sr. Pastor will have direct oversight of the Church Staff performing annual evaluations which will then be shared with the Administrative Board for further evaluation if needed. (See Flow Chart at the conclusion of this document.) The Sr. Pastor will also oversee the “Ministry Leaders Team” to ensure quality ministry is created and cultivated.

Ad Hoc teams may be developed in order to address specific issues in the life of the church, but will be disbanded once the issue has been dealt with to the satisfaction of

the Administrative Board. This may include Ad Hoc teams such as a budgeting team, a building projects and upkeep team, and other specialized teams.

No immediate members of the same family shall serve on the Administrative Board at the same time. This includes children of Board members (including by marriage), grandchildren, and spouses.

### **Members of the Administrative Board Shall:**

- Be members in good standing of Grace on the Hill Community Church.
- Be growing in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Show evidence of active involvement in the ministries of Grace on the Hill Community Church.
- Be nominated by the Administrative Board for a three year term
  - Should a Board member not be able to fulfill their three year term, a new person will be nominated at which time their three year term will begin at their first Administrative Board meeting.

### **Administrative Board Officers Shall:**

- Be elected for three year terms by the members of the Administrative Board.
  - These will include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer
- Work with the Senior Pastor to fulfill the vision, mission and goals of Grace on the Hill Community Church.
- Work cooperatively with the Senior Pastor in developing the monthly meeting agenda topics.
- The President of the Administrative Board will lead the monthly meetings.
- Follow up actions by assigning responsibility for implementation.
- Coordinate the activities of the Administrative Board working cooperatively with the Senior Pastor.
- Maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life.

### **Ministry Leaders Team**

To help lead ministry teams, recruit for ministry teams, and work in cooperation with the Sr. Pastor to implement ministry, the Ministry Leaders Team will meet together twice a year at which time the Sr. Pastor will share vision, information, and encouragement.

Each Ministry Team Leader will connect on a regular basis with the Sr. Pastor in some form to apprise him of the activities of their team. This will also provide the Sr. Pastor an opportunity to develop team leaders for more effective leading of ministry. As new ministries are developed, those ministry team leaders will be integrated into this overall team.

The emphasis on this ministry model is to cultivate leaders and insure the continuation of ministry even during times of leadership transition. In this way there will be little if any disruption in the flow of ministry which will foster good church health.

### **System Structure**

- **Holistic** – Integrates the spiritual and functional sides of leadership and the church.
- **Comprehensive** – Aligns the clarity of day-to-day activities with big picture vision, mission and values.
- **Scalable** – Applies to any and all leadership challenges that affect every aspect of the church.

### **Principles, Practices and Processes**

- **Principles and Practices**
  - Spiritual leaders who model a community that loves, learns and leads together
  - Creating environments that foster transformation
  - Establishing processes that bear fruit
  
  - Loving
  - Learning
  - Leading
- **Processes**
  - Spiritual Formation
  - Team Covenants
  - Ministry Action Planning
  - Reflecting, Adjusting and Doing (RAD) for organizational learning
  - Personal Development Planning (PDP) for personal and ministry development

### **Team Accountability**

- **Accountabilities**
  - Spiritual (to God)
  - Relational (to one another)
  - Missional (the Great Commission)

### **Meetings**

The Administrative Board will meet on a monthly basis, but reserve the right to cancel or reschedule the monthly meeting as needed. Special meetings of the Administrative Board may be called by its President or any 2 [two] of its members. Unless waived, notice of the time, date and place of a special meeting of the Administrative Board shall be provided to its members at least two (2) days prior to the date of the special meeting.

## **Additional Notes**

- Any vacancies of the Administrative Board will be filled with the 3 year term beginning at the first meeting of the new Board member.
- A person must sit out one calendar year after rotating off of the Administrative Board.
- The Administrative Board may remove a member of the Administrative Board for cause.

## **Credentialing of Ministers**

This ministry shall have a set number of classes of ministers, as set forth below. Each class of minister will have distinct rights and privileges; they are listed below:

### **Minister's Apprentice:**

This recognition is given by the Senior Pastor and Administrative Board of this ministry. This recognition is for those who are starting out in the ministry, but need extensive training. They are to work closely with a licensed or ordained minister.

