

CONSTITUTION
of... **Bridges Community Church**
February 27, 2005
Table of Contents

Article 1: NAME	page 1
Article 2: STATEMENT OF FAITH (What We Believe)	page 1
Article 3: PURPOSE (Why We Exist)	page 2
Article 4: MEMBERSHIP (Who Are Members)	page 3-5
<i>Eligibility (Qualifications)</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Admissions Procedure</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Membership Responsibilities</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Voting Rights</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Withdrawal or Termination of Membership</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Membership Reinstatement</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Church Discipline & Restoration Procedures</i>	<i>page 4-5</i>
Article 5: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS & ELECTIONS	page 6-7
<i>Scheduled Church Celebration Meetings</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Special Church Votes & Celebration Meetings</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Public Notice</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Quorum</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Rules of Order</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Nomination Process</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Voting</i>	<i>page 7</i>
<i>Elections</i>	<i>page 7</i>
<i>Vacancies</i>	<i>page 7</i>
Article 6: ORGANIZATION & AFFILIATION	page 8
<i>Congregational Authority</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>Church Leadership</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>Church Incorporation</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>Denominational Affiliation</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>Denomination Liaison</i>	<i>page 8</i>
Article 7: BOARD OF ELDERS	page 9-10
<i>Qualifications</i>	<i>page 9</i>
<i>Selection & Vacancies</i>	<i>page 9</i>
<i>Board Organization</i>	<i>page 9</i>
<i>Elder Responsibilities & Accountability</i>	<i>page 10</i>
Article 8: PASTORAL STAFF	page 11-12
<i>Qualifications</i>	<i>page 11</i>
<i>Selection</i>	<i>page 11</i>
<i>Pastoral Staff Responsibilities & Accountability</i>	<i>page 12</i>
<i>Resignation or Termination of Pastoral Staff</i>	<i>page 12</i>
Article 9: CHURCH OFFICERS	page 13-14
<i>Nominations Team (Selection & Responsibilities)</i>	<i>page 13</i>
<i>Elder Chair</i>	<i>page 13</i>
<i>Church Moderator</i>	<i>page 13</i>
<i>Church Clerk</i>	<i>page 14</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>page 14</i>
Article 10: AMENDMENTS	page 15
<i>Amendment Process</i>	<i>page 15</i>
<i>Approval of Amendments</i>	<i>page 15</i>
<i>Amendment Limitations</i>	<i>page 15</i>
Article 11: PROPERTY & RECORDS	page 15
<i>Property Ownership</i>	<i>page 15</i>
<i>Church Records</i>	<i>page 15</i>

Article 1: NAME

The name of this church shall be: Bridges Community Church

Article 2: STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Scriptures, both Old & New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, & the Divine & final authority for Christian faith & life.
(*2 Tim.3:16-17; 2 Pet.1:20-21; Matt. 5:17-18*)
2. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect, & eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
(*Gen.1:1,26; Deut.6:4; John 1:1,3; Acts 5:3-4; Rom.1:20; Eph.4:5,6; Col.1:16-17; 2:9*)
3. We believe that Jesus is true God & true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit & born of the virgin Mary. He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He is now our High Priest & Advocate.
(*Isa.53; Matt.1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; Rom.9:5; 1 Cor.15:3,4; Heb.4:14-16; 1 John 2:1*)
4. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, & during this age to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct & empower the believer for godly living & service. (*John 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 1:7*)
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin & is therefore lost, & only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation & spiritual life be obtained.
(*Genesis 1:26,27; 3:1-24; John 3:3; Romans 3:10,23; 5:12-18; 1 John 1:8*)
6. We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ & His resurrection provide the only ground for justification & salvation for all who believe, & only such as receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit, & thus become children of God.
(*John 1:12-13; 3:16; Rom.3:24-26; 5:1; 10:9; 2 Cor.5:21; Eph. 1:7; Heb.9:22; 1 John 2:2*)
7. We believe that water baptism & the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as a means of salvation.
(*Matt.26:26-28; 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-47; 8:36-40; 10:47; 18:8; 1 Cor.11:23-26; Eph.2:8-9*)
8. We believe that the true Church is composed of all such persons, who through saving faith in Jesus Christ, have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit & are united together in the Body of Christ of which He is the Head. (*1 Cor.12:13; Eph.4:1-6; Titus 3:5*)
9. We believe that only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local Church.
(*Acts 6:1-6; 15:22; Romans 1:7; Eph. 1:1; Phil.1:1; Col.1:2*)
10. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord & Head of the Church, & that every local church has the right, under Christ, to decide & govern its own affairs. (*Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18*)
11. We believe in the personal, pre-millennial, & imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, & that this "blessed hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life & service of the believer.
(*Matt.24:42-44; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess.4:14-17; Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:1-3*)
12. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness & joy with the Lord; of the unbeliever to judgment & everlasting conscious punishment.
(*John 5:28-29; 2 Cor.5:10; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev.20:11-15*)

