

**BYLAWS**  
**GRAND MESA SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH (GMSBC)**

Cedaredge, Colorado  
Established May 27, 1979  
Revised April 15, 2018 May 17, 2020

*Handwritten initials: JES, DM*

**ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP**

**Preamble** - Recognizing that personal relationships are a vital aspect of church life, members agree to work towards fulfilling the Church Covenant as found in the Constitution, Article V.

**Section A. Admission to Membership**

1. Any person, regardless of gender, race, or national origin who has expressed interest may become a candidate for church membership by one of the following methods:
  - (a) Upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and after baptism by immersion.
  - (b) By letter of transfer (or recommendation) from another church with compatible beliefs and practices.
  - (c) By statement of faith, if previously baptized by immersion.
2. All candidates for church membership must attend a new member's class, complete an application as defined in the Operations Manual, and meet with the elders for a membership interview.
3. After meeting these requirements, the elders may recommend the person for membership at a family or business meeting for a vote of affirmation.

**Section B. Transfer of Membership** - A letter received from another church requesting the transfer of membership from GMSBC to their church will be granted based on the recommendation and approval by the elders and will be reported to the congregation at the next family or business meeting.

**Section C. Membership Requirement** - All church officers, ministry staff, elders, deacons, and their spouses, shall be members of GMSBC.

## **Section D. Termination of Membership**

- 1. Request** - A written request from a member asking to have their name removed from the membership records will be granted by the Elder Leadership Team and reported to the church at the next family or business meeting.
- 2. Death** - The name of a deceased person shall be removed from the church membership records.
- 3. Inactivity** - The membership records will be reviewed by the Elder Leadership Team annually. Members who have not participated in any church activities or meetings for the past year and have not communicated with the church during that time will be contacted by an elder. Active participation and church membership will be discussed. The elders may remove individuals from membership based on inactivity.
- 4. Surrender of Privilege** - Any member who has been removed from the church membership records for any reason surrenders all ministry positions and all rights of any interest in the business of the church.

## **Section E. Church Discipline**

- 1.** The goal of church discipline is repentance, restoration, and the maturing in faith and obedience of both the individual disciplined and the congregation. If any member is found to be living or teaching contrary to the Word of God, the Statement of Faith, or the Church Covenants, they will be counseled in love by the elders who will diligently put into practice the principles in scripture to restore the member(s) to peace and harmony. *Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 2:5-11 and 7:5-12; Titus 3:10-11*
- 2.** If the elders determine the person is not repentant, the elders will recommend the non-repentant individual be removed from membership upon a vote of the church membership.
- 3.** Any person who has been dismissed from church membership may be restored to full membership upon evidence of that person's repentance and upon the recommendation of the elders and an affirmative vote of the church at a family or business meeting. *II Corinthians 2:5-11*

## ARTICLE II. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

**Preamble** - A combination of elder leadership, deacon support, and congregational involvement will be practiced to discern and implement God's leadership in the church as described below and displayed in Graphic #1.

### Section A. Elder Leadership Team

#### 1. Elders

**(a)** The elders are a group of men who work together as a team to discern God's strategic direction for the church with the goal of leading the members of the church to spiritual maturity and effective ministry while at the same time protecting and caring for the church body. *Acts 20:28-32; Colossians 1:28*

**(b)** Because spiritual discernment is key to their role, the elders will be men who are committed to the disciplines of prayer, study of scripture, mutual accountability, and other spiritual disciplines as outlined in scripture. *Acts 6:1-4*

**(c)** The elder's primary methods of leadership and communicating God's direction for the church will be through teaching, modeling, and guiding the church in its activities. *Ephesians 4*

**(d)** When necessary to protect the doctrinal integrity of the church, the spiritual direction of its ministries, or the relational nature of the body, the elders have the authority to remove an individual from a ministry position within the church. *1 Corinthians 5; 2 Timothy 4:14; 3 John 1:9*

**(e)** The elders are the authoritative interpreter of scripture for this local church and are responsible for correcting practices and teachings within the body that contradict their understandings of scriptural truths. *Acts 20:17; 28-31; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Galatians 1:6-10*. Individual members are responsible for their own study and interpretation of scripture as it applies to their personal lives. *1 Thessalonians 5:21-22*

**(f)** The elders are responsible for the work of the Pastoral Ministry Teams which would include the following tasks:

- i. Meeting with and addressing the spiritual needs of individuals and families.

