

Our History

Sovereign Grace was started in late 1984 (incorporated as a church January, 1985) by a small group of Christians who were captivated by the serious preaching & teaching of the Scriptures, and who wanted to create a church where that was the norm. Our founding pastor was Kirk Wellum, who served 19 years and eventually went on to be the Principal of Toronto Baptist Seminary (retired). Our current pastor is Glenn Tomlinson, who has served since 2005 and recently indicated his plan to retire in 2027. We are beginning the search for our third pastor, and are praying that the Lord will supply us with another man who loves God and is excited to preach and teach His Word.



Our Doctrinal Foundation

We are a Baptist church that is rooted doctrinally in:

- the historic Christian faith.
- the great truths of the Reformation (the *sola's*: *Scripture alone, grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone, to the glory of God alone*).
- the 'doctrines of grace' (total depravity, unconditional election, particular atonement, efficacious grace and the perservance of the saints). We believe the doctrines of grace are an excellent summary of the Bible's teaching about salvation.
- In terms of a framework for understanding the entire Scriptures, we reject both classic covenant theology and dispensational teaching – finding that they either truncate and flatten, or unnecessarily clutter and obscure the grand scope of redemptive history revealed in the Bible. We believe that more biblical (and defensible) understandings of the Scriptures are found in what has been termed New Covenant Theology, and more recently, Progressive Covenantalism.

A brief summary of what we believe at Sovereign Grace is attached in Appendix 1.

Our Leadership

Our church board consists of elders and deacons (the pastor is considered to be one of the elders). The elders have primary responsibility for the spiritual oversight and welfare of the congregation, and the deacons have responsibility for the facilities and practical wellbeing of the congregation. The elders and deacons meet both separately and together.

Our Ministries

Sunday mornings begin with Sunday School (from September – June) for all ages above toddler (including an adult class). The younger ages typically follow prepared curriculum, while the high school class consists of a 4-year systematic theology course (developed in-house based on Grudem's Systematic Theology). The adult class has a rotating faculty of teachers, who either teach personally chosen topics or 'team teach' a larger topic (often sections of systematic theology). The pastor sometimes participates in the teacher rotation.

We love to sing together, enjoying theologically rich songs - both traditional and contemporary, accompanied by a variety of instrumentation.

The preached Word has always been a priority in the Sunday services (morning & evening) at Sovereign Grace, and typically this has taken the form of verse by verse exposition of books of the Bible. We do this because we believe that only God's Word has intrinsic authority and the Holy Spirit especially blesses that Word in the salvation and sanctification of God's people.



Other teaching ministries include:

- Prayer Meeting every Wednesday, with a Scripture devotional typically led by the pastor.
- Men's bible study (every other Tuesday evening).
- Ladies bible studies (every other Tuesday morning and evening).
- Youth group (Grade 6 – 12) that meets regularly.

Our Outreach

We believe that evangelism and supporting missions both at home and across the world are the responsibility of every Christian and every Christian church. At Sovereign Grace, we have always tried to prayerfully and financially support mission endeavours both at home (pregnancy centre, neighbourhood food bank and college chaplaincy in Sarnia) and abroad (currently including church planting in Northern Ontario Indigenous villages, evangelism & discipling in the Congo, orphan safe houses and church support in South Africa). In addition, we also run a Vacation Bible School in the summer and have responsibility for weekly Sunday services at Landmark Village – a retirement community in Sarnia.

Our Church Family

- On Sundays, about 100 people gather to worship at Sovereign Grace.
- Our church family ranges from newborns to 90 year olds (one of our church prayers that the Lord has answered abundantly is for more young children in the congregation).



- We strive for close fellowship and love getting together as a group – all ages interacting and enjoying each other's company. Throughout the year, we gather at the church or each other's homes for potluck meals and conversation. Sometimes we even turn the auditorium into a banquet hall (as we did for the church's 40th Anniversary celebrations).
- We are a diverse group of people with a high level of volunteer participation within the church. Our members are actively involved in serving others and contributing to the life and mission of our church and our community.

Our Future Pastor

- Satisfies and is maturing into the Biblical standards for an overseer (see Appendix 2).
- Clearly understands and agrees with the doctrinal position of Sovereign Grace.
- Possesses evident gifts for preaching & teaching, able to communicate the truth in love.
- Has a heart for the Lord and for His people, joined with humility and a desire to serve.
- Has a heart for personal evangelism and missions.
- Exhibits basic administrative skills (time management, planning, goal and priority setting, delegation, and self-discipline).



For a comprehensive summary of our desired pastoral qualifications, see Appendix 3.



We appreciate you taking the time to learn about our church. If you are interested in this position, please forward your resume to our Pastoral Search committee at pastoralsearch.sgccc@gmail.com.