### **Licensed Minister:**

This recognition is given by the Senior Pastor and the Administrative Board of this ministry. This recognition is for those who are somewhat seasoned in the ministry, but need further experience. Many of these are individuals that have been working in their chosen vocation, but for some reason or another have never entered full-time ministry, or have only been in full-time ministry for less than three (3) years. Such persons are authorized to perform the following religious functions:

1. Conduct religious worship
2. Religious instruction
3. Administer Communion
4. Provide spiritual counseling
5. And other sacerdotal functions including
  1. Conduct baby dedication ceremonies
  2. Perform Baptisms
  3. Perform weddings
  4. Conduct funerals
  5. Visit the sick and shut-in
  6. Minister in prisons

However, this person is not in charge of a congregation. Limited authority is granted to run the affairs of the ministry. They qualify for Clergy Tax benefits.

### **Ordained Pastor/ Minister:**

This recognition is given by the Senior Pastor and Administrative Board to those persons who have an "established" or "proven" ministry. They will hold a minimum of a Bachelors degree and be willing to continue their education in some form. Ordained ministers are authorized to perform all functions of the Christian ministry and religious functions, and must be capable of doing so. Ordained ministers are authorized to perform all religious functions:

1. Conduct religious worship
2. Religious instruction
3. Administer Communion
4. Provide spiritual counseling
5. Ministry administration
6. And other sacerdotal functions including
  1. Conduct baby dedication ceremonies
  2. Perform Baptisms
  3. Perform weddings
  4. Conduct funerals
  5. Visit the sick and shut-in
  6. Minister in prisons

The pastor must be capable, as determined by the Administrative Board, to take charge of a congregation if the Senior Pastor is unable to do so. They qualify for Clergy Tax benefits.

The Senior Pastor in conjunction with the Administrative Board of this ministry shall have ecclesiastical authority to decide who, how or if a person will be licensed by this ministry to hold any of the classes mentioned above (Matt. 16:13-19). Decisions regarding credentialing will be reflected in the historical record of the Administrative Board and a document will be provided to the minister indicating their ministry classification.

### **Grievance Procedure Regarding Church Staff**

If there is a grievance regarding a Staff Member, the first action to be taken is to share the grievance with the Staff Member. If resolution isn't achieved, the aggrieved person can request a meeting with the Sr. Pastor (responsible for direct oversight of the Staff) and the Staff Member. If resolution is still not achieved, the aggrieved may request a meeting with the Church Board and Staff Member. This is in keeping with the pattern described by Jesus in Matthew 18 for resolution among brothers and sisters in the Lord.

In cases deemed appropriate by the Church Board, the grievance may be brought before the congregation as a whole. This would be an extreme measure.

## **Appendix on Doctrine**

The doctrine and theology of Grace on the Hill Community Church is founded upon the Holy Scriptures as found in the Old and New Testament.

Here at Grace on the Hill Community Church we believe:

There is only one true God: Father, Son, and Spirit. All other gods or variations of religious systems are not God.

**- Deuteronomy 10:17**

- All religions do not lead to the one true God. God is not known by different names and worshiped in different ways by other religions.

### **God The Father**

- God exists as Triune Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Three-in-One.
  - Matthew 28:18-20**
  - Matthew 3:13-17**
  - John 15:26**
- God is creator, redeemer, and sustainer of all of His creation.
  - Psalm 104**
  - Nehemiah 9:6**
  - Isaiah 40:28**
  - Colossians 1:15-17**
- As creator, God spoke into existence all that is. All three members of the Trinity were present at the creation event.
  - Genesis 1:1-2**
  - John 1:1-5, 14**
- As creator, God has the authority, power, and right to establish all systems or nature and laws as it pertains to what is good and what is evil.
  - Hebrews 4:13**
- God dwells outside of the bounds of time and space, and therefore is not limited to either.
  - Psalm 139:7-12**
  - Revelation 1:8**
  - 2 Peter 3:8**
- God is all present and all knowing. Just because God is all knowing does not mean that God predestined all things. Foreknowledge is not the same as predetermination.
  - Hebrews 4:13**
  - Psalm 139: 1-18**
  - Isaiah 40:28**
  - Isaiah 46:9-10**
  - 1 Kings 8:39**