Article 3: PURPOSE

The purpose and mission of this church is to Glorify God by helping people come to know & worship Jesus, develop caring relationships, serve others, grow spiritually, & influence others to do the same. We will endeavor to do so by making 5 foundational Biblical purposes our priorities:

1. **OUTREACH** – sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our community & throughout the world, with a heart of compassion to meet their needs. *(Matt.28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2:47; 2 Pet.3:9)*
2. **WORSHIP** – honoring & celebrating Christ in our lives through godly living as individuals, & through regular worship & study of God's Word together as a church family. *(Ps.95:6-7; Matt.22:37-38; John 4:24; Acts 2:46-47; Eph.5:19-20; Heb.10:25)*
3. **RELATIONSHIPS** – fellowshiping, encouraging, supporting, praying, caring for & in other ways edifying one another in personal family life & in the family of God. *(Matt.22:39; John 13:34-35; Acts 2:42,46; Rom.15:5-7; Heb.10:24-25; 1 John 1:7)*
4. **SERVICE** – ministering unselfishly to others in the church family, through discovering & using the gifts & abilities God's given to meet their spiritual, physical & emotional needs. *(Matt.25:34-40; Gal.5:13; 1 Thess.5:11; 1 Peter 4:10-11)*
5. **GROWTH** – developing in maturity, love, discipline, & integrity as individual believers, through a lifestyle of Bible study, prayer, giving, & spiritual accountability that leads to greater outreach, richer worship, deeper relationships & increased service & discipling of others. *(Matt.28:19-20; Acts 2:42; Eph.4:11-13; 2 Tim.2:2; 2 Peter 3:18)*

All ministries of the church will be initiated, supported, & evaluated in light of these Biblical purposes.

Article 4: MEMBERSHIP

Eligibility

Qualifications for church membership:

- a. At least sixteen (16) years of age;
- b. A personal statement of a genuine faith commitment in Jesus Christ for salvation;
- c. Living a life that reflects the fruits of a true faith in God & conforms to the teaching of the Bible as understood & interpreted by the Elders.

Admissions Procedure

New members shall be received into the church in the following manner:

- a. Completion of the church's membership class.
- b. Signed commitment to abide by the Church Relationships Covenant, Statement of Faith, & Constitution, including its member discipline policies.
- c. Elder interview & recommendation. At least one elder will meet with each applicant to answer questions, hear their spiritual testimony of salvation, & inquire about their acceptance of & commitment to the Church Relationships Covenant, Statement of Faith, & Constitution.
- d. Upon recommendation by the Elders, the congregation will be notified by publication in the weekly worship bulletin of the applicant's desire to become a member. If any member should question the spiritual qualifications of any applicant, the reason must be shared in writing with the Elders, who shall investigate & offer assistance. If the membership qualifications are not met, the request for membership shall be denied. If the Elders receive no objections following congregational notification, the applicant shall be accepted as a member without further action.
- e. The applicant shall then be notified of the decision of the Elders.
- f. Applicants admitted to membership shall be officially received & welcomed at a subsequent worship service.

