

Church Operating Model

SAMPLE

Needs tweaking especially for the local community on page 2.

Contact Mark for source document if needed.

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Amended:

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This Operating Model is a *living, breathing* document that presents our current thinking on how we want to operate as a church.

It is the responsibility of the lead pastor to maintain this document and to propose major changes to the Board of Elders for their advice and consent. Nothing in it may contradict the church *Constitution and Bylaws* or the Board of Elders' *Guiding Principles* document.

Section I – Philosophy of Ministry

Philosophy of Ministry. This is not our doctrinal statement, which is a part of our Constitution. Rather, it is an application of our stated doctrine as it relates to how we do ministry. Specifically, it answers these questions:

- *Why has God situated this group of people at the corner of Berkley and Eggleston at this time in history?*
- *What is it that God has uniquely called us to do that no one else can do as effectively?*

▼ Cultural & Community Realities

1. What are the realities of the culture and communities of which we are a part?

How does this influence how we implement ministry here?

- We live in the greatest nation on earth. Americans generally are self-sufficient and desire to live the American dream. We praise the maverick or self-made man.
 - To invite Americans to deny themselves and follow Christ as Lord can be a hard sell. We recognize the inherent difficulty we face in local evangelism, but we are not intimidated by the challenge. Rather we rely on God to soften hearts.
- Illinois is not generally considered part of the traditional *Bible Belt* of the southern states. Yet we are typically known to hold more Midwestern values than people of the East and West coasts. Our neighbors may generally hold traditional values similar to ours, though their religion is less likely to be conservative Protestant—in fact, forty-percent of our neighbors identify as Roman Catholic.
 - We need to expect and be welcoming to visitors of other faiths, and not expect them to be as biblically-literate as most of us are, or understand the basics of the gospel.
- DuPage County is the 23rd-most wealthy county in the US (by median household income). Many of our neighbors are financially well off. The Bible tells us that this often causes people to trust in their riches and not feel a need for God.
 - We, ourselves, need to make sure that we have a biblical attitude toward money and success.
- The greater Elmhurst area is a mix of white- and blue-collar communities in which the traditional family structure predominates. Family, community, education, and often faith, are key values of its citizenry.
 - We can use our common interests and values to build relationships with our neighbors.
- Three large, impressive institutions in Elmhurst profess to be in the business of knowledge or truth: the College, the Library, and the High School.
 - We need to seek opportunities to capitalize on these resources and make contact with seekers who are looking for truth.

▼ Truth in a Postmodern Age

2. Many around us are discarding the ideas of absolute truth or morality.

How does this influence how we do ministry? How can we defend and communicate God's truth more effectively?

- While we believe in absolute truth we recognize that an increasing percentage of our neighbors do not. In an age of tolerance, many hold that all spiritual values are merely subjective, have no basis in objective truth, and no particular religion has a "corner on the truth." They believe that any religion is as good as another, as long as you are sincere. It is considered a breach of etiquette to try to impose your faith on another.
 - Before we "preach the word" to them, we may have to defend it to them first. And many of our younger neighbors may have no knowledge of the Bible at all. We may have to introduce it to them and explain why we believe it.
- Around town we frequently see bumper stickers promoting the **Coexist** message of inter-faith dialog. Ongoing events at Elmhurst College promote a wide variety of religious expression. We have neighbors who are seeking for something more in life and whom we need to find ways to reach.
 - We need to equip ourselves to communicate our faith effectively.
- We know that many have a distaste for organized religion.
 - We cannot assume all people will feel welcome visiting our church. We need to find creative ways to do outreach outside of our walls.
- Every age has its own popular "reasons" for disbelief. To defend our faith well today, we need to understand common beliefs such as relativism, atheism, mysticism, and pantheism, as well as the common religions around us such as Catholicism, Hinduism, and Islam.
 - While we know that we are right with God through the internal witness of the Spirit, we must demonstrate it to others in clear and compelling language. In order to be effective witnesses we must be trained in apologetics.
- The exclusive claims of Christ are becoming even more of an offense to the secular mindset today. Teaching moral issues based solely on the Bible may not have any convincing value to the church visitor today. Pragmatism is the prevailing philosophy of many: whatever works. The popular saying is that your truth may not be my truth – a totally unbiblical concept.
 - We must also recognize that while the gospel message can be offensive to lost people, the truth needs to be communicated in a winsome and loving way by messengers who do not cause unnecessary offense. We need to be continually improving our skills in communicating God's message.
- We also know many who are devout and active about their faith, but it is not a saving faith.
 - We care about the lost, whether church or not, and we need to be very clear what it means to be saved.