- God is sovereign and as such does not rely on anything or require anything from anyone.
  - Daniel 2:21**
  - Job 12:10**
  - Romans 11:33**
  - Psalms 115:3**
- God can be known, yet not fully known. God can be understood, yet not fully understood by his creation.
  - Jeremiah 9:23-24**
  - Jeremiah 29:11-13**
  - Jeremiah 33:3**
  - Romans 11:33-36**
- God is love.
  - 1 John 4:8**
  - 1 John 4:16**
- God is Holy, and thus worthy of our praise.
  - **Revelation 4:8**
  - Revelation 15:4**
  - Exodus 15:11**
  - 1 Samuel 2:2**
  - John 17:11**
  - 1 Timothy 1:17**

### **Jesus The Son**

- Jesus, the second member of the Holy Trinity, is the sole source of salvation. There is no other means of salvation apart from Jesus Christ.
  - John 14:6**
  - Acts 4:12**
- The pre-existent Jesus stepped away from heaven and was born of a virgin according to Scriptures and dwelled amongst his creation. This event is known as the incarnation.
  - **Luke 2:6-7**
  - John 1:1, 14**
- Jesus lived a sinless life performing various miracles, signs, and wonders during his earthly ministry.
  - **2 Corinthians 5:21**
  - Matthew 4:23-24**
- To see Jesus and read of Jesus is to see and know of the Father.
  - **John 14:8**
- When his earthly ministry was complete, prior to his crucifixion, Jesus went to Jerusalem where he was handed over into the hands of the Roman Empire.
  - Matthew 27: 1-2**
- He was rejected by his own, betrayed by his disciples, was sentenced, crucified and died for the sins of humanity.

- **-Matthew 20:17-19**
- On the third day Jesus rose again, conquering death, and the grave.  
**-Luke 24:2-3**
- He was seen by his disciples and many others after His resurrection.  
**- Luke 24:15**
- He ascended back to His rightful place at the right hand of the Father in Heaven.  
**-Matthew 28:16-17**
- Jesus is in Heaven interceding on behalf of his followers when they are accused by Satan.  
**- Romans 8:34**
- One day Jesus will return and call his church home to be with Him.  
**- Hebrews 9:28**  
**-Matthew 24:36**

### ***The Holy Spirit***

- The Holy Spirit, our Paraclete (The Helper), was sent by the Father on Pentecost to empower believers and establish Christ's Church.  
**-Acts 2:1-13**
- Just as the Holy Spirit filled and empowered the disciples and believers on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fills and empowers all believers who ask the Father by faith.  
**-Matthew 3:11**  
**-Luke 11:9-13**
- The Spirit empowers the believer with gifts for the purpose of equipping, training and releasing believers into ministry. When a believer is empowered with the Spirit, spiritual gifts will begin to be released through them, enabling them to minister to the body of Christ.  
**-1 Corinthians (Chapters 12, 13, 14)**  
**-Ephesians 4:11-16**
- The role of the Holy Spirit is to convict people of sin and to remind people as to the teachings of Jesus. The Spirit guides and directs the followers of Jesus, helping them to understand Scripture and grow in their faith.  
**-John 16:12-15**
- The Spirit also endows believers with the Fruit of the Spirit as evidence of the indwelling presence of Jesus in the life of the believer. Their lives become a reflection of the presence, grace, and character of Jesus.  
**-Galatians 5:22-23**
- The Holy Spirit helps believers pray when they don't know how to pray.  
**- Romans 8**

### ***The Bible***

- Scripture is the divine Word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit and given to humanity as a means of inspiration, instruction, correction, guidance, and understanding of God.
  - 2 **Timothy 3:16-17**
  - 2 **Peter 1:21**
- Scripture exists in the form of the 66 books of the Old and New Testament. There are no additional texts to be held with the same authority as the Old and New Testament.
  - Revelation 22:18-19**
- Followers of Jesus are to live by the authoritative standard of Scripture.
- Scripture is a living Word and as such does not cease to be relevant or authoritative over time.
  - Isaiah 40:8**
  - 1 **Peter 1:24-25**
- Any religious teachings or doctrine that are not supported by Scripture or are contradictory to Scripture are unacceptable to the church and are false teachings.
  - **Galatians 5:9-10**
  - 2 **Peter 2:1-2**
- The various translations offered in English are acceptable means of studying Scripture, however, Scripture exists in its purest form in the original languages in which it was written.