Pastoral Staff:

The calling of a Pastor or pastoral staff member into full time ministry in the church shall concurrently include their, & if also qualified, their spouse's acceptance into membership in the church, unless otherwise directed by the Elders.

Membership Responsibilities

The responsibilities of membership are described in the Church Relationships Covenant.

Voting Rights

All "active" members shall have the right to vote in all matters calling for a Congregational Celebration or Church Vote.

Members shall be considered "inactive" when they move out of the communities into which the church's ministries extends, or if during the previous six (6) months, they have neither registered their attendance at any worship service nor made any financial contributions to the ministries of the church.

- a. Those members determined to be "inactive" shall have no voting rights at any Church Vote or Celebration Meeting & will not be considered part of its required quorum.
- b. Members who are temporarily located away from the church, such as college students, missionaries, or those legitimately unable to attend services through prolonged illness, shall be returned to "active" member status immediately upon their resumption of attendance.
- c. Members designated as "inactive" but who are still in the area, shall be contacted by the Elders to encourage their reengagement & restoration as "active" members.

Withdrawal or Termination of Membership

Members shall be removed from the church membership list for the following reasons:

- a. Death.
- b. Written withdrawal request by the member to the Board of Elders.
- c. Transfer of membership to another church. Upon request of a member in good standing to unite with another church of like faith, a letter of release can be granted.
- d. Termination of membership shall occur for any member who's neither registered their attendance at any worship service nor made any financial contributions to the ministries of the church during the previous six (6) months, & shown no interest in reengagement after due notice & effort by the Elders to make this action unnecessary.
- e. Termination of membership shall occur when a member is living in a way that is contrary to the Word of God as understood by the Elders & after contact & effort by the Elders, refuses to repent.

Any member who has withdrawn or been removed from membership loses all rights of membership in the church, & shall have no claim whatsoever upon the church property.

Membership Reinstatement

Former members of the church may have their membership reinstated upon written request to the Board of Elders, providing they meet the eligibility requirements, & agree to abide by the current Church Relationships Covenant, Statement of Faith, & Constitution (including its Church Discipline policies and procedures).

Church Discipline & Restoration Procedures

Scope of Church Discipline:

Any church member or professing Christian in regular fellowship with the church, who engages in conduct that in the opinion of the Board of Elders is not in harmony with what the Bible teaches, shall be encouraged to repent & forsake such conduct.

Sinful Conduct Necessitating Church Discipline shall include but not be limited to...

- a. divisiveness which is detrimental to the spiritual welfare of the church (Titus 3:10),
- b. immoral behavior (including adultery, fornication, homosexuality – 1 Cor.5-6),
- c. questionable financial conduct (stealing, tax fraud, misuse of funds, properties or assets – 1 Cor.5:11, 6:10),
- d. questionable theological views that are heretical or that stand in direct opposition to the teachings of the church & its Statement of Faith (e.g. - 2 John 7-11).

Purpose & Manner of Church Discipline:

The spiritual restoration of the sinning person & the protection of the spiritual health of the church shall be the purpose of all church discipline. In all cases corrective action shall be administered in love & tenderness as directed in Scripture (Matt.18:15-18; 1 Cor.5; 2 Cor.2:5-11; Gal.6:1-2).

Church Discipline Process:

Every member of the church who has knowledge of a sinning Christian brother or sister should consider it their personal duty to warn & correct that individual.

- a. This warning & corrective action is to be done in private, just between the two of them (Matt.18:15).
- b. However, if the sinning individual does not heed this warning, then the warning member shall again go to him/her accompanied by one or two other believers, to further warn the sinning individual to repent & forsake their wrongful behavior (Matt.18:16).
- c. If that individual still refuses to heed the warning, it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders in a private & confidential manner. However, no accusation shall be taken up by the church against any member or pastor except by the complaint of two or three Christian witnesses (Matt.18:17; 1 Tim.5:19).
- d. Two of the Elders, accompanied by the accusing member shall then attempt to meet with the person accused of sinful behavior to substantiate the concern, & if substantiated, to warn of his/her need to immediately forsake the wrong behavior.
- e. If further action is necessary, that person shall be asked to meet with the Board of Elders for a fair & impartial hearing of all the facts ascertainable. If the sinning individual refuses to forsake their sinful behavior, or refuses to meet with the Elders, church discipline shall result. This shall be done only after prayerful consideration & upon a unanimous vote of the Board of Elders. No Elder, however, is entitled to vote regarding his own discipline.