- We also know many neighbors and coworkers who are so busy about life, they might be called **non-seekers**.
 - We care about these folks also, and we need to find creative ways to get them thinking about spiritual matters.
- Many of us are busy too and can become lax in our responsibilities.
 - We need to have a growing sense that the Lord may very well return in our lifetimes, and encourage each other to have a heightened sense of urgency.
 - We need to redeem the time by living lives of separated holiness and by spreading the gospel in season and out of season.

▼ Program Design

3. How do ensure that we make decisions & operate consistently with our values? What is beauty and excellence? How do the principles of order guide us in ministry?

- While the Bible is our sole source of authority, we recognize that its interpretation can be legitimately debated among serious Christian scholars. We hold to a normal, or literal interpretation of Scripture as we believe is justified by Scripture.
 - We need to intentionally attempt to “major on the majors” and “minor on the minors,” or as commonly expressed: “In essentials, Unity. In non-essentials, Liberty. In all things, Charity.”
- While every human institution inevitably develops its own traditions, we attempt to keep ours from inhibiting the leading of the Spirit should He move us in new directions.
 - Each of us must be willing to submit to one another, and not let our preferences keep us from supporting the larger picture when necessary. We believe God has chosen the leaders that He has for our church and we are obligated to follow their Godly leading.
- We live in a high-tech age that provides ample opportunities in many dimensions.
 - We need to explore and take advantage of technology to be more effective and more efficient.
 - Where technology can be a distraction or temptation, we need to support each other and hold each other accountable.
- In a culture that values abstract art, celebrates deviance, and glorifies anti-heroes, many people wonder if there can be any way to define standards of beauty. Isn’t beauty merely in the eye of the beholder? Scripture denies that, of course, saying for example the church ought to be run decently and in order. God’s design of the universe, his exacting standards for the tabernacle, and recognition of artists in Scripture all illustrate God’s love of beauty.
 - We must make sure that everything we do is purposely to glorify God and illustrates his attributes. Everything He does is excellent; we must always strive to do our best in our service and worship of Him.

▼ Organizational Design

4. What guidelines are appropriate in church government?

- It is a day when parents are particularly mindful of child safety.
 - We need to be especially careful in matters of personnel selection and security. Every staff member and children's volunteer must sign and abide by a Code of Conduct. We cannot allow even one abusive event to occur which could damage the reputation and effectiveness of the church, not to mention the suffering of the victim.
- We live in a democratic republic and we genuinely believe it is the best type of human government possible. We love having a voice in how we are governed and we like having people who are experts in governing run the day-to-day affairs of state. We also know that in the millennium Christ's rule will be different, perhaps a kind of benevolent dictatorship.
 - Our church is sort of a hybrid of those forms. We elect elders who are accountable to us. As an independent church we value being able to choose our own pastor. We believe that there is great value to a diversity of opinions -- an application of the "two heads are better than one" principle at a corporate level.
 - The delicate balance that we face in the area of church leadership is that while we need to respect the people's voice, we expect the leaders' primary direction to come the Holy Spirit's leading.
 - To implement effective leadership and day-to-day decision-making we have a clearly defined process, and a thorough understanding of it and commitment to it by our membership. It is guided by the church constitution, and implemented by the Elders, the Staff, and the ministry volunteers.

Section II – Culture

▼ Common Behaviors

The pastors, leaders, office workers, and ministry volunteers of Grace Bible Church will demonstrate the following core behaviors in all their interactions.

Common Purpose

We have carefully defined our Vision, Mission Statement, and Operating Model and we know clearly the purposes to which GBS is committed. It is expected that all those serving in any capacity, or representing the church in any way, will subscribe to these purposes and priorities.

Passion About Service

Those who serve at Grace will demonstrate a genuine passion about the service they provide. True to the Biblical model, they will take great care to put the interests of those they work with and those they serve above their own. They will do all they can to deliver excellence in all they do.