- ii. Coordinating, directing, and implementing church worship including music, ordinances, and preaching.
- iii. Coordinating and overseeing all Christian education including Sunday school and other church-recognized study groups.
- iv. Recommending individuals for church membership.
- v. Supporting and coordinating the work of Southern Baptist convention entities at the local, state, and national level.
- vi. Administering the affairs of the church, overseeing the church clerk and staff, and serving as the church moderator at business meetings.
- vii. Coordinating evangelistic outreach ministries.
- viii. Additional tasks and duties may be found in the Operations Manual.

**(g)** The elders are responsible for overseeing the work of the deacons and support ministries.

**(h)** The elders are responsible for reporting to the congregation at quarterly family meetings or more frequently as necessary.

## **2. Pastor**

**(a)** The Pastor is an elder who has the same qualifications as the other elders, and who serves in mutual submission and accountability to the elders.

**(b)** The pastor, an elder, serves as the elder team leader giving guidance to the team as it fulfills its leadership functions.

**(c)** The pastor will be selected following the process outlined in Article IV, Employees and Staff.

**(d)** As an employee, the pastor will have a more prominent role in leading the church in weekly services and in public activities within the community.

## **3. Qualifications**

**(a)** Elders are to be men of good reputation in their community and who otherwise meet the qualifications found in *1 Timothy 3:2-7*. Further clarification is provided in Appendix A.

**(b)** Men must aspire to the job of overseer for it is an arduous task. *1 Timothy 3:1*

**(c)** Elders must be men who willingly seek out and respond to the leading of the Lord through the Holy Spirit and are:

- i. Willing to submit themselves to other elders in mutual respect.
- ii. Consider others more important than themselves.
- iii. Work well with and seek consensus–derived solutions as a team member with other elders. *Philippians 2:1-4*

#### **4. Selection and Appointment**

**(a)** Elder candidates will be identified in one or more of the following ways:

- i. An individual may make it known to the elders that he aspires to serve in a leadership role as an elder.
- ii. The elders may recognize an individual within the congregation as having elder leadership qualities.
- iii. A member of the congregation may bring an elder candidate to the attention of the elders at one of the regular elder meetings.

**(b)** Elder candidates will enter a time of preparation (as described in the Operations Manual) by participating with the existing elders in Bible study, prayer, and training appropriate for the elder ministry.

**(c)** At the discretion of the elders, elder candidates will be presented to the congregation as follows:

- i. A worship service will be held where the candidate will share his testimony and sense of calling.
- ii. A special called business meeting will be held where the candidate is presented to the church for a vote of affirmation as described in Article III, Business Practices.
- iii. A worship service will be held where the candidate who has been presented by the elders and approved by the congregation will be installed as an elder of GMSBC.

#### **5. Evaluation and Reaffirmation**

**(a)** Elders (including the pastor) who have served three years will be evaluated for continuing service. It is also a time of personal re-evaluation of their role as an elder. The remaining elders will convene to make an evaluation to consider both the spiritual and physical aspects for continued service. This evaluation will incorporate input from the congregation.

**(b)** At the end of this reevaluation period, the elder may be re-affirmed as an elder if the following conditions are met:

- i. The individual affirms to the other elders and the congregation a sense of God leading them to continue in their role as an elder.
- ii. The elders unanimously vote to recommend them to the congregation for reappointment.
- iii. The congregation votes to reappoint them in accordance with Article III, Section B, 3.

## **6. Termination of Service**

**(a)** An elder, including the pastor, may be removed from service in one of the following ways:

- i. An elder may voluntarily step down from service by submitting a letter of resignation to the elders.
- ii. Termination of church membership for whatever reason, as per Article I, Section D and/or E, will result in termination of service as an elder.
- iii. The elders may remove another elder from service if they have determined that there is sufficient moral cause as indicated by the elder significantly falling short of the spirit of the qualifications for elders listed in Appendix A. The decision to remove an elder from service requires a unanimous vote of the remaining elders.
- iv. Regardless of cause, *Matthew 18* and *1 Timothy 5:19-20* provide scriptural guidelines for this process.

**(b)** The congregation will be informed of any termination of service in a timely manner and in a way deemed appropriate to the circumstances.

