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Article I  
Name

The name of this church shall be Grace Community Church, located in the town of Grantsville, Garrett County, in the state of Maryland.

Article II  
Purpose

The purpose of this church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ and proclaim the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

Article III  
Policy

The Government of this church is vested in its active members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject, however to the Laws of the State of Maryland relating to religious corporations.

Article IV  
Faith, Covenant and Mission

1. Faith - This church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of man. It finds its authority in and from the Word of God in the 66 books of the Holy Bible as its rule for practice in all matters. It claims as its own, the faith of the historic church, expressed in the Apostles’ Creed, Nicene Creed and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformation.

In accordance with the teaching of our Lord, we recognize two Sacraments; Baptism, and Holy Communion. Recognized baptism is performed in water by sprinkling, pouring or immersion in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The church recognizes infant baptism as a dedication of infants or children, and as a promise by their parents and the congregation to raise them “in the faith”. We understand that baptism does not make one a member of God’s family, faith alone in who Christ is and what Christ has done makes one a member of God’s family.

2. Covenant - We agree, one with another to seek and respond to the Bible as God’s Word, and His will for our lives. We desire to be kind and caring to each other, using scripture as our example. We desire to faithfully pursue a life of sanctification and a unified doctrine as affirmed by the Board of Elders. We desire to faithfully promote high standards of church membership and faithful attendance. We pledge ourselves to review and faithfully affirm a member covenant annually as presented by the Board of Elders.

- 1 3. Mission - The mission of the church is to go into the world making disciples by: declaring  
 2 the gospel of Jesus Christ, gathering disciples into the life of the church, worshiping God in  
 3 spirit and in truth, obeying Jesus' commands now and forever, all to and for the glory of  
 4 God.  
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 7 Article V  
 8 Membership  
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- 10 1. Membership in this church shall be open to any person who has professed their faith in  
 11 Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and is willing to submit to the authority of the church, its  
 12 representative leadership, approved processes, documents, applications, covenants and  
 13 standards for membership.  
 14 2. Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the church and the  
 15 celebrations of the Lord's Supper; to live the Christian life; to share in the life and work of  
 16 the church; to contribute to its support and benevolences; and to seek diligently the spiritual  
 17 welfare of the membership and the community.  
 18 3. Members shall pledge to faithfully promote high standards of church membership and  
 19 faithful adhere to an annual member covenant presented by the Board of Elders.  
 20 4. Membership Categories  
 21 a. An active member, who in the judgment of the Board of Elders shows interest in  
 22 the church by attending at least 50% of the worship services per calendar year and  
 23 contributes to the church treasury according to the church's records. Active  
 24 members shall be counted in the membership statistics of the congregation and  
 25 have voting privileges whether present or by proxy. An exception may be granted by  
 26 the Board of Elders for someone who requests to be an active member but cannot  
 27 attend worship services due to health or other limitations.  
 28 b. An in-active member is a former active member who no longer meets the standards  
 29 laid out within active member status per calendar year. In-active members do not  
 30 have voting or member privileges. The active church membership may remove any  
 31 inactive member who if after 12 months of opportunity does not resume adherence  
 32 to active member status.  
 33 5. Any member may request a letter of transfer. The church may grant such requests approved  
 34 by the active church membership.  
 35 6. Brotherly discipline of the Membership shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders as  
 36 a representative of the Congregation.  
 37 7. If a member persistently breaches their covenant vows, the Church Council may censure,  
 38 suspend or terminate a membership by taking any or all of the following steps:  
 39 a. Faithful efforts have been made to bring the member to amendment.  
 40 b. A request for the member to attend a face to face meeting with an Elder or the  
 41 Pastor has been granted.  
 42 c. A request for the member to attend a face to face meeting with the board of Elders  
 43 has been granted.  
 44 d. A notice of request for correction by the Board of Elders has been given to the  
 45 member in writing.  
 46 e. A request for the member to attend a review before the Church Council has been  
 47 granted.  
 48 f. A request for the member to attend a member's meeting has been granted.