Nature of the Church's Discipline:

- a. For non members, this shall include their exclusion from serving in any church ministry.
- b. For church members, this shall include their exclusion from serving in any church ministry, termination of their membership & all its rights, & notification to the church membership that this has occurred, by listing their name under the heading "*Church Membership terminated by action of the Board of Elders for disciplinary reasons*".
- c. For pastors or other paid members of the church's staff, their employment by the church shall also be terminated.
- d. The decision of the Board of Elders shall be final, & there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.
- e. A letter shall be sent from the Board of Elders to the sinning individual confirming the termination of their serving, membership, employment, & added encouragement to repent & invitation to restored fellowship when they do (2 Thess.3:14-15).

Restoration Process:

The ultimate purpose of all church discipline is to seek the spiritual restoration to fellowship for any individual who has been disciplined by the church (2 Cor.2:5-11). When repentance has occurred, they are invited to seek re-admittance & restoration to membership as follows...

- a. Submit a written request for re-admittance to the Board of Elders;
- b. Provide satisfactory evidence to the Elders of genuine repentance in the area of wrong doing, & a willingness to forsake such in the future.
- c. Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, the individual shall be restored to fellowship in the church. This restoration may be full & unreserved, or may be restricted in some way if the Elders deem it beneficial to that individual or to the church. Restoration of membership shall result in notification to the church that this has occurred.

Article 5: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS & ELECTIONS

Scheduled Church Celebration Meetings

An Annual Church Celebration Meeting shall be scheduled at the start of the church's ministry year to elect officers, receive financial reports, & transact any church business requiring congregational involvement.

A Church Celebration Meeting shall be scheduled at the start of the church's fiscal year to approve the church's budget. The fiscal year shall be established by the Elder Board.

Special Church Votes or Celebration Meetings

Special Church Votes or additional Church Celebration meetings may be scheduled at any time by the Board of Elders to conduct church business as needed.

- a. The Church Moderator shall supervise & preside over all Church Votes & Church Celebration Meetings.
- b. Any member of the Congregation may request the convening of a special Church Celebration Meeting by presenting such request & purpose in writing to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will determine if the urgency of the matter requires immediate action or can wait until the next regularly scheduled Celebration Meeting.

Public Notice

Notice of all Church Votes & Celebration Meetings & their purpose shall be announced in advance to the membership in two (2) sequential worship bulletins.

Quorum

Ten percent (10%) of the "active" membership, as defined in this Constitution, shall constitute the quorum required for any Church Vote or Celebration Meeting.

Rules of Order

The congregation shall conduct Church Celebration Meetings under the leadership of the Church Moderator, first according to Scripture & then, wherever applicable & not inconsistent with this Constitution or any special order the Elders may establish, according to Roberts Rules of Order.

Nomination Process

Nominations Team:

The Board of Elders shall submit nominees from the church membership for the Nominations Team to the Congregation for their approval.

Elders & Church Officers:

- a. The Nominations Team shall submit one nominee from the church membership for each vacancy on the Board of Elders & elected church Officers to the Annual Church Celebration Meeting for their approval.
- b. They shall publish the names of all nominees at least two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Celebration Meeting.

Voting

Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution...

- a. All matters shall be determined by majority of the members voting;
- b. Voting may be by voice, show of hands, or written ballot.

Absentee voting shall be permissible on ballots provided & supervised by the Church Moderator, must be turned in by the time of the vote, & shall be done in a manner established by the Elders.

Elections

All elective Officers except the Nominations Team shall be voted upon at the Annual Church Celebration Meeting.

