

# Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

*" Teaching the Truth of the Word of God "*

## Constitution



**SOVEREIGN GRACE  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

# Constitution

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this church shall be The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

## **ARTICLE II: AFFILIATION**

**Section 1:** We acknowledge no ecclesiastical authority other than our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the church (Ephesians 5:23) and who directs the affairs of the church through elders chosen and ordained according to the precepts of Holy Scripture. The elders themselves at all times and in all their activities stand under the authority of Holy Scripture.

**Section 2:** The church may and does cooperate with other like minded churches in matters of mutual interest and concern. We may seek the assistance and counsel of other churches in Matters of special concern to us, but the decision of no other church or group of churches shall at any time be acknowledged as binding on this church.

## **ARTICLE III: PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church is to glorify the God of the Scriptures in promoting his worship, evangelizing sinners, and edifying saints. Therefore, we are committed to the proclamation of God's word and the glorious gospel of his grace throughout the world and to the defense of "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

## **ARTICLE IV: ARTICLES OF FAITH**

We adopt as the fullest expression of our faith the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church Confession of Faith.. The ultimate authority in all matters of faith, order, and morals is and must be the Bible alone. This document is, however, an excellent summary of "the things most surely believed among us", and we find it to be an assistance in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness.

## **ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1: Requirements for membership.** Any person who professes repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, who manifests a life transformed by the power of Christ, who has been baptized upon the profession of his faith or is willing to be baptized, who expresses substantial agreement with the doctrines and aims of this church, and who is willing to submit to its government shall be eligible for membership in it.

**Section 2: Types of membership.** Each member of the church is acknowledged to form a vital part of the body and to have a peculiar function in the life of that body (1 Corinthians 12:14-27), Practical considerations, however, require that certain distinctions be recognized in the membership of this church.

**Paragraph A: Regular members.** All who are received into the membership of the church according to the procedures set forth in Section 3 of this Article, who continue in regular attendance at the stated meetings of the church, and who do not come under the corrective discipline of the church as set forth in Article VI, shall be considered regular members in good standing and entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership in the church.

**Paragraph B: Temporary members.** Persons who come to live in our area for a limited period of time (e.g. college students, military personnel, persons on special work assignments) may be received into the membership of the church on the same basis and in the same manner as persons who have permanent residence in our geographical area. If such a person is already a member of a church in his place of permanent residence, he need not be released from the membership of his "home church" but will be regarded as a temporary member while in our midst, enjoying all the rights and privileges of regular membership. When such a person terminates his period of temporary residence and leaves our area, he will automatically be released to the fellowship of his "home church" and no longer be regarded as a member of this church.

**Paragraph C: Associate members.** Regular members who move away from our area and who cannot find another local church with which they can conscientiously unite will, at their request, be retained as associate members of this church. Such persons must maintain regular communication with the church in order to maintain their associate membership in it. Nevertheless, they are urged to seek diligently a church with which they can unite elsewhere. An associate member shall not be allowed to vote in any business meeting of the church. At the discretion of the elders, associate membership may also be granted to invalids, Christian workers, and others whose relation to the church involves unusual circumstances.

### **Section 3: Procedures in the reception of new members.**

**Paragraph A:** A person who desires to become a member of the church may apply to the elders and request to be interviewed by them. During the interview the

elders will seek to determine whether that person has a creditable profession of faith in Christ, has been baptized, or is willing to be, is in substantial agreement with the doctrines of the church, and intends to give wholehearted support to its ministry and submit to its discipline.

**Paragraph B:** If the applicant is or has been a member of another church, special effort will be made to determine the person's standing in that church and his reasons for leaving. At the discretion of the elders, a letter of inquiry concerning the person's standing may be sent to that church before his acceptance as a member in this church is determined.

**Paragraph C:** If the elders are satisfied that the applicant meets the requirement for membership, they shall announce the same to the congregation at a stated meeting of the church. Time will be allowed for objections or questions to be raised by any member concerning the applicant's manner of life or doctrine. If no objection is raised which the elders consider to be valid, the person will be publicly received into the membership at a stated meeting of the church, usually the next meeting for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The elders may postpone the reception of a person into membership until proper investigation can be made concerning objections which in their judgment are sufficiently serious.

#### **Section 4: Termination of membership.**

**Paragraph A: By Physical death.** When a member of the church is removed from our midst by death, his name shall automatically be removed from the membership roll.

**Paragraph B: By Transfer.** When it is so requested, the elders may grant to a departing member in good standing a letter of transfer to the fellowship of another church. No such letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of this church. The elders may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church which is in their judgment disloyal to "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) or which does not exercise godly care over its members.