1 Article VI  
 2 Governing Body  
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4 The governing body of this church shall be the active membership assembled in a called church  
 5 meeting. The vote of a majority of active members present at the meeting shall be the action of  
 6 the church. A quorum shall consist of 50% of the active members.  
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8 Article VII  
 9 Church Council  
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- 12 1. The Church Council shall consist of the Senior Pastor, a Board of no less than 3 Elders, and  
 13 a Board of no less than 5 Deacons who meet the scriptural qualifications for such positions  
 14 and shall be the executive body of the church. A majority of the Church Council members  
 15 shall constitute a quorum. The number of Church Council members shall not exceed 12  
 16 voting members.
  - 17 2. The Church Council shall organize itself each year by electing an Elder as President, an  
 18 Elder as Vice-President, a Deacon as Vice-President, and a Secretary. In addition, the  
 19 Church Council shall appoint a Treasurer, Assistant Treasurers, Financial Secretaries and  
 20 other boards, organizations and teams, as it may deem necessary.
  - 21 3. The President shall preside over meetings of the Church Council and of member's meetings  
 22 unless those active members attending the meeting decide otherwise.
  - 23 4. A Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President unless those active members  
 24 attending the meeting decide otherwise.
  - 25 5. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the Church Council and member's meetings and  
 26 shall preserve its archives.
  - 27 6. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds of the church; and be bonded; and shall  
 28 disburse all such funds in accordance with the decisions of the members and of the Church  
 29 Council. A financial report approved by the Board of Deacons and the Church Council  
 30 shall be presented at the annual January Member's Meeting.
  - 31 7. The Board of Elders is appointed to assist and support the Pastor in the general  
 32 government of the congregation. They form, with the Pastor, a council in common for the  
 33 spiritual supervision of the congregation, which is committed to their care. They shall be on  
 34 hand in all circumstances with spiritual aid for the congregation's necessities and desires.  
 35 They shall have special responsibility, acting with the Pastor for the development of a sound  
 36 program of evangelism, for matters pertaining to the congregation's worship, member  
 37 discipline and for general spiritual care of the congregation, and shall regularly make  
 38 recommendations to the Church Council.
  - 39 8. The Service & Stewardship Team comprised of at least: The Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer,  
 40 and Financial Secretary shall have special responsibility for the management and securing of  
 41 funds; shall act as trustees under the Maryland Religious Corporation Act. Other interested  
 42 persons in addition to the officers named in this section will make known to the members  
 43 of the congregation the needs of the congregation, foster stewardship, cultivate the spirit of  
 44 cheerful giving; care of the property; prepare the annual church budget; and make  
 45 recommendations to the Church Council.  
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- 1           9. The Discipleship Team comprised of no less than one Elder shall have special responsibility  
 2           under the supervision of the Pastor and the Board of Elders to operate the discipleship  
 3           programs of the church and other schools, to promote the education of all ages within the  
 4           church and make recommendations to the Church Council.
- 5           10. The Fellowship and Outreach Team comprised of at least a member of the Deacon Board  
 6           and other interested persons shall have special responsibility for fostering fellowship  
 7           opportunities and outreach programs which enhance the unity of the church and reach  
 8           outside the walls of the church with the gospel message.
- 9           11. Nominations shall be made for the offices of Elders and Deacons by the Board of Elders  
 10          and be approved by the Church Council. Notice to the congregation of such nominations  
 11          shall be given from the pulpit or in the Sunday bulletin or by post marked letter at least 14  
 12          days before the election.
- 13          12. The present Elders and Deacons of the Church Council shall continue with their terms of  
 14          office on an annual basis. There shall be an election of affirmation each year to reaffirm or  
 15          reject continuing positions and to affirm and elect any new Elders or Deacons presented by  
 16          the Church Council as a candidate for election and affirmation by the Church Membership.
- 17          13. The election, affirmation and reaffirmation of each Elder and Deacon must be affirmed by  
 18          no less than 75% of the voting quorum of active members or the candidate shall not hold  
 19          or continue in office.
- 20          14. Vacancies on the Church Council may be filled by a nomination by the Board of Elders and  
 21          approved by the Church Council.
- 22          15. The Church Council may authorize any extraordinary expense if funds are available not to  
 23          exceed 10% of the approved annual budget per year. If borrowing is necessary, it must  
 24          receive the approval of the majority of the active members of the church.
- 25          16. The Church Council shall meet at least quarterly or more often if necessary for the  
 26          transaction of such business as may come before it. The Boards of Elders and Deacons  
 27          shall meet separately as needed.