## **People**

- All persons are created *Imago Dei*, in the image of God and as such are of utmost value to God and His church.
  - Genesis 1:26-27**
- Life begins at conception; therefore, abortion is not compatible with scripture. Regardless of disability or age, life is a sacred gift of God. Therefore, God alone determines and appoints when a person's life ends.
  - Psalms 139:14-16**
- While every person is created in the image of God, not every person is a child of God. That privilege is reserved for those who place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for salvation.
  - John 1:12**
- Discrimination against anyone with regard to gender, ethnicity, education, socioeconomic status is not acceptable according to the command of Jesus to love one's neighbor as oneself.
  - **Galatians 3:28**
  - Mark 12: 30-31**
- God created male and female. The first male was Adam, and the first female was Eve. They were created by God and instructed to steward over God's creation and to multiply. While Adam was created first in the creation account and Eve second, they both are of equal value in the eyes of God and share equally in the responsibilities and duties assigned by God, yet they are distinctly male and female.

- **- Genesis 2:23-24**
- God created man to be with woman to live in a monogamous covenant of marriage. If a person is not married, they are to live celibately and not engage in physical relations outside of the bond of marriage.
  - **- Hebrews 13:4**
- The practice of homosexuality and cohabitation outside of marriage is not compatible with Scripture or the will of God.
  - **- 1 Corinthians 6:9**
  - **- 1 Corinthians 6:18)**
  - **- Colossians 3:5**
- God does not err; therefore, any attempt to change or modify one's appearance or physical structure to live as the opposite gender is not compatible with Scripture or the will of God. Males are to live as males and females are to live as females.
  - **-1 Corinthians 6: 19-20**
- The ultimate desire of God for humanity is to be in a relationship with each person through the sacrificial act of Jesus Christ and God's offer of salvation. To that end, people are to love God, love their neighbors and serve God in any and every way they can throughout their lives. **-John 3:16-17**
- All persons without regard of their past sins are redeemable by God. There are no persons who are beyond salvation as long as they are living.
  - **- 1 Peter 3:18**
  - **-1 John 2:1-2**

## **Salvation**

- A person is saved by grace through faith alone and not by works. There are no works that are sufficient enough to merit salvation. Therefore, we are totally reliant upon the grace of God for salvation.
  - **-Ephesians 2:8-9**
- All people have sinned and are in need of saving. Salvation is available to anyone and everyone who would receive it through faith in Jesus Christ. No one has sins so great that God can't forgive.
  - **-Romans 3:23**
- The wages of sin is death. As a sinner all people deserve death, but God makes a way for salvation through Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of Jesus was enough to merit salvation for anyone who would receive it.
  - **-1 John 1:9**
- There is no other religion or god that has the power or authority to offer eternal life except Jesus Christ not only as creator, but as redeemer. He paid the price for salvation by dying on the cross and shedding his blood for our sins.
  - **-Acts 4:12**
- Grace as it pertains to salvation.

**Prevenient Grace** – the grace of God available to all persons. It is experienced throughout life up to the moment of justification. It is the working of God in and around a person's life leading him or her to the point of accepting Jesus Christ.

**Justifying Grace** – the grace of God a person experiences the moment he or she makes a commitment to Jesus Christ. In that moment that person is justified and his or her sins are washed away. He or she now stands whole before the Lord, not based on their own merits, but on the merits of Jesus. His or her name is now written in the Lamb's Book of Life and he or she becomes a Child of God.

**Sanctifying Grace** – the grace of God that a person experiences throughout the rest of their lives as they grow in faith and the knowledge of the Lord. It is the grace that allows a person to grow and develop Spiritual Fruit. This is a process that one will undertake throughout the rest of his or her life. It is the pursuit of total holiness whereby a person becomes like Jesus.

- Salvation is not stagnant and is not just about achieving eternal life or getting to heaven. Salvation is a life lived in pursuit of being like Jesus and loving God. It is a relationship with the Holy God that begins on earth and continues throughout all of eternity.
- It is the desire of God that all be saved. However, not all will choose to accept the gift of salvation.

***-Matthew 25:31-46***

***-1 Timothy 2:3-6***

- The gift of salvation can be rejected by the free will of humanity.
- A person can choose to follow Jesus and be saved or reject Jesus and be damned. A person may also choose to follow Jesus and at a later date choose to denounce Jesus and reject him, and in doing so, give up his or her salvation.