## **Section B. Support Ministry Team - Deacons**

### **1. Purpose and Role**

**(a)** Deacons are servants of the church made up of men and women who, working together as a team, provide the leadership necessary to plan and implement the support ministry activities of the church and encourage the members of the body to actively participate in these ministries.

**(b).** The pastor, or an elder selected by the pastor, will serve as the chairperson of the Support Ministry Team whose roles are:

- i. Schedule and facilitate deacon meetings.
- ii. Promote teamwork among the deacons.
- iii. Facilitate coordination among the support ministry functions.
- iv. Serve as the liaison to the Elder Leadership Team.

**(c)** The elder-chairperson will not assume responsibility for any support functions.

**(d)** Each support function will have one individual deacon responsible for that function; however one deacon may be responsible for more than one function. As a minimum, the following support functions are deemed necessary:

- i. Addressing the physical support needs of individuals and families in the church.
- ii. Managing the financial aspects of the church including preparing and managing the annual church budget.
- iii. Caring for the church buildings, grounds, equipment, and vehicles, and managing church security and personal safety.
- iv. Coordinating and managing all aspects of facility use and fellowship gatherings including funerals, weddings, special events, and non-church community use of the facilities. This includes food service, decorations, and facility scheduling.
- v. Addressing local community ministry needs such as a church benevolence fund, food banks, and shelters.
- vi. Other support functions can be organized and disbanded as needed as further defined in the Operations Manual.

**(e)** The Support Ministry Team shall meet as needed to assure coordinated, effective, and efficient efforts among their functional areas.

**(f)** Deacons are accountable to the elders and report, as appropriate, to the congregation at family and business meetings in accordance with Article III, Section B.

## **2. Qualifications**

**(a)** Deacons are to have a good reputation and meet the qualifications found in *1 Timothy 3:8-13* and Appendix A.

**(b)** Deacons must be individuals who willingly seek out and respond to the leading of the Lord through the Holy Spirit and are:

- i. Willing to submit themselves to other deacons in mutual respect.
- ii. Consider others more important than themselves.
- iii. Work well with and seek consensus–derived solutions as a team member with other deacons. *Philippians 2:1-4*

## **3. Selection and Appointment**

**(a)** At a family or business meeting the elders will inform the congregation of the need for deacon(s) and present the process whereby nominations will be received.

**(b)** Upon receipt of nominations, the elders will interview candidates to affirm their interest and qualifications.

**(c)** In consultation with the existing Support Team Ministry deacons, the candidate(s) will be selected for presentation to the church members at a business meeting for approval in accordance with Article III, Section B, 3.

**4. Evaluation and Reaffirmation** - Upon evaluation and recommendation by the elders, deacons will be reaffirmed every three years by congregational vote at an annual business meeting.

## **5. Termination of Service**

**(a)** A deacon may be removed from service in one of the following ways:

- i. A deacon may submit a letter of resignation to either the elder-chair of the Support Ministry Team or the pastor.
- ii. Termination of church membership for whatever reason, as per Article I, Sections D and/or E will result in the termination of service as a deacon.
- iii. The elders may remove a deacon from service if they have determined that there is sufficient moral cause as indicated by the deacon significantly falling short of the spirit of the qualifications for deacons in accordance



with Appendix A. The decision to remove a deacon from service requires a unanimous vote of the elders.

iv. Regardless of cause, *Matthew 18* and *1 Timothy 5:19-20* provide scriptural guidelines for this process.

(b) The congregation will be informed of any termination of service in a timely manner and in a way deemed appropriate to the circumstances.

### **ARTICLE III. BUSINESS PRACTICES**

#### **Section A. Fellowship Status**

##### **1. Members**

(a) Individuals who have been admitted to membership through the process described in Article 1 and who are 16 years of age or older are eligible to vote at family and business meetings.

(b) Members must be present at meetings to vote.

(c) Those individuals whose membership is under review based on one of the conditions outlined in Article 1 will not be eligible to vote until issues are resolved and membership status is affirmed by the elders.

**2. Others** - Those who have been participating in the life of the church without official membership status are welcome to attend and join in discussions at family meetings but are not eligible to vote.

#### **Section B. Meetings**

**1. Elder and Deacon Meetings** - Elder and deacon meetings will be held regularly as defined in the Operations Manual. A portion of each meeting is open to the congregation.