Article VIII  
 Pastor

- 33          1. The pastor must be in agreement with the church's faith and covenant as stated in Article  
 34          IV.
- 35          2. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to seek a candidate for a pastoral  
 36          vacancy.
- 37          3. The Board of Elders shall present to the church the name of the candidate it recommends  
 38          to fill the vacancy. At least one meeting will be held by the candidate and the Board of  
 39          Elders. At least one meeting will also be held by the candidate and the Church Council. The  
 40          candidate will present at least one trial sermon and meet with the congregation. A favorable  
 41          vote of no less than 75% of the active membership of the church constitutes a call.
- 42          4. When a minister accepts a call to this church, the church shall have a service of installation  
 43          or ordination.
- 44          5. In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including any benefits package  
 45          agreed upon by the candidate and the Church Council.
- 46          6. The Pastor, as an Elder and a spiritual leader of the congregation, shall be a voting member  
 47          of the Board of Elders, Church Council and an advisory member of all other boards, teams,  
 48          groups, committees, and organizations of the church.

- 1 7. Brotherly discipline of the Pastor shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders  
 2 representing the church.  
 3 8. The Board of Elders may at its discretion may recommend Associate or Assistant Pastors.  
 4 9. In order to terminate a pastoral employment, 30 days notice shall be given by the Board of  
 5 Elders. Such a termination shall be approved by majority vote of a quorum of the active  
 6 members in a duly called members meeting.  
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9 Article IX  
 10 Property  
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- 12 1. The church may in its corporate name, acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or  
 13 otherwise and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal for  
 14 such work as the church may undertake and may purchase, own, hold, invest, reinvest or  
 15 dispose of property both real and personal for such work as the church may undertake and  
 16 may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or  
 17 otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer, and convey such property for the general  
 18 purposes of the church; it may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and  
 19 invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and  
 20 purposes of the church.  
 21 2. Upon dissolution of the church, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall  
 22 then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other  
 23 instrument, in trust or otherwise, will be given to a non-profit organization as defined by  
 24 state law at the discretion of the active members of the church.  
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27 Article X  
 28 Member Meetings  
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- 30 1. An Annual Member's Meeting of the active membership shall be held in the month of  
 31 January unless encumbered by weather. A majority of the active members shall constitute a  
 32 quorum. At this meeting, the Church Council, the Officers of the church, the Pastor, and all  
 33 church organizations may submit annual reports.  
 34 2. Additional Member Meetings may be called by the Board of Elders or by a petition to the  
 35 Church Council signed by at least fifteen percent of the active members. The Board of  
 36 Elders shall call such meetings within 30 days from receipt of the petition.  
 37 3. Member meetings require 14 consecutive days prior notice listed in the church bulletin, post  
 38 marked letter or by announcement during the worship service.  
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41 Article XI  
 42 Rules of Order  
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- 44 1. Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of  
 45 procedure not specifically covered by this Constitution and/or By-Laws.  
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1 Article XII  
 2 By-Laws  
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- 4 1. The church shall adopt such by-laws as may from time to time be found  
 5 necessary. No by-law may conflict with this constitution.  
 6 2. By-laws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of the  
 7 Active members by a two-thirds majority vote of those active members present. A copy of  
 8 the proposed by-law or amendment shall be made available at the church facilities no less  
 9 than 14 days prior to the meeting.  
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11 Article XIII  
 12 Amendments  
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- 14  
 15 1. No amendment to this constitution shall conflict with the doctrinal basis as contained in  
 16 Article IV and the purpose as contained in Article II.  
 17 2. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall be:  
 18 a. Read at a meeting of the congregation or mailed to the voting members no less than  
 19 thirty days before a legally called meeting of the active members to adopt such  
 20 changes.  
 21 b. Approved, with or without change, at the meeting following its announcement, by a  
 22 two-thirds vote of those active members present.  
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30 **This Constitution Ratified by the Joint Church Council on January 10, 2013**

31 **This Constitution Ratified by the Active Members on January 27, 2013**  
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