***-Hebrews 6:4-6***

***-Hebrews 3:12***

***-2 Peter 3:17***

### ***Heaven and Hell***

- There is life after this life. We were created with an everlasting soul that will go beyond this life on earth.

***-John 14:2***

***-1 Thessalonians 4:16-17***

***-Philippians 3:20-21***

***-2 Corinthians 5:1***

- One day God will reclaim His creation and cast Satan, his demons, and those who rejected His Son into the Lake of Fire where they will spend eternity separated from God and tormented.

***-Revelation 19:20***

***-Revelation 21:6-8***

- Eternity is not optional. All will pass from this life and on into eternity.

**-Matthew 25:31-46**

- There are only two eternal destinations; Heaven or Hell.

**-Revelation 20:11-15**

- Heaven is the dwelling place of God.

**-Isaiah 66:1**

- Jesus promised that he was going on into Heaven to prepare a place for his followers in Heaven so that they may be where he is.

**-John 14:2-3**

- Heaven is a place of eternal bliss and peace where there is no evil or sin. Eventually, Heaven will be the dwelling place of all believers.

**-Revelation 21:3-4**

**-1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

- There will be no end to this eternal reward.

**-Isaiah 26:4**

**-Daniel 4:3**

- Hell is a place of eternal torment and suffering intended for Satan and his demons but will also be the final eternal destination for all who reject God's offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.

**-Revelation 20:14-15**

- Hell is as much a reality as heaven.

**-Luke 16:19-31**

- Those who do not choose to follow God are cast into Hell, not because God did not love them, but because they rejected God and chose evil.

**-Matthew 7:13**

- There will be no end to this eternal punishment.

- Ultimately God will restore His creation to its former intended state. Satan and all evil and sin will be cast away and God will establish a new heaven and a new earth where those who chose to follow God will dwell throughout eternity.

**-Revelation 21:1**

### **Satan or the Devil and Demons**

- Satan is a created being. He was an Arch Angel until, being filled with pride, he rose up against God. He was cast out of Heaven and took 1/3 of the angels with him.

**-Colossians 1:16**

**-2 Corinthians 11:14**

**-Revelation 12:7-9**

**-2 Peter 2:4**

- Satan is not equal to God in any way. His power is limited by God.

**-Job 2:1**

- Satan is not all knowing nor is he everywhere all the time.

- Satan was given the right to reign on the earth after the Fall of Humanity. He is the source of evil and exists in opposition to God and His Church.

**-Job 1:7**

**-John 12:31**

- Satan is a liar and a deceiver whose desire it is to separate people from God. He delights in deception and destruction.  
**-John 8:44**  
**-Matthew 4:3**
- At the end of time, Satan and his army of demons will all be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity.  
**-Revelation 20:10**

## **Church**

- Jesus Christ is the head of His church and as such runs His church under the guidance of the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.  
**-Colossians 1:18**
- The church exists in both the incarnational and institutional forms.
  - The incarnation church consists of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the people of God. It is not limited by location or space, rather it exists wherever the people of God are. It is not limited by denominations or varying theological differences within orthodox Christianity.
  - The institutional church is found in the various locations and denominations in which people gather and associate themselves. The institutional church can also include persons who are not committed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This church is limited by the earthly divisions that exist within the church on earth. It will remain in a constant state of change as history unfolds.  
**-Ephesians 2:21-22**
- The church exists on earth as a visible representation of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the purpose of the church is to properly represent God and live according to God's will and Word.
- The ultimate mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.  
**-Matthew 28:18-20**
- All followers of Jesus Christ are called and gifted for ministry through the Holy Spirit. The church exists as a priesthood of believers. As such all believers are to be connected to a church and actively involved in the church according to his or her gifting.  
**-1 Peter 2:4-5**  
**-Ephesians 4:11-16**
- The church consists of laity and clergy both working together to glorify God, bear fruit of the Kingdom of God, and to advance the Kingdom of God on Earth until the return of Jesus Christ.  
**-1 Peter 4:10**