##### **2. Family Meetings**

##### **(a) Purposes**

i. Hear reports from the elders and support ministry teams with regard to the current status of ministries.

ii. Participate in discussions concerning upcoming ministry projects and events.

- iii. Vote to affirm new members.

**(b) Frequency**

- i. Family meetings will be scheduled three times a year during the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> calendar quarters (January, April, July).
- ii. Additional family meetings may be called by the elders with a minimum of two weeks' notice in the weekly bulletin.

**(c)** Voting at family meetings will be limited to affirming new members.

**(d)** The pastor or one of the elders he appoints will serve as moderator at family meetings. The moderator will conduct family meetings in an appropriate manner.

**3. Business Meetings**

**(a)** The purpose of business meetings will be for church members to vote to approve the following:

- i. Pastor.
- ii. Other paid pastoral ministry positions. (music/youth minister, etc.).
- iii. Elders and deacons.
- iv. The following officers:
  - a. Trustees: Serve as advisors and official representatives for legal and political matters, as authorized by the congregation of GMSBC and further defined in the Operations Manual.
  - b. Clerk: Maintains the official business records of the church including minutes of business meetings.
  - c. Treasurer: Maintains official financial records of the church.
  - d. Messengers: Individuals who represent GMSBC at local, regional, and national Southern Baptist General Convention meetings.
- v. The annual budget prepared by the Finance Deacon in consultation with the other deacons and the elders.
- vi. Exceeding the annual budget beyond 5%, incurring indebtedness, and purchasing or selling real property.
- vii. Significant changes that affect the ministries of the church.

Term lengths and job descriptions of officers are described in the Operations Manual.

**(b) Process for presenting officer candidates**

- i. Elders will nominate the church clerk based on congregational input.
- ii. Deacons will nominate the trustees and treasurer based on congregational input.

**(c) Frequency**

- i. The annual business meeting of the church will be held during the 4<sup>th</sup> calendar quarter (October).
- ii. Special Business meetings may be called by the elders with one-month advance notice given in the weekly bulletin.

**(d) Quorums and Conditions**

- i. A quorum of 25% of members will be required to approve officers and the annual budget.
- ii. A quorum of 40% of members will be required to approve pastors, elders and deacons, incur indebtedness, exceed the budget by greater than 5%, purchase or sell real property, or amend the Constitution or Bylaws.
- iii. A vote of at least 75% of members present will be required to approve business. Ninety percent (90%) is required for approval of calling / hiring pastors and other paid ministerial staff in accordance with Article IV, Section B, 3.
- iv. All voting at business meetings *will be conducted in a manner as determined by that meeting's moderator.* (Rev. 5/17/2020)

**(e) Moderator** - The pastor or one of the elders he appoints will serve as moderator at business meetings. The moderator will conduct business meetings in an orderly manner.

**Section C. Operations Manual** – An operations manual is a living document which has the purpose of defining how the ministries of the church will be organized and conducted. The Operations Manual will be prepared and updated as needed by the Support (deacons) and Pastoral ministry teams. Each of these teams will be responsible for creating and updating their portion of the Operations Manual. The Chairperson of the

Support Ministry Team will coordinate the preparation and updating of this document. The Operations Manual will be made available in the church office and online for church member comment and input at any time.

#### **Section D. Other Church Business**

1. Elders, deacons, and support ministry teams are approved by the church to conduct business on behalf of the church in between formal business meetings in keeping with their ministry assignments and within their approved budget(s).
2. The authority to sign checks and expend church funds is limited to the trustees and treasurer.
3. Unforeseen emergencies requiring immediate action will be dealt with as appropriate and followed-up with the church leadership for budget reconciliation.

### **Article IV. EMPLOYEES AND STAFF**

**Section A. Ministry Purpose of Employees and Staff** - Employees and staff will be hired as needed to further advance the ministry purposes of the church. Administrative and support employees need not be members of GMSBC, but they must agree to work within the confines of GMSBC's beliefs and practices as described in the Constitution and Bylaws. Job interviews, candidate selection, job descriptions, supervision, and terms of dismissal will be governed by GMSBC's doctrines and procedures as documented in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Operations Manual.