- a. Only active members shall be eligible to vote.
- b. Election of Elders & church Officers shall be by written ballot, with three-quarters (3/4) affirmative votes needed for election.
- c. The retiring church Officers shall vacate & the newly elected Officers shall take office upon their election at the Annual Church Celebration Meeting.

Vacancies

An elected or appointed Office shall be designated as vacant upon...

- a. the death or resignation of the church Officer;
- b. establishment of residence in another locality which prevents him/her from fulfilling the duties of the Office;
- c. failure to attend 50% of the regularly scheduled meetings without a valid reason within a six-month period;
- d. removal from office by action of the Board of Elders.

Any elected or appointed Office shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Elders for the remainder of their uncompleted term.

Article 6: ORGANIZATION & AFFILIATION

Congregational Authority

The Congregation shall have the authority to review & make final decisions concerning the church's ministry to insure they conform to the church's purpose, policies & Statement of Faith.

- a. The Congregation shall consist of the active membership of the church as defined in Article 4 of this Constitution.
- b. The Congregation shall call Pastors & elect a Board of Elders & church Officers to oversee the business & ministries of the church in accordance with this Constitution.

Church Leadership

The work of the church shall be under the supervision of the Board of Elders, Pastoral Staff, church Officers & Ministry Teams whom the Elders select in accordance with this Constitution.

To be elected or appointed to these church leadership roles, the qualifications include:

- a. The Biblical requirements for Deacons as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1;
- b. Be a member in good standing of the church as set forth in the Church Membership section of this Constitution (for at least one year).
- c. Have been actively involved in the ministries of the church.
- d. Regularly contributing financially to the church's ministries.

Church Incorporation

The church is incorporated within the State of California as a non-profit organization. The Board of Elders shall serve as the legal Board of Trustees for the corporation.

Designated as "corporate officers" for the conduct of corporation business are...

- a. the Chair of the Board of Elders as the President;
- b. the Treasurer as the Treasurer;
- c. the Church Clerk as the Secretary.

Denominational Affiliation

The church shall remain free & independent & be its own highest decision making authority under Christ.

The church shall work as part of & cooperate with the Evangelical Free Church of America, & the EFCA West District Conference.

- a. It shall send delegates to conferences, support its ministries, & unite in any mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel as the church itself may officially decide.
- b. The Elders shall insure that that the church stay apprised as needed of both Evangelical Free Church of America & EFCA West District ministries, concerns and needs.
- c. The church shall not join itself to any other denomination.

Article 7: BOARD OF ELDERS

Qualifications

To be chosen as an Elder, a man must be...

- a. known to be of exemplary spiritual character (1 Tim.3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9),
- b. full of wisdom, full of the Holy Spirit & full of faith, with great vision for what God can & will do (Acts 6:3-5),
- c. actively involved in the ministries of the church,
- d. regularly contributing financially to the church's ministries.

Selection & Vacancies

The Board of Elders shall be composed of no more than eight (8) Elders from the church membership, the Senior Pastor, & no more than three (3) additional Pastors whom the Senior Pastor may recommend.

- a. The Congregation shall affirm a Board of Elders by written ballot.
- b. Each Elder shall serve one term of two (2) years. If asked by the Nominations Team, each may serve up to two additional two (2) year terms, following which he shall then be ineligible for re-election to the Board of Elders for a period of two (2) years.
- c. Any 'no' votes for an Elder shall be accompanied by the reason for hesitation, & will be shared with that Elder nominee as opportunity for spiritual growth.

When a vacancy occurs on the Board of Elders during the year, the Board shall appoint a new Elder to serve out the remainder of their uncompleted term.

Board Organization

Leadership:

The Board of Elders shall organize itself at the first meeting following their election in the following manner:

- a. Elect from among its members an Elder Chair - to preside over the Board meetings;
- b. Elect from among its members a Church Moderator - to preside over Church Votes & Celebration Meetings, as well as to serve as Elder Vice Chair;
- c. Appoint an Elder Secretary - to record & keep minutes of all Elder meetings.

Minutes:

Minutes of all Elder meetings shall be recorded by the Elder Secretary & be made available on a timely basis to the church membership. Minutes need not include discussions of personal matters.