**Paragraph C: By Exclusion.** If a member habitually absents himself from the stated meetings of the church without showing just cause, or if due to relocation he ceases to maintain a vital contact with the church, he may be excluded from the membership at the discretion of the elders. Also any member who personally so requests may after due admonition be excluded from the membership. In such cases no congregational approval of the action shall be needed; the elders shall simply announce to the congregation that such a person is no longer a member. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth in Section 3 of this Article will be followed.

**Paragraph D: By Excommunication.** According to the teaching of Holy Scripture a congregation must cut off from its fellowship and visible membership any person who teaches or insists on holding false and heretical doctrine, who blatantly and persistently conducts himself in a manner inconsistent with his Christian profession, or who persists in disturbing the unity or peace of the church (Matthew 18:15 ; 1 Corinthians 5:1). The procedure to be followed in such excommunication is set forth in Section 2 of Article VI of this Constitution.

### **Section 5: Conduct required of members.**

**Paragraph A:** All regular and temporary members are encouraged to attend the stated meetings of the church unless providentially hindered (by illness, accident, unusual working conditions, and other such circumstances). The stated meetings of the church are all the services on the Lord's Day, the midweek prayer service, the business meetings of the congregation, and any special meetings which the elders shall occasionally deem it necessary to call.

**Paragraph B:** The church expects its members to make use of the various other means of grace which are available to them, such as regular daily reading of the bible, regular private and family prayer, and proper reverence for and observance of the Lord's Day.

**Paragraph C:** Since it is clearly taught in Scripture that Christians should support financially the work of the Lord by systematic and proportionate giving

made through the local church (Malachi 3:8-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-9; 2 Corinthians chapters 8-9), all the members of this church are expected to conform to this rule of Scripture. The tithe (10 percent of one's income) is not imposed on the people of God as a tax but is strongly urged upon each member as an expression of worship and the biblical norm for basic giving, to which should be added gifts and offerings according to one's ability and the willingness of his heart (2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Exodus 36:2-7).

**Paragraph D:** The church expects its members to obey the teachings of the Scriptures in respect to family life and government. As the God-appointed head of the family, the husband must rule over the household with gentleness and love but also with wisdom and firmness (Ephesians 5:25; 1 Timothy 3:4-5). The wife must be in subjection to her husband in all things according to the rule of Scripture (Ephesians 5:22-24; 1 Peter 3:1). The husband with the wife must "nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:2), by setting a godly example before them, by instructing them consistently in the scriptures, and by wise and firm discipline, including corporal punishment when it is needed. (Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 29:15; Hebrews 12:7).

**Paragraph E:** Inasmuch as the church is represented in Scripture as a body having many members, each of the members having its particular function and yet having a concern for the health and protection of the whole (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:4, 11-16), this church expects that each of its members will strive for the good of the entire body. The members must actively seek to cultivate acquaintance with one another so that they may be better able to pray for one another; love, comfort, and encourage one another; and help one another materially as necessity may require. They must refrain from speaking ill of one another and must keep in strict confidence all matters of private concern to the church and not discuss them with persons outside of this fellowship.

**Paragraph F:** It is the duty of every Christian individually and as a member of a local church to labor for the extension of the kingdom of God both at home and to the ends of the earth. Therefore, every member of this church is expected

prayerfully to recognize and to seize every opportunity to bear witness to his faith in Christ both by consistent Christian conduct and by the testimony of his lips.

**Paragraph G:** Each member of the church is required to render in his daily life loyal obedience to all the moral precepts established in the Word of God (Romans 8:3-4). If God has not condemned or forbidden a practice in his Word, a Christian is at liberty to participate in it. The exercise of Christian liberty, however, must at all times be governed by an earnest desire to walk in the fear of God and to glorify him in all things (1 Peter 1:17; I Corinthians 10:31), a loving regard for the consciences of weaker brethren (I Corinthians 8:9; Rom 15:1-3) a compassion for the lost (I Corinthians 9:19-22) and zealous regard for the health of one's own soul (Romans 13:14; I Peter 2:16).

**Paragraph H:** All who come into the membership of this church are expected to recognize and submit to the authority of the overseers of the church (1 Corinthians 16:15-16; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17).

## **ARTICLE VI: CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

**Section 1: Formative Discipline.** Every disciple (follower of Christ) must be under his discipline (his instruction and correction), which is administered to each one through the church, according to (I Corinthians 12:12-17) and other passages.