Discipleship, Mentoring, Coaching

The Biblical injunction is one of training others and passing on the work. To that end we will look for opportunities to disciple, mentor, and coach each other to grow and use their spiritual gifts in the Lord's work.

Flexibility

As the world changes around us, we must continually revise methods to communicate the eternal message of God's Word. Despite the potential discomfort of change, we will remain flexible to adjust as needed. While many churches have a reputation for being resistant to change, we will proactively look for ways to build God's church more effectively and more efficiently.

Willingness to Learn

None of us has achieved perfect maturity. We all must learn and grow throughout our lifetimes. A godly humility and willingness to learn will be a common attitude among the people of Grace. We will be committed to personal transformation through the renewing of our minds.

Openness

Loving one another includes being easy to get along with and being ready to change one's mind as others see things differently than we do. We will be a people who are known by our love for one another, especially in how we get along with others even in demanding situations.

Motivation

Scripture encourages us to redeem the time, to share the gospel in season and out, and to look unto Christ's glorious appearing. We will be a people who eagerly and promptly respond to His Word.

Enthusiasm

Many aspects of our faith bring us great joy: the forgiveness of sins, the personal relationship with God, the fellowship of our fellow saints, and the certainty of our salvation. We will be a people of enthusiastic and grateful heart and demonstrate the peace and joy we have as we serve and witness to others.

Unselfishness

We have freely received and so we freely give. We will be a community of people who look after the interests of others.

Confidence in Leaders and Each Other

The leaders and members of Grace will work together with confidence in each other to meet commitments and support each other as needed in ministry.

Leaders will likewise trust those who serve. Lines of authority and decision-making processes will be made clear, and within those guidelines, leaders will trust others to do the right thing.

Those who serve at Grace will place trust in the Pastors, Deacons, and other leaders whom God had called to be overseers. They will show respect for the officeholders both in their conduct toward them and in speaking of them to others. Respectful disagreement is a responsibility and should be offered at the appropriate time and place. Once decisions are made, however, it is expected that everyone will support the decision and do nothing to undermine it.

Proactive Approach Toward Change

We are a church that earnestly desires to follow the Spirit's leading and to improve as a church body. Hence, we eagerly look for ways to grow and we embrace change as necessary. While we respect our traditions, we are more committed to being all God needs us to be in this day and at the place God has planted us.

Responsible Stewardship

We are entrusted with the resources of other people, including their financial gifts, their children, and the time that volunteers contribute. We will do all we can to properly use the funds, train and respect their children and appreciate their time.

Section III – Values

Values. Grace Bible Church will live the following core values in all their interactions.

Reliance upon God

We believe God for the impossible. We trust in him for the unknowable and lean into Him to bring us the unbelievable. We put ourselves in positions where we can only succeed with God's intervention. We are committed to prayer—strategic and personal.

We seek to derive our beliefs from what the Bible says and Jesus did instead of simply believing everything as it has been presented to us from others.

Focus

We believe in the family and want to see families restored and built up in our community. We empathize with young people and prioritize them and families everywhere in our church.

- Because of this, we implement *keychain leadership*. We believe the youngest person who can do the job well should do the job. We will actively mentor and coach younger people to be leaders, and give them the keys to significant responsibilities.

We no longer assume people know who Jesus was and seek to make Him known through our lives.

We don't seek to impose our beliefs on an unbelieving world but seek find common ground through relationship.

We resist the idea that the mission of the church is to make church people happy. Instead, we seek to be a people who live the love of Christ in a broken and fallen world. We are not a rescue boat, a cruise ship, or a battleship; we are an aircraft carrier—we come together to plan and refuel but our most significant action takes place outside of our walls.

Continual Improvement

We are trying to be different. On Purpose. Not just by accident. We serve a God of infinite variety and we walk in newness of life. We intentionally look at everything we do as a church and ask, is this what God had in mind when he sent His son to die on a cross for the world? We are willing to do away with anything that doesn't help us reach that end. We don't cling to the way things have been done, just because they've always been done that way. Six times in Scripture we're commanded to sing a new song, and we take that seriously. We believe we haven't yet arrived and if we're not changing, we're not improving.

