

## **Grace EV Free Governance**

The ultimate governance of Grace shall be by elders who are plural in number, equal in authority, committed to humbly submitting to one another in all matters of decision-making and led by the Holy Spirit in submission to Christ and His Word.

We believe the New Testament teaches a plurality of elders as the model of church leadership (1 Peter 5:1-2; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 5:17-18).

Along with our commitment to the priesthood of all believers we also recognize the need for strong, Spirit-led, biblically instructed elder leadership under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

However, the elders are not the only shepherds at Grace. We want to see all those with pastoral and teaching gifts using them regularly. The leaders of our small groups function as pastors of their small flocks within our church.

We believe pastors/elders should function primarily as shepherds who emphasize the ministry of the word, prayer, discipleship and the spiritual health of God's people. They are not primarily administrators, managers, etc.

### ***Scripture References:***

1 Peter 5:1-2 So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

Acts 20:28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."