Quorum:

Half of its members must be present for the Elders to transact business at any Board meeting.

Executive Session:

The Board of Elders may at times convene in Executive Session. In Executive Session, membership shall be limited to Elders, not including the Pastoral Staff. The Senior Pastor & other pastor members may attend at invitation of the Board but will not have voting rights at such sessions.

Elder Responsibilities & Accountability

The Board of Elders shall exercise oversight over all areas affecting the spiritual welfare of the church family, serving as its spiritual overseers & policy board, & being responsible for:

- a. Church Goals & Direction – develop & regularly monitor the church's annual goals & assist the Pastoral Staff in the development & Biblical balance of their service, teaching & ministry priorities.
- b. Church Policies – oversee the development & implementation of church policies & changes in the Constitution that will best enable the church to fulfill its five (5) Biblical purposes.
- c. Pastoral Care – insure the development of discipleship, shepherding & care throughout the church family, & assist the Pastoral Staff in carrying out pastoral duties as needed.
- d. Prayer – pray for the church & for individuals in the church family who are in need.
- e. Church Membership – be responsible for the reception, discipline, dismissal & restoration of church members.
- f. Conflict Resolution – mediate any disputes between various ministries or individuals in the church.
- g. Staff Development & Support – insure healthy staff relations, as well as the proper care & welfare of the Pastoral Staff & their families, including an annual staff evaluation to review salary & other compensation needs, & the calling or dismissal of pastoral staff members.
- h. Communion – coordinate & lead the administration of regular church communion.
- i. Church Finances – review & approve the proposed annual church budget with the Treasurer, to be presented at a Church Celebration Meeting at the start of the church's fiscal year. For unanticipated needs & ministry opportunities, the Board of Elders is authorized to make changes up to three percent (3%) of the total approved church budget, with amounts above that requiring congregation approval. The Elders shall be given discretion for usage of non-budgeted gifts & annual giving that exceeds church expenditures. In the event of emergency needs, the Board of Elders is authorized to take any reasonable action to protect life & property.
- j. Ministry Oversight – appoint ministry directors or ministry teams as are needed to provide leadership in areas where there are no Pastoral Staff responsible, delegating to them such powers & duties as may be required, & requiring them to regularly report to the Elders concerning their work. All subsidiary ministries including the deaf church, Little Lamb Preschool & Daycare, & Benevolent Fund shall serve under the authority of the Board of Elders, who shall retain the right to rescind any decisions or actions they have taken.

The Board of Elders shall be accountable to & serve under the direction of the congregation, & shall keep the church well informed concerning its work & any major decisions.

Article 8: Pastoral Staff

Qualifications

Each individual called or chosen to become part of the Pastoral Staff, must be...

- a. known to be of exemplary spiritual character (1 Tim.3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9);
- b. full of wisdom, full of the Holy Spirit & full of faith, with great vision for what God can & will do (Acts 6:3-5);
- c. gifted by God with the ministry skills, knowledge & experience needed to provide & develop leadership & produce spiritual growth through their assigned area of ministry.

Selection

Senior Pastor:

- a. The Board of Elders shall appoint a Pastoral Search Team that reflects the make-up of the congregation, to solicit male candidates & investigate each regarding their personal beliefs, education, pastoral record, giftedness, & qualifications for the position.
- b. The Pastoral Search Team shall then make their recommendations to the Board of Elders.
- c. The Board of Elders shall invite one candidate at a time to visit the church to provide an opportunity for the congregation to meet the candidate.
- d. The Board of Elders & the Pastoral Staff shall both interview the candidate & establish informal congregational get-acquainted sessions.
- e. A special Congregational Meeting will be called shortly after the visit of the candidate to consider the recommendation of the Board of Elders & job description.
- f. A three-quarters (3/4) affirmative vote shall be necessary for the extension of a call to a Senior Pastor. The vote shall be by secret ballot.