We place a high value on creativity and entrepreneurship because the gospel is relevant to all times and generations. If it has lost its relevance, it is because we have clung to outdated methods of sharing it.

We will NOT play it safe. We WILL take risks. The cause is great and the eternal destiny of souls is at risk. We cannot afford to sit idly by, but must take action. We're in this fight to win. We will be an agile organization so that we can respond promptly to the leading of the Spirit.

We don't listen to the negative voices of those who would seek to make the church about themselves; instead we seek to hear the voices of those who aren't yet here.

We are more concerned about who we're reaching than who we're keeping.

This may not be the place for you if you don't think the church needs to change or that the way it's always been done is good enough.

Leadership

We don't think it is the responsibility of paid church staff members to do the work of ministry, but that every member of our church has a role to play as a member of this body.

We aren't here to make you feel comfortable; we are here to push you out of your comfort-zone and into an area of growth and possibility.

We aren't seeking to have a few leaders of hundreds but to have hundreds of leaders of a few.

Community

We are a community of misfits, rejects and outcasts and all kinds of messed up people in need of grace. And we're okay with that.

We believe belonging precedes believing and to reach the people God has put in our lives, we have to help people belong first.

- Because of this, we strive to live in authentic, covenantal community with one another.

We don't care what you look like, how you dress or any other superficial characteristic that others may have judged you for.

We work hard because we know the night is coming when no man can work.

We are an active church. There are plenty of churches where you can be a passive attender. But, what God has given us to do, requires action. It requires us to be active in our church, and in our community.

We are not content to sit around in our padded pews and cushiony chairs and expect the world to come to us. We have to go into the world and love them unconditionally. We have to go into the world and do justice, love mercy and walk humbly. That's the thing, we are the light of the world. If we are going to be the light, that means we have to go into the darkness and light it up. What good is it for all the lights to spend all their time together shine their lights in each other's enlightened faces?

We are the music makers. We are the dreamers of dreams. We think the best days of the church are in front of us, not behind us. And we join with the creator of the universe to create the best possible future for His church.

- **The reality is we live in a dark world.** It's messed up in so many ways. It's broken. It's fallen. It's full of messed up people doing messed up things. But there is hope. In fact, what some have called the darkest times might very well be our finest hour. All we need is some people to share their light, and the world is waiting to catch fire.

*Some **Values** borrowed from 68church.com and 'Growing Young' book.*

Section IV – Staff Organization

Staff Organization. The lead pastor is responsible to manage the staff organization of Grace Bible Church. Time and circumstances will dictate changes on a routine basis.