## **Sacraments**

- The sacraments of baptism and The Lord's Supper are outward and visible signs of the inward grace of God. They are the means by which one may experience the grace of God in tangible ways.
- The sacraments are not the means of salvation. One does not become a born again believer through the administering or receiving of either of the sacraments.
- The sacraments, both Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to be under the authority of an ordained clergy person, or someone commissioned by that ordained clergy person. The laity may assist in the distribution and act of the sacrament with the blessing of the ordained clergy person. All elements must be blessed by an ordained clergy person.
- The sacraments consist of Baptism and the Lord's Supper
  - Baptism
    - Baptism is a means of grace that follows justification. It is the proper response to becoming a follower of Jesus and it is also an obedient act to the command of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20.
      - Luke 3:21-22**
      - Matthew 3:16**
      - Mark 1:4-5**
      - John 1:29-33**
    - Baptism is a sign of acceptance and profession of faith as well as a sign of new birth and regeneration.
      - Colossians 2:12-13**
      - Galatians 3:27**
      - 1 Peter 3:21**
    - While baptism is not a means of salvation, anyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior should seek baptism as it is a command from Jesus.
      - Mark 16:16**
      - John 3:5**
    - Baptism is to be done in the "name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
      - Matthew 28:19**
    - Since Baptism is not a means of salvation and since Jesus did not give specific instructions as to the proper mode or modes of baptism, it shall be acceptable to baptize through sprinkling, pouring, or immersion.
    - As long as a Christian person has been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that baptism is accepted and recognized under the doctrine of Grace on the Hill Community Church.
      - 1 Corinthians 12:13**
      - Ephesians 4:4-6**
    - The baptism of infants shall be acceptable and encouraged.
    - When the infant has matured to the age of making his or her own decision and chooses to accept Jesus as their personal Savior, they can also accept and remember their baptism.

- Parents may present their infants to the congregation in the presence of the Lord for dedication, demonstrating their desire to raise their children in the Christian faith.  
**-Acts 2:38-41**
- Prior to baptism the prospective person or parent/guardian should be asked the following questions:
  - “Do you renounce the devil, and reject the evil powers of this world?”
  - “Do you repent of your sin and turn to Jesus Christ, and confess him as your Lord and Savior?”
  - “Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in both the Old and New Testaments?”
  - “Will you keep the holy will and commandments of God and live accordingly guided by grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit?”
  - “Congregation, will you receive this person into the church and promise to nurture, aid, and assist him or her as they journey through life toward sanctification?”
- The Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion
  - While the elements in Communion do not contain the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, they are representatives of the body and blood of Jesus and should be handled with the utmost respect and dignity.  
**-Matthew 26:26-29**  
**-Mark 14:22-25**  
**-Luke 22:19-20**  
**-John 6:48-51**  
**-1 Corinthians 11:23-26**
  - The church shall practice open communion. Open communion means that anyone who is living in peace with his or her neighbor and seeking to follow the will, word, and ways of Jesus Christ, without regard to membership in the church are welcome to partake of communion.  
**-Acts 2:42,46**
  - Communion is a time of reflection, repentance, remembrance, and renewal for the believer in Jesus.  
**-1 Corinthians 11:27-29**
    - Prior to receiving Holy Communion each person should reflect on his or her spiritual journey allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal to him or her areas of life where he or she has denied God or not lived according to God’s word.  
**-1 Corinthians 11:28**
    - If there are areas during the reflection time where the Holy Spirit has revealed unconfessed sin, repentance is in order. One is to confess the sin, and then to seek the strength to turn away from that sin and live the free life promised by Jesus.  
**-1 Corinthians 11:27**

- As one participates in the service it is good to remember the sacrifice that Jesus paid for the gift of salvation, the sacrifice of his body that was given and the blood that was shed for the forgiveness of our sin.

**-1 Corinthians 11:29**

**-1 Corinthians 10:16-17**

- The receiving of communion is also a time for renewal. Having reflected on who we are as sinners, we repent and remember the love of God for us in spite of our sins. We can be encouraged to grow in our faith and in the love of God. We are refreshed and ready to face life once again under the lordship of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- While there is no specific formula for when communion should be offered, it should be offered often in the life of the church.
- The mode of communion may vary according to the service and needs of the faith community. It is at the discretion of the clergy in charge of the service as to the mode used.
- The elements used in Communion shall be limited to bread either leavened or unleavened and grape juice. The bread and juice shall not be substituted for other items.

## **Creeds**

- The church recognizes the value of the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed as effective and concise statements of the Christian faith.
- The value of the creeds is found in the ability to memorize certain aspects of Christian faith as well as a means of proclaiming those statements as a means of confirmation and hope.
  - Apostles Creed 180 A.D.
  - Nicene Creed 381 A.D.