Upon receipt of your resume, our search committee will be in touch with you.

Appendix 1

We Believe:

- The Bible is the inspired, infallible, completed Word of God.
- There is only one, living and true God, composed of three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; each eternally co-existent and fully God.
- God is sovereign over all creation, and He directs all things in accordance with His eternal, immutable purpose.
- The first man was created innocent, but willingly disobeyed God, severing his communion with God, thus leaving his descendants, all mankind, at enmity with God and spiritually dead in their sin.
- For no reason, other than to glorify His own Self, God in His eternal purpose chose to reconcile a multitude of people to Himself through the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. For this multitude Jesus took on the form of a man and became their perfect Substitute on the cross, satisfying divine justice on their behalf. His sacrifice purchased all things necessary to ensure their eternal salvation.
- Although God commands men everywhere to repent, such is the power of sin that men will not of themselves obey this command. Therefore God, determining to save those for whom Christ died, draws them by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit; who renews their minds, hearts and wills so that they freely trust in Christ. Those brought to faith in Christ are forgiven all their sins, declared perfectly righteous in Christ (justified) and adopted as God's children.
- Saving faith is of necessity accompanied by repentance, which involves the recognition of, sorrow over, and the turning away from all known sin, with a new desire to live in obedience to Jesus Christ.
- Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the one true Christian Church, which is made up of only those people who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. All these are presently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and by their words and deeds show their allegiance to Christ.
- There are two ordinances which have been instituted by the Lord Jesus; believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither of these has, in itself, the power to save men from their sins, but are outward symbols of inward, spiritual realities.
- God, in His eternal purpose, has also appointed a day of judgment; a day in which He will judge all mankind in righteousness by Jesus Christ. Every human who has ever lived will appear before Christ to give an account of their life and to receive either everlasting life in the presence of God, or everlasting torment in hell.

Appendix 2

Summary of Biblical Duties and Qualifications for an Overseer

Teaching and preaching - 1 Timothy 3:2, Colossians 1:28

Holding firmly to scriptural truths - 1 Timothy 3:9, Titus 1:9

Able to teach - 1 Timothy 3:2, 5:17, Titus 1:9

With humility - Acts 20:19

Does not hesitate to preach anything helpful - Acts 20:20

Teach publicly and from house to house - Acts 20:20

Pastoral care

Able to shepherd the church - 1 Peter 5:2, Acts 20:28

Hospitable - 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8

Serves with a heart of compassion - Acts 20:19

Discipleship/Mentoring - Ephesians 4:12-13

Personal

Tested - 1 Timothy 3:10

Self-controlled - 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8

Loving what is good - Titus 1:8

Upright and holy - Titus 1:8

Disciplined - Titus 1:8

Above reproach (blameless) - 1 Timothy 3:4 - 5, 12, Titus 1:6

Having a good reputation with outsiders - 1 Timothy 3:7

Having one wife - 1 Timothy 3:2, 12, Titus 1:6

Temperate - 1 Timothy 3:2, 8, Titus 1:7

Respectable - 1 Timothy 3:2, 8

Able to manage his family - 1 Timothy 3:4, 12, Titus 1:6

Having obedient children - 1 Timothy 3:4-5, 12, Titus 1:6

Not violent but gentle - 1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7

Not a lover of money - 1 Timothy 3:3

Not quarrelsome - 1 Timothy 3:3

Not a recent convert - 1 Timothy 3:6

Not overbearing - Titus 1:7

Not quick-tempered - Titus 1:7

Not given to drunkenness - 1 Timothy 3:3, 8, Titus 1:7

Not a pursuer of dishonest gain - 1 Timothy 3:8, Titus 1:7

Appendix 3

Qualifications of the Pastor of Sovereign Grace Community Church

1. He must be seen to comply with Biblical standards for an overseer:
 - able to teach the Word clearly and openly
 - a pastoral heart
 - a servant leader
 - must have a good reputation in the church and in the community
2. He must clearly understand and be in agreement with:
 - the Doctrines of Grace
 - New Covenant Theology/Progressive Covenantalism
 - the doctrinal statement of Sovereign Grace Community Church
 - the constitution of SGCC
3. He must display skills as a sound expository preacher, capable of effectively communicating the gospel - as we believe God uses sound expositional preaching to equip believers and reach the lost.
4. He must exhibit a shepherd's heart, demonstrating warmth, humility and gentleness with a genuine love for the flock, which implies that he knows his flock and is involved in both their joys and hurts.
5. He will have a heart for outreach and evangelism, both locally and abroad.
6. He should have basic administrative skills including time management, goal setting, planning, delegation and priority setting.