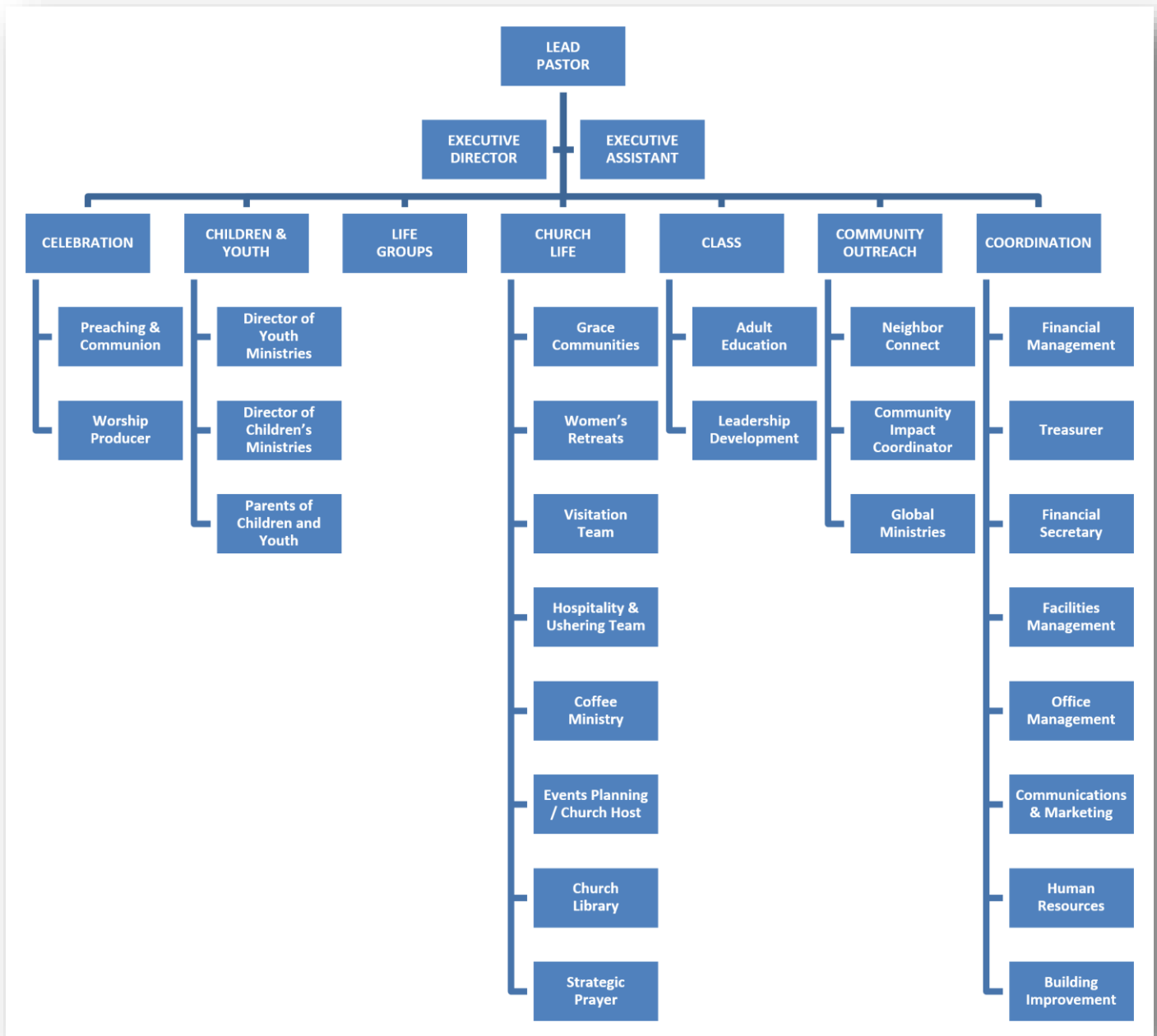
▼ Accountabilities

As the Lead Pastor leads the church in accomplishing the Mission Principles, he is charged with determining the staffing needs of the church within the financial parameters established by the congregation in the annual budget. This document depicts the current staff relationships at the church. Changes to the staff or ministry teams of the church may be made with approval required by the individual to whom a particular staff member reports. For this purpose the supervisor of the Lead Pastor is the Board of Elders.

A staff person appointed by the Lead Pastor shall manage each area of church operation with the exception of the Board of Elders. In addition to responsibilities found elsewhere, staff members are responsible for the overall leadership of programs and ministries that have been assigned to them by the Lead Pastor. This includes recruiting volunteers and then equipping, encouraging, and monitoring the work of the lay ministers of the congregation. Interested parties should reference the Grace Bible Church Constitution and the balance of the Guiding Principles to better understand the responsibilities of the church staff.

Current Staff Organization

The following chart depicts the reporting responsibilities as relate to the Lead Pastor.



▼ Job Description Summaries

Shown below are summaries of the key responsibilities of each role in GBC. They are extracts from the official job descriptions, which are available upon request. Listed alphabetically; where a role is missing, the job description is not yet written or finalized.

Community Impact Coordinator

The Community Impact Coordinator (CIC) is responsible to stay abreast of what is happening in our neighborhood and help our whole church make this a better place to raise a family.

A key responsibility is to coordinate the Cultural Impact Team. This includes: inviting interested people to participate on the team; leading the team to clarify its (1) role within the church, (2) mission within the community, and (3) means of engagement; coordinating team plans with church leadership and other teams

(i.e. Neighbor Connect, etc.), as appropriate; setting up team meetings, with agendas; assigning appropriate tasks to team members, and following up on assigned tasks; following up meetings with minutes; and coordinating the team communications with the congregation.

Deacon

Deacons are responsible for pastoral care of the church membership, for coordination of the Lord's Supper, and for the distribution of the benevolent fund.