Mutual submission to one another and to the Overseers whom the Lord has set over his church (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5) will result in the sanctification of each member individually and of the whole body of the church collectively. There are occasions, however, when failure in the application of this formative discipline makes the application of corrective discipline necessary.

**Section 2: Corrective Discipline.**

**Paragraph A: General Statement.**



Corrective discipline becomes necessary when heretical doctrine or disorderly or scandalous conduct appears among the members of the church. In all such cases reasonable efforts must be made to resolve difficulty, correct error, and remove offense through counsel and admonition before more drastic steps are taken (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20). The principles given to us in (Matthew 18:15-16) and (1 Corinthians 5:1-13) must be carefully followed in all cases of corrective discipline. When admonition is not heeded, suspension of some of the privileges of membership may need to be imposed, and if this measure fails, excommunication from the membership of the church may be necessary.

**Paragraph B: Suspension.**

(1) Any conduct on the part of a member which disturbs the peace of the church or prejudices its testimony may require that the offending brother or sister be debarred by action of the elders from participating in certain activities of the church according to the gravity of the offense. A suspension shall be announced to the congregation by the elders and shall remain in force until the suspended member gives evidence of true repentance and change of conduct. When a suspended member can be restored to full fellowship, this also shall be announced to the congregation by the elders. While a member is under such discipline, he shall be treated by the congregation according to the directions given in (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15). Although such a person is considered to be walking disorderly, he must still be regarded as a member and not as one cut off from the church.

(2) If a member has sinned publicly but shows hopeful signs of repentance, including submission to the admonition of the elders, it may still be necessary to suspend him for a time from some of the privileges of membership lest reproach be brought upon the church, lest others be emboldened to sin, and lest the offender himself fail to test his own soul and realize the gravity of his offense. Those who humbly submit to the imposed discipline shall afterwards be wholly forgiven and publicly received back into the full fellowship of the church.

(3) In the case where a person is accused or suspected of gross sin and absents himself from the congregation, refusing to meet with the elders that the matter may be investigated, the elders shall announce to the congregation that that person is suspended from the membership, and such suspension shall continue in force as long as the conditions giving rise to it continue.

**Paragraph C: Excommunication.**

(1) Some types of conduct must be categorized as "immoral" (1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 6:9-10), and a member guilty of such conduct must be cut off from the fellowship of the church (1 Corinthians 5:3-5, 13; Matthew 18:17). In such a case the elders shall make earnest efforts to bring the offender to true repentance and reformation, but if these efforts fail they shall report the same to the congregation at a regular or specially called business meeting of the church and recommend that the offender be excommunicated--which must be done, according to Scripture (Matthew 18:17;

(1 Corinthians 5:4), by action of the entire church. To be valid, an act of excommunication must have the approval of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting.

(2) Likewise, some wrong opinions regarding the doctrines of Scripture are so serious that they must be categorized as "heretical" (Galatians 1:6-9; I Timothy 4:1), and a member who persists in propagating or holding any such opinion, in spite of earnest and patient admonition by the elders, shall be excommunicated in the same manner as an immoral person.

**ARTICLE VII BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

**Section 1: General Statement.** There are two ordinances of special significance which our Lord has commanded us to observe, namely, Baptism and the Lord's supper. (these are sometimes referred to as "sacraments".) Neither of them has saving merit, nor is any grace imparted to the recipient through the water of

Baptism or the bread and the cup of the Supper. These ordinances are not a means of saving grace.

**Section 2: Baptism.** Only confessed disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ are proper candidates for Baptism, and all such persons should be baptized (Acts 2:38). Believing that Baptism is the God-ordained door of entrance into the visible community of the people of God, we shall receive into the membership of the church only those who have been baptized or who are willing to be baptized in the biblical manner which is by immersion and "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

**Section 3: The Lords' Supper.** Whereas Baptism is the initiatory ordinance by which one enters the visible church and should be observed only once by each believer, the Lord's supper should be celebrated frequently by the assembled church (1 Corinthians 11:26). While this is a most holy ordinance and should be observed with solemnity and dignity, the bread and the cup of the Supper are and remain only symbols of the broken body and the shed Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper shall, under normal circumstances, be celebrated by the church on the first Lord's Day of each month.

## **ARTICLE VIII: OFFICE-BEARERS**

**Section 1: General Statement.** Jesus Christ alone is Head of the church (Colossians 1:18)<sup>1</sup> and he governs his church through office-bearers whom he appoints and who are endowed by his Spirit with the gifts and graces needed to accomplish their work. Office-bearers in the church are of two kinds, elders (also called "bishops") and deacons (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13). It is the duty of the church to seek and discover among its members those to whom Christ the Lord has imparted the necessary gifts for office-bearing, and after formally recognizing them by common suffrage, to set them apart by united prayer, and then to submit to their authority.