#### **Section B. Pastor and Other Paid Ministerial Staff**

1. **Selection** - When a pastoral vacancy occurs a search committee will be formed made up of the elders, two deacons, and two members-at-large selected by the elders with congregational input. An elder will serve as the committee chair.
2. **Process** - The search committee will:
  - (a) Develop a search process which includes advice from the Colorado Baptist General Convention.

(b) Call a special family meeting to solicit input and inform the congregation of the process. Follow-up family meetings will be called, as appropriate, to keep the congregation informed of the search committee's efforts.

(c) Conduct the search in accordance with the developed process.

**3. Approval** - Having given at least one month advance notice to the congregation, including weekly postings in the church bulletin, the committee will present pastoral candidate(s) to the church for approval. At least 90% of the necessary quorum of members present in accordance with Article III, Section B, 3, (d), iii will be required for approval to call / hire a pastor or other paid ministerial staff.

### **Section C. Administrative Staff (i.e. Office Staff)**

**1. Hiring and Supervision** - Administrative staff will be hired and supervised by the pastor in consultation with the elders.

#### **2. Job Descriptions and Salaries**

(a) Job descriptions will be prepared by the Elder Leadership Team for each position and will be documented in the Operations Manual.

(b) Salaries and benefit packages will be determined in consultation with the Finance Deacon as a part of the annual budget.

### **Section D. Support Staff (i.e. Maintenance Staff)**

**1. Hiring and Supervision** - Each employee will be hired and supervised by the appropriate deacon for that support ministry in accordance with Article II, Section B.

#### **2. Job Descriptions and Salaries**

(a) Job descriptions will be prepared by the appropriate deacon for each position and will be documented in the Operations Manual.

(b) Salaries and benefit packages will be determined in consultation with the Finance Deacon as part of the annual budget.

## **ARTICLE V. LICENSING AND ORDINATION**

**Section A** - In the event a member of this church shall indicate a call to preach the Christian Gospel and shall in the judgment of the church display evidence of such a call, the church may, upon recommendation of the elders, license him to preach.

**Section B** - This church shall have the power to ordain to the gospel ministry any candidate who shall indicate such a call. After due examination of Christian faith and experience by the elders and upon their recommendation, the church may proceed to vote with ordination. The leadership of churches of like faith and order with which this church cooperates may be invited to assist.

## **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

**Section A** - These Bylaws shall supersede any previously adopted Bylaws.

**Section B** - These Bylaws may be amended at a Church Business Meeting as described in Article III, Section B, Item 3, (d) ii.

**These amended bylaws were approved at a business meeting of the congregation of Grand Mesa Southern Baptist Church on Sunday, April 15, 2018.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ron Perry - Deacon**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dean Plotner - Deacon**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ed Reese - Deacon**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Bill Wells - Deacon**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dennis Scroggins - Elder/Pastor**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## **APPENDIX A. ELDER AND DEACON QUALIFICATIONS**

*I Timothy 3 and Titus 1*

### **Section A. Elders**

1. Limited to men.
2. Able to teach (communicating sensitively and in a non-threatening and non-defensive manner)
3. Above reproach (a person with a good reputation)
4. Husband of one wife - a one-woman man (maintaining moral purity as a pattern of life; divorce does not automatically disqualify a person from serving)
5. Temperate (exemplifying balance in words and action)
6. Prudent (being wise and humble)
7. Respectable (serving as a good role model)
8. Hospitable (demonstrating unselfishness and generosity)
9. Not given to wine (not being addicted to substances)
10. Not self-willed (not being a self-centered and controlling personality)
11. Not quick-tempered (void of anger that becomes sinful)
12. Not pugnacious (not an abusive person)
13. Un-contentious (non-argumentative and non-abusive)
14. Gentle (a gentle, sensitive, and kind person)
15. Free from the love of money (non-materialistic)
16. One who manages his own household well (a good husband and father)
17. A good reputation with those outside of the church. (A good testimony to non-believers)
18. Love what is good (pursuing godly activities)
19. Just (wise, discerning, non-prejudiced, and fair)
20. Devout (holy and righteous)
21. Not a new convert. (not a new Christian)

### **Section B. Deacons**

1. Same as above except for items 1 and 2 (deacons can be male or female and are not required to be teachers).
2. Men and women must maintain moral purity.

Graphic #1  
Grand Mesa Southern Baptist Church  
Cedaredge, Colorado