Director of Children's Ministries

The DCM reports to the Lead Pastor and works closely with him and with the Christian Ed Board. The DCM's performance is evaluated periodically by the Lead Pastor.

The DCM will also work closely with the Directors of Adult, Youth, and Family ministries to jointly plan all CE ministries and ensure alignment.

The DCM is responsible for directing or overseeing all aspects of GBC's children's ministries. The areas that are directed include • Kingdom Kids, • Children's Church, and • Nursery. The areas that are overseen (less hands-on direction) include • AWANA T&T, • AWANA Sparks, and • VBS.

The DCM ensures that all areas are planning for the future, and are meeting the goals they've set for themselves. The DCM requires a firm understanding of and commitment to the mission (Discipleship-Service-Community), vision (focusing on young families) and strategic objectives (established by the planning arrow process).

Director of Discipleship

The Director of Discipleship and Small Groups (DDSG) is responsible to direct all aspects of discipleship at GBC, particularly those in the small group format. The DDSG would encourage spiritual disciplines, spiritual growth, mutual accountability, identification and use of spiritual gifts, and disciples making disciples. His/her purpose is to increase the maximum engagement of congregants in personal commitment to being a growing disciple of Christ. He/she would identify ways to objectively measure success in this area, and would track ongoing church-wide participation and progress.

The DDSG reports to the Lead Pastor working closely with him and with the Director of Adult Ministries. He/she will also work closely with the Director of Christian Education to ensure alignment with all related ministries.

Director of Facilities

The Director of Facilities is responsible for the overall maintenance of the building and grounds.

Director of Youth Ministries

The goals for the youth ministry of Grace Bible Church is that students develop thriving relationships with their peers and leaders in the group, with their parents, and with the Lord. This means that students will make tangible progress in becoming a more mature disciple of Christ, taking responsibility for their own spiritual growth, and learning how to care for the spiritual needs of others. It also means discovering who they are, both their weaknesses and strengths, and learning how to overcome sin/temptation and how to develop and use their giftedness and passions in service to others.

The Youth Pastor reports to the Lead Pastor and will lead the volunteer young adult leaders.

Elder

The essential tasks of the Board of Elders are to: actively connect to the people of, and served by, Christ's church; maintain the Guiding Principles; monitor the performance of the Lead Pastor. In addition, the Board of Elders shall exercise authority granted to it in the Constitution and Guiding Principles and not delegated to the Lead Pastor. The Elders collectively are responsible to provide leadership and governance to GBC. They manage changes to the Constitutions and Bylaws. They coordinate the hiring of key staff with recommended candidates requiring Congregational approval. They establish the Guiding Principles for the pastoral staff and key policies that guide church operations. They provide feedback and reviews to the pastors.

Executive Assistant

The Executive Assistant (EA) is responsible for supporting the Lead Pastor and Executive Director. The EA focuses on processes, alignment, communications and volunteer recruitment. Other specific tasks vary from time to time depending on what initiatives are active.

The EA reports to the Lead Pastor and supervises the daily work of the Office Secretary. The EA works closely with the pastor, executive director and treasurer to facilitate efficient office operations and congregational communications.

Executive Director

The Executive Director (XD) reports to the Lead Pastor and works closely with him and the Board of Elders. The XD assists the Lead Pastor in building and maintaining the governance infrastructure; supporting the church leadership, especially as they define the vision and develop the organization; supporting the ministry leaders and staff; managing the office staff/interns, and ensuring that the strategic ministry objectives of the church are attained. He monitors the day-to-day performance of the Lead Pastor and approves requested time off.

Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary is responsible for tracking all money that is received by the church, ensuring that funds are placed in the proper accounts, and issuing receipts for all tax deductible donations. Other responsibilities include: overseeing the counting of each week's income and make bank deposits (weekly); maintaining the database that tracks individual donations (monthly and as needed); Assigning envelopes and prepare them to give to the congregation (annually); and printing and distributing IRS receipts for all donors (annually).

Lead Pastor

The role of the Lead Pastor is to establish and implement a vision and culture so that the strategic ministry objectives of the church are effectively and efficiently attained. As shepherd of the flock, the Lead Pastor instructs, and provides for the needs of the church. The Lead Pastor supports and supervises the pastoral staff and ministry directors, assisting them and being a resource to them in order that the ministry objectives informed upon them by the Holy Spirit may be accomplished in the most God-honoring way for the betterment of the local church body.