Pastoral Staff:

- a. The addition of any new Pastoral Staff position shall be approved by the congregation either by its inclusion in the church budget, or a special non budgeted provision for that position through a Church Vote or Celebration Meeting.
- b. Pastoral Staff other than the Senior Pastor shall be called by the Board of Elders.
- c. The Elders or a special Pastoral Search Team that they may choose, shall solicit candidates for the position, & investigate each regarding their personal beliefs, education, ministry record, giftedness, & qualifications for the position.
- d. They shall expose any candidate to the primary constituency to be served by that Pastoral Staff member to facilitate feedback & recommendations.
- e. The Senior Pastor shall also interview the candidate & give his recommendation to the Board of Elders, who may extend a call with a three-quarters (3/4) affirmative vote.

Unless otherwise arranged, the calling or choosing of the Senior Pastor & all Pastoral Staff members shall be for an indefinite period of time.

Pastoral Staff Responsibilities & Accountability

Senior Pastor:

- a. Spiritual Leadership – work with the Elders to model servant leadership & provide overall spiritual guidance to the church & its ministries.
- b. Preaching – make the study, teaching & preaching God's Word his chief & primary duty.
- c. Strategic Planning – provide Biblical vision & direction for the congregation that will best achieve the church's purposes & mission.
- d. Leadership Development – give over-all direction & ongoing spiritual & ministry training to the staff & elders, & insure development of leadership training throughout the church.
- e. Worship Service Oversight – oversee arrangements, conduct, & speakers of all the church's public & regular services.
- f. Administration – serve as a voting member of all the church's board, leadership, & ministry teams, & insure the effective administration of the church office staff.
- g. Accountability – be accountable to & serving under the direction of the Board of Elders.

Pastoral Staff:

- a. Administrative Leadership – serve as the primary administrative leaders of the church. The Senior Pastor & no more than three (3) additional Pastors whom the Senior Pastor may recommend shall serve as voting members of the Board of Elders.
- b. Specialized Ministries – fulfill the duties described in their own staff job description.
- c. Accountability – be accountable to & serving under the direction of the Senior Pastor.

Resignation or Termination of Pastoral Staff

When the congregation severs the relationship between the church & a Pastoral Staff member, it shall occur as follows...

- a. Termination of any Pastoral Staff relationship shall be acted upon by the Elders, & shall require a three-quarters (3/4) affirmative vote of the Board of Elders.
- b. Termination of the Senior Pastor relationship shall in addition, require a majority vote of the members of the congregation present at a duly convened Church Celebration Meeting. The vote shall be by written ballot.
- c. The Board of Elders shall immediately notify the membership of any termination action.

When a Pastoral Staff member severs the relationship between the church & that Pastoral Staff member, it shall occur as follows...

- a. Two (2) months notice shall precede a severance of relations between a Pastoral Staff member & the church, unless waived by mutual consent.
- b. The Pastoral Staff member shall submit a letter of resignation to the Board of Elders.
- c. After accepting the letter of resignation, the Board of Elders shall make known this action to the membership.

Article 9: CHURCH OFFICERS

Nominations Team

Selection:

- a. Elder Board shall appoint a Nominations Team, to include the Senior Pastor, the Elder Chair & 3 to 5 additional members of the church.
- b. All members of the Nominations Team shall be members of the church who are actively involved in ministry, & have attended the church for at least one (1) year.

Responsibilities:

- a. Invite the congregation to prayerfully suggest names of possible Elder nominees. All names submitted for consideration shall be handled confidentially & must be Elder qualified.
- b. Ask the Board of Elders to screen & prioritize the names that are submitted, & add any additional names they believe the Nominations Team should also consider.
- c. Work to secure the nomination of one person for each vacant office.
- d. Publish the names of all nominees at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

Elder Chair

Selection:

The Elder Chair shall be an Elder appointed annually by the Board of Elders.

Responsibilities:

- a. Preside over the Elder Board meetings, including the coordinating the items of business to be presented & their presenters, & preparing & publishing the agendas in advance of the meetings, & seeing to it that the overall spiritual tone of each Elder Meeting shall be edifying to all who attend.
- b. Convene & serve as a voting member of the Nominations Team.
- c. Serve as President of the church corporation to act in behalf of the church in handling official correspondence & signing legal documents as directed by the Board of Elders.