## **Section 2: Elders.**

Paragraph A. Whereas in new or small congregations only one man may have the gifts requisite to his being recognized as an elder, the Scriptures appear to indicate that normally there should be a plurality of elders in the local church (Acts 15:6; Philippians 1:1). These are also called "bishops" (meaning "overseers") because they are charged with the oversight of the assembly (Acts 20:9-8; I Peter 5:2). They are the "pastors and teachers" given to the church "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body pf Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).

**Paragraph B:** In view of the fact that the responsibilities of this office are numerous and grave, it is highly desirable that at least one elder should devote his full time to the work of the ministry and the oversight of the church. Such elders are usually referred to as "pastors", not to the exclusion of the others, for they all share the pastoral responsibility, but because they "labor in the word and in teaching" (1 Timothy 5:17). The church is responsible to give adequate financial support to such men (1 Corinthians 9:9-11; 1 Timothy 5:17-18). Any man thus called to this office must be able conscientiously to affirm his agreement with the Articles of Faith and the Constitution of the church. Should he at any time move from this position, he is under spiritual an moral obligation to make this fact known to the church.

**Paragraph C:** Elders are responsible for the spiritual ministrations of the church, the implementation of discipline, and the oversight of the souls of the church's members "as they that shall give account" to God (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:2-3). While every elder should be "apt to teach", some will be more engaged in formal and public teaching, while others will be more engaged in 'Pastoring' (that is, private teaching and admonishing) and governing. Gifted men who are not recognized as elders may engage in public preaching and teaching, provided they are godly in character and walk, but the exercise of their gift must be under the direction and control of the elders.

**Paragraph D:** While elders are overseers of the flock, they are themselves members of the flock. Therefore, each elder as an individual is under the oversight of his fellow elders and is subject to the same discipline as are all the members of the church.

**Paragraph E:** The church should endeavor to discover and then formally to recognize all the men whom the Holy Spirit has endowed with the requisite gifts and graces and has set over the church, but only such men. Thus when men have been ordained to this office, the church will have the confidence that it has recognized the overseers whom the Holy Spirit has set over it (Acts 20:28). It is evident, therefore, that neither the number of elders nor the length of their term of office can be fixed by the church.

**Paragraph F:** The qualifications for a man chosen to fill the office of elder are clearly set forth in Scripture, particularly in (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

**Paragraph G:** The pastors/elders have the authority to perform marriage ceremonies which are based on the guidelines written in the Word of God and stated in the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church Confession of Faith.

The pastor/elder will meet with the couple seeking to be married in order to determine if there are any reasons that would prohibit them being married by the pastors/elders of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church. The decision will be based on Scripture as set forth in The Confession of Faith.

All the pastors/elders of this Church must be able to conscientiously affirm his agreement with the Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the church. Therefore they are prohibited from performing any marriage that is contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture and The Confession of Faith, (See Constitution Article VIII Section B)

The couples seeking to be married must consent to and sign The Statement of Marriage, Gender and Sexuality prior to the marriage ceremony. A signed copy will be kept on file of the church.

### **Section 3: Deacons.**

**Paragraph A:** Deacons are responsible to administer the ordinary business of the church so that the elders may devote themselves without distraction to the more spiritual matters (Acts 6:3-4). They must fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with and subjection to the elders.

**Paragraph B:** The number of deacons shall not be fixed. The church shall choose as many as are needed for the work to be done from among the men who give evidence of having the scriptural qualifications for that office (Acts 6:3).

**Paragraph C:** The qualifications for a man chosen to fulfill the office of deacon are particularly set forth in (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

### **Section 4: Appointment of office-bearers.**

**Paragraph A:** The local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is responsible to appoint men to the offices of elder and deacon. Each individual involved should have an inward conviction that the Lord is calling him to the particular office, and the church should recognize that call as it observes in the individual evidence of the gifts and graces which Scripture requires for the particular office. This is a matter of such gravity that it should be accompanied by much prayerful waiting on God for guidance, a careful perusal of the relevant passages of Scripture, and a dispassionate evaluation of each man nominated to a particular office.

These activities are the responsibility of each individual member of the church as well as of the church as a whole.

#### **Paragraph B: Nominations.**

(1) Nominations to the offices of elder and deacon shall be made by the congregation by submitting the names to the elders. After earnest prayer and careful consideration of all the potential office-bearers, the elders shall place in nomination as many or as few men as it sees fit.