The Lead Pastor reports to the Board of Elders.

Ministry Leader

Ministry Leaders (ML) are responsible for the overall success of his/her area. This will include items such as:

- Planning for the ministry area's future, typically using the planning arrow tool
- Preparing and submitting an annual budget, and managing expenses through the year
- Finding ways to operate more cost effectively and more efficiently
- Recruiting and developing staff
- Delegates tasks with commensurate authority, and following up commitments
- Tracking trends, resolving issues and adjusting communicating results to others as appropriate
- Celebrating team successes and individual accomplishments

Treasurer

The Treasurer reports to the Lead Pastor and works closely with the Board of Elders, its Chairman, the Financial Secretary, and the office. Responsibilities include:

- Determine ways to operate more cost effectively and more efficiently
- Periodically assess the overall budgeting, investment and cash flow process
- Manage banking relationships and broad investment policies
- Ensure proper safeguards and checks and balances are in place and effective
- Ensure proper data security and backups are in place and periodically tested
- Ensure that appropriate insurance policies are in place and kept in force
- Assist in preparation of the annual budget; Monitor expenses against the budget through the year
- Validate and pay invoices, keeping records to avoid duplicate payments
- Review and decide upon special requests for funds
- Manage the day-to-day receipts, payments, and cash flow
- Manage bank reconciliations, day-to-day fund allocations and investment decisions
- Coordinate with the Missions Board's budget process and expense tracking

Worship Producer

The Worship Producer (WP) is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the regular worship service, ensuring that these elements complement the sermon and/or the communion celebration. The WP will also coordinate special seasonal services and a regularly scheduled different day worship service, perhaps a Saturday evening.

The WP reports to the Lead Pastor. The WP leads the Worship Planning Team (WPT) and works closely with the Praise Team Leader (PTL) and with the Audio-Visual Team. Any mediation that may be required between the PTL and the Audio-Visual Team will be facilitated by the WP. Any issues that require assistance to resolve will be escalated to the Lead Pastor.

▼ Contemporary Issues

The following discussion presents our current position on current issues where reasonable Christians can disagree. This is where we stand.

Early Genesis Material

- Genesis is historical, as is Adam and Eve as the first humans.
 - We hold that the six days of creation are literal, successive days. We reject evolutionary concepts of mutation as the mechanism used to promote the chance development of human life.
 - We hold to a worldwide, catastrophic flood.
- A person may be a genuine believer, yet diverge from our perspectives on this matter. Agreement with this statement is not a requirement for membership.
- When preaching and teaching on these topics from Genesis or other biblical passages, all Pastoral Staff and Christian Education personnel should endeavor to positively present the perspective of this statement. This expectation does not exclude discussing other perspectives.
- Recognizing the importance of preserving the bond of unity and peace in Grace Bible Church, members and non-members are asked to avoid divisive controversy on these topics. Individuals holding Grace Bible Church's position should treat those who differ with it kindly and respectfully.

The Work and Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- **The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.** We believe and teach that the baptism by-or-in the Holy Spirit is the experience of all truly born again Christians. It is not a repeatable or selective experience.
- **The Filling of the Spirit.** The Scripture never commands or asks believers to be baptized in (or with or by) the Holy Spirit. However, we see that the filling of the Spirit is a command addressed to the Christian. It is also a repeatable experience. It is our belief that the Scriptures nowhere indicate that either tongues or prophecy is the definitive indication of the filling or the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- **Gifts of the Holy Spirit.** The word "gift" in the New Testament is used to describe the sovereign bestowal of the Holy Spirit of some spiritual enablement on all who believe.
- **Restricted Nature of Some Gifts.** Some of these gifts are apparently restricted and temporary. The language used by the Apostle Paul in I Cor.13, suggests some gifts would cease of themselves (tongues), and others would be made to cease (prophecy and knowledge).

