

## **Grace Presbyterian Church – Arlington, TX**

### **Vehicle Use Policy**

The safety of the drivers and occupants of vehicles used for church purposes is a primary concern. These policies and procedures have been established to provide for safe vehicle operation, to reduce the chance of accidents, and to reduce the liability to Grace Presbyterian Church – Arlington, TX.

### **General Policies for Vehicles Driven on Behalf of Grace Presbyterian Church – Arlington, TX**

1. All drivers must have a valid driver's license appropriate for the type vehicle being operated.
2. All drivers must be at least 25 years old.
3. All drivers must be properly insured.
4. All drivers must complete and pass the driver's section of the current GPC Child Protection Policy background check.
5. Children must ride in approved safety seats as required by State Law.
6. All drivers and passengers must wear seatbelts at all times. There may be no more passengers in the vehicle than seatbelts available.
7. Trucks may not be used for transporting passengers except in the cab.
8. All vehicles must be in safe operating condition.
9. Drivers must obey all traffic laws and exhibit safe driving skills while transporting passengers.
10. Drivers must be free of distractions.
  - a. Drivers should not use cell phones – receiving or initiating calls, text messages, etc. – while the vehicle is on a public roadway (even at a stop light).
  - b. Passengers must keep noise and other distractions to a minimum to allow the driver to concentrate on safe operation of the vehicle.
11. Fatigue is a major cause of highway accidents and fatalities. Travel and rest time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours in one 24-hour period, regardless of the number of drivers available. The intention is to include sleep and thorough rest breaks while traveling long distances. If there is only one driver, the driving time should be reduced and stops should be made more frequently.
12. To drive on behalf of the church is a privilege. The Church reserves the right to remove any driver from the approved driver list.

## Vehicle Insurance Policies

Whenever a member of Grace Presbyterian Church drives his/her own vehicle on a church outing, the individual's insurance is primary, as auto insurance always follows the "owner of the vehicle". Recommended liability limit is a minimum of \$500,000. Should an accident occur in which litigation follows, the individual's insurance will be primary. Grace Presbyterian Church's general liability insurance and excess liability limits will only apply to the church and will be called upon after the individual's primary limit is exhausted. Grace Presbyterian Church includes employees, faculty, members, teachers, teaching assistants, students, volunteers, directors, trustees, emeriti, committee members, and clergy.

## Vehicle Rental Policies

1. Anytime a van or other vehicle is rented for church purposes, the vehicle must be rented in the name of Grace Presbyterian Church.
2. Designated drivers of rented vehicles must be members or employees of Grace Presbyterian Church in order to provide drivers and occupants with the full benefit of the church's insurance policy.
3. All drivers must be listed on the reservation and rental contract.
4. Loss Damage Waiver (LDW) should be accepted. This covers everything on the vehicle. If LDW is not accepted, any collision or property damage will be carried on the driver's own insurance policy.
5. Liability coverage should be declined. Grace Presbyterian Church's insurance policy covers liability for all employees, faculty members, teachers, teaching assistants, students, volunteers, directors, trustees, emeriti, committee members, and clergy.
6. No special license is required for driving vans up to 15 passengers in the State of Texas.
7. Class C license is required for vehicles which carry 16 to 23 passengers.
8. Whenever a vehicle is taken across state lines, local and state laws regarding passenger vehicle limits and licensing should be reviewed prior to travel and complied with.

## Trailers

1. Trailers are not covered for collision under the church's insurance policy. Liability will be covered if the trailer is towed by a vehicle rented in the name of Grace Presbyterian Church and is less than 2,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight (GVW).
2. When towing a trailer, the tow vehicle's performance, steering, and braking abilities will be altered. To safely tow a trailer the following safety tips should be followed:
  - a. The trailer GVW should be well within the limits of the tow vehicle.
  - b. Use the correct hitch for the trailer being towed.
  - c. Distribute and anchor the load of the trailer.
  - d. Add safety equipment as dictated by common sense and state laws (mirrors, lights, safety chains, brakes for heavy trailers, etc.).
  - e. Allow extra time to brake. Changing lanes while braking can cause the trailer to jackknife.

## Chartered Transportation

The church should consider the following when chartering transportation:

1. Charter buses that are licensed by the ICC to sell interstate transportation.
2. Secure indemnification from the bus company for all liabilities resulting from their transportation.
3. Verify that the bus company's insurance is in effect at the time of the trip.
4. Check with the ICC for any complaints that have been filed about the bus company.
5. Verify with state transportation authorities that the bus company has all the necessary permits to operate in the state(s) of travel.
6. Review the age and condition of the buses that the bus company proposes to use on the trip.