Church Moderator

Selection:

The Church Moderator shall be an Elder appointed annually by the Board of Elders.

Responsibilities:

- a. Serve as Vice Chair of the Board of Elders & shall preside over the Elder meetings in the absence of the Chair, or at his request.
- b. Preside over the Church Votes & Church Celebration Meetings, which shall include coordinating the items of business to be presented & their presenters, preparing & publishing the agenda, initiating the Church Vote & Celebration Meeting announcements in the required worship bulletins, overseeing all discussion & voting, & seeing to it that the overall spiritual tone of the Congregational Meetings shall be edifying to all who attend.

Church Clerk

Selection:

The Church Clerk shall be appointed annually from the church membership by the Elder Board. There shall be no specific limitation on terms.

Responsibilities:

- a. Record or insure that accurate minutes are kept of all regular & special Church Votes & Celebration Meetings, & of all Board of Elders meetings.
- b. Oversee the maintenance of the membership records of the church.
- c. Determine the quorum of "active" members required prior to any Church Celebration Meeting.
- d. Maintain a current copy of the church Constitution.
- e. Serve as Secretary of the church corporation to act in behalf of the church in handling official correspondence.

Treasurer

Selection:

- a. The congregation shall elect the Treasurer at its Annual Church Celebration Meeting from among the church membership.
- b. He/she shall serve a one-year term with indefinite succession possible.

Responsibilities:

- a. Insure the keeping of accurate, auditable records of all disbursements of funds for the church.
- b. Disburse funds as directed by the church budget & the Board of Elders.
- c. Provide regular reports on the state of the church's finances to the Board of Elders & written reports to the congregation at the regularly scheduled Church Celebration Meetings.
- d. Maintain the financial health of the church by evaluating & recommending investment & cash flow management options to the Board of Elders.
- e. Insure the keeping of accurate, auditable records of all income for the church & assist auditors when they are appointed by the church to review the financial records. Submit to the Elders a detailed report & accounting of such income.
- f. Make sure that at least two (2) persons authorized by the Elder Board are present when church offerings are counted, & deposit all funds in the bank as directed by the church, maintaining duplicate deposit slips.
- g. Insure the maintenance of accurate & confidential contribution records: mailing giving statements each quarter & at the end of each calendar year to those contributors, & mailing receipts to each contributor of any 'gift in kind' or similar contribution in a timely manner after receipt.
- h. Provide, upon request, statistical data on church giving to the Board of Elders.
- i. Oversee the development & presentation of the annual budget to the congregation.
- j. Sign such legal documents as have been directed by the Board of Elders.

Article 10: AMENDMENTS

Amendment Process

Proposed amendments to this constitution must be presented in written form at least one (1) month prior to the time of their adoption at a Church Vote or duly convened Celebration Meeting.

Approval

Approval of amendments to this Constitution shall require a two-thirds (2/3) of votes cast by written ballot at any Church Vote or duly convened Celebration Meeting.

Limitations

Article 2: Statement of Faith cannot be repealed or revised, except to bring it into conformity with the Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Article 11: PROPERTY & RECORDS

Property Ownership

The church shall have the authority to buy, own, lease, & sell real & personal property in its own name.

- a. If division occurs in the church, the name & all property are retained by those adhering to the Constitution.
- b. If the church ceases to function & its organization is dissolved, the property shall return to the EFCA West District to enable it to renew the work or use the value thereof for further Gospel enterprises.

Church Records

The church shall keep & maintain the following records:

- a. Financial records (adequate and correct books & records of accounts);
- b. Written minutes (of all duly called Church Votes, Celebration Meetings & Elder Meetings);
- c. Church membership (list of members to be kept current);
- d. Contribution statements (made available for all contributors).
- e. Asset records (church property, facilities, equipment, etc.)

All such records (with the exception of contribution statements) shall be kept at the church's office, & shall be available for inspection by any member of the church.