The Roles of Men and Women in Teaching Ministries

In our public and private ministries:

- Our adult teaching ministries that have men and women in attendance should model the Biblical plan for gifts, responsibilities and order in the church by using men alone or married couples as teachers or team teachers.
- Our adult teaching ministries that have women only in attendance should model the Biblical plan for gifts, responsibilities and order in the church by using women alone, men alone or married couples as teachers or team teachers.
- Men and women, married or single, have a Biblical responsibility to teach children.
- We do not consider the occasional assignment of women to assist the designated teacher in presenting material, for which she is qualified, to the class to be a contravention of Biblical standards regarding the woman's role in ministry.

Gay Marriage

- Scripture teaches that homosexual acts are sinful. We believe that remains true today.
- will not perform gay marriages or unions.
- A repentant homosexual, who lives celibately, and does not defend homosexual practice, will be treated as any other church member who acknowledges and repents of their particular sin. We will baptize, welcome them to participate at the communion table, accept into membership, and encourage them to use their gifts in service to the rest of the body, including ordination.

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

- God intended marriage to be a monogamous (one man-one woman), lifelong union.
- In no case ought any person to enter into any so-called “marriage” with a person of the same sex. Homosexual unions are specifically forbidden and are described in Scripture as manifestations of the most base forms of sinful conduct.
- A Christian should not marry a person who does not know Christ as personal Savior.
- Divorce is a departure from the purposes of God. While in the Old Testament divorce was allowed and was apparently easily secured, this, like polygamy, was contrary to God’s highest intentions.
- While divorce is always contrary to God’s intentions, there are certain circumstances when it is permitted. A believer cannot consider divorce as a reason to marry some else. When a partner of a marriage has become involved in adultery, the offended mate is permitted, though not required, to get a divorce.
- If an unsaved husband or wife refuses to continue to live with his or her mate and deserts, or in some way forces or creates a separation, the believer may agree to this separation. Such separations may result in divorce, and in that event the Christian is guilty of no wrong.
- The remarriage of persons who have been divorced is permitted by Scripture under certain circumstances. If, after being divorced, one of the original marriage partners dies, the remaining partner is free to remarry.
- When an adulterous relationship has brought about a divorce, only the party who is innocent of adultery has a right to remarry.
- If a person is divorced on grounds other than that of fornication or desertion and his or her former partner remarries, that partner by remarrying has, according to scriptural standards, committed adultery and has dissolved the original relationship.
- Persons who remarry after being divorced on other than scriptural grounds are guilty before God of adultery. Such marriages shall not be performed by the Pastors of Grace Bible Church.
- Persons who have been divorced on other than scriptural grounds who subsequently become Christians may remarry only if the former partner has remarried or died.
- Persons who were divorced and remarried without scriptural grounds prior to conversion are not obligated after conversion to withdraw from the subsequent marriage and return to the former marriage partner. The remarriage that was entered into wrongly constituted an act of adultery that broke the former marriage. With the former marriage, then, having been dissolved, the remarried person is responsible to be faithful in the new marriage. Having broken the former marriage, he/she is “living in adultery” only if unfaithful to the present marriage partner.
- However, Romans 6:14-15 states a biblical principle that sin must not be freely entered into knowing that grace will provide a way out. The Christian cannot use adultery as a means of breaking a marriage contract or in order to make it possible to marry another person.
- Persons who are divorced or divorced and remarried on scriptural grounds are entitled to fellowship and membership in the church. A believer who was divorced or divorced and remarried on other scriptural grounds while still a non-believer should likewise be received into fellowship and membership in the church.

- In light of the Bible's position that divorce and remarriage are not God's best it would appear that a person divorced and remarried should not hold an office in the church.
- Since scripture does not state that divorced and remarried people are excluded from participating in the ministries and offices of the church, neither should we. However, the deacon board shall hold the right to review each case to see that it conforms to scriptural teaching on divorce and remarriage. Divorced and remarried people will be reviewed by the Deacon Board before he/she may be nominated or appointed to a position in the church.
- However:
 - A believer who knowingly secures a divorce on other than scriptural grounds;
 - Or a believer who knowingly marries someone who was divorced on other than scriptural grounds;
 - Or a believer whose divorce was granted on other than scriptural grounds and who remarries;should be disciplined by the church and be renewed to Christian fellowship only after a demonstration of genuine repentance for deliberate departure from scriptural standards.