(2) The elders alone may at any time during the year nominate a candidate or candidates to either or both offices and call a special congregational business meeting for their consideration. In no case may a man be nominated to either office without his knowledge and prior consent.

**Paragraph C:** When the time comes to consider a nomination during a business meeting of the church, the candidate for office and any members of his immediate family who are present shall be requested to leave the room while his qualifications are openly discussed by the entire congregation in the fear of God and the light of Scripture. After that a written ballot shall be taken. It is hoped that the vote of the congregation will in such matters always be unanimous, but if unanimity is not realized, no less than a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting shall be required for the election of an office-bearer.

**Paragraph D:** Following the recognition of an office-bearer by vote of the congregation, he shall be publicly installed in his office at a regular worship service by the prayer of the whole church and the laying on of the hands of the existing elders.

**Paragraph E:** Office-bearers are subject to the same rules of discipline as are other members of the church. They shall hold office as long as they are faithful to their calling and have the confidence of the congregation. An officer may, however, resign his office without prejudice if for good and valid reasons he finds he is no longer able to discharge the duties of it.

**Paragraph F:** The elders shall choose one of their number to be their chairman, and the deacons shall choose one of their number to be their chairman. These men shall be known as "chairman of the board of elders" and "chairman of the board of deacons" respectively.

## **ARTICLE IX: TRUSTEES**

**Section 1:** In order to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" this church was incorporated as "The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church", under the laws of the State of New Jersey. Our certificate of Incorporation requires that trustees be elected by the church to represent the church in all its relations with the civil government.

**Section 2:** The board of trustees shall consist of four members, who shall be elected by the corporation (the church) at each annual congregational meeting for a term of three years. Each member so elected shall hold office until his successor shall be elected and qualified. A trustee may be elected to succeed himself. Trustees may be elected from the office-bearers or from the congregation at large.

**Section 3:** The trustees shall perform such legal and business transactions as are peculiarly designated to them by the laws of the State of New Jersey. In the discharge of their duties, they shall act only at the direction of the office-bearers of the church.

## **ARTICLE X: CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**Section 1: General Statement.** There shall be an annual business meeting of the church for the hearing of reports, the election of officers, and the transaction of such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. Special business meetings may be called at other times at the discretion of the elders.

**Section 2: Notice of meetings.**

**Paragraph A:** Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at regular worship services on two successive Lord's Days immediately prior to the meetings. However, in the case of an emergency, a meeting may be called on shorter notice by notifying each regular member of the time, place and purpose of the meeting.



**Paragraph B:** Meetings for the hearing of special reports or for seeking the counsel of the congregation may be called on shorter notice, but no vote may be taken or other business transacted at such meetings.

**Section 3: Quorum.** The regular members present at any properly convened congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 4: Chairmanship.** The chairman of the board of elders shall preside at all business meetings. In the case of his absence or inability to serve, the elders shall appoint another of their number to preside.

**Section 5: Voting.**

**Paragraph A:** All regular members who have reached the age of eighteen years and are in good standing in the church may vote on any question properly brought before the congregation.

**Paragraph B:** Unanimity of heart and mind under God shall at all times be sought and prayed for (Acts 6:5), but when unanimity is not realized, not less than a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required to make a resolution valid.

## **ARTICLE XI: BYLAWS**

The elders shall draft and amend from time to time, with the advice and consent of the deacons, such by-laws as they shall deem necessary for the efficient implementation of this Constitution; but no by-law which is in violation of any of the terms of this constitution shall be valid.

## **ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1:** This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at a duly convened business meeting of the congregation.

**Section 2:** No proposed amendment may be voted on which has not been distributed to the congregation in written form at least two weeks prior to such a meeting.

## **Additions to the Constitution**

1. The pastors/elders have the authority to perform marriage ceremonies which are based on the guidelines written in the Word of God and stated in the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church Confession of Faith.
2. The pastor/elder will meet with the couple seeking to be married in order to determine if there are any reasons that would prohibit them being married by the pastors/elders of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church. The decision will be based on Scripture as set forth in The Confession of Faith.
3. All the pastors/elders of this Church must be able to conscientiously affirm his agreement with the Articles of Faith and the Constitution of the church. Therefore they are prohibited from performing any marriage that is contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture and The Confession of Faith. (See Constitution Article VIII Section B)
4. The couples seeking to be married must consent to and sign The Statement of Marriage, Gender and Sexuality prior to the marriage ceremony. A signed copy will be kept on file of the church.

## **Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4.)

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model for Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.)

Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church.