

**THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF
COVENANT GRACE CHURCH
OF
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO**

AS RATIFIED ON 28 JANUARY 2024

PREAMBLE

Whereas, we, a body of believers in Jesus Christ, organized for the purpose of fellowship and proclamation of the gospel of our Lord and Savior as recorded in the Holy Scriptures, deem it wise that we have certain laws to serve as criteria to work by; and help preserve the purpose and function of the local church; therefore be it resolved: that beginning with its legal adoption thereof we shall be governed by the following Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization, a non-profit religious corporation organized under the laws of the State of Colorado, is Covenant Grace Church, an affiliate of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ, promote biblical values, foster holy conduct, and tend to the spiritual needs of the congregation.

ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus-Israel's promised Messiah-was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose partnership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Membership

1. This church shall receive as Members only those who have by a credible profession of faith submitted to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and who live accordingly by word and deed.
2. Membership requires submission to baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit either before or as part of the membership process.
3. No person shall be excluded from membership because of biological sex, race, national or ethnic origin or skin color.
4. Members under the age of 18 shall be received as “Junior Members” (see Article IV Section 5) with limited rights and responsibilities when it comes to church administration, but full recognition and inclusion as members of the body of Christ.
5. Membership requires agreement with and willingness to live in harmony with all elements of the church’s Statement of Faith (Article III).
6. Membership requires abidance in and with this Constitution and these Bylaws, as well as published policies of the church.
7. Membership requires agreement with and abidance in a membership covenant that shall be prepared by the Elders and affirmed by the Members, consistent with these articles.
8. The Elders shall examine all applicants for membership to determine if they are eligible. Eligible applicants are those who are sincere followers of Christ (as described above) and support the purpose of this local church (as stated in Article II). The Elders may reject an application for membership as ineligible if they determine the applicant does not have a credible profession of faith or the moral and/or spiritual character of an individual is not consistent with biblical Christianity, biblical values, or the purpose of this church. Applicants shall therefore be required to share a personal testimony of faith in Christ and answer questions from selected Elders or those whom the Elders designate.
9. After affirmation of eligibility by the Elders, applicants shall be presented to the existing Members for affirmation and inclusion into membership. Any Member of the church who objects must give written reason and cause to an Elder. The Elders shall measure the merit of all objections according to Scripture and this Constitution. If the objections are found to be disqualifying for membership, the Elders shall inform the applicant and devise a course of action to resolve the objection and restore the applicant to eligibility.
10. After a period of review by existing Members, those applicants found eligible shall be admitted into church membership, formally presented to the congregation, and given the

right hand of fellowship at a gathered Sunday worship service as soon as can be arranged. This shall be accomplished via the Affirmation Process (Bylaws Article IV Section 5).

11. Staff pastors automatically become Members upon receipt and acceptance of a call from the church. A staff pastor shall not be called if he is ineligible for membership as described above.

12. Members not under discipline as described in Article IV Section 4 are considered to be in "Good Standing." Members under discipline are likewise not considered to be "In Good Standing."

13. Members in Good Standing, the age of 18 and older, may participate in the budget/bylaw/elder or other affirmation processes.

14. Any Member who has withdrawn or transferred membership, been placed under discipline (or otherwise not in Good Standing), has no right nor claim upon the church business or property, real or personal.

Section 2 - Membership Covenant

1. Members of this church agree to abide in the following by the grace of God and through the help of the Holy Spirit:

- i. Live in submission to Jesus as Lord.
- ii. Live in accordance with biblical principles in all areas of life.
- iii. Live in agreement with the Statement of Faith (Article III).
- iv. Abide by the Constitution, By-Laws, and policies of the church.

2. The Elders shall prepare (and from time-to-time update and amend) a "Membership Covenant," but it shall consist of no less than those elements contained above. All amendments must be affirmed by the Members in good standing before adoption.

Section 3 - Membership Roll

1. The membership roll shall be overseen and maintained by the Elders.
2. The membership roll shall be reviewed by the Elders regularly to ensure the needs of all Members are being met.
3. Members in good standing may request to be removed from membership or to receive a "Letter of Good Standing" if they move. Other reasons for termination of membership are subject to acceptance by the elders.

Section 4 - Discipline

1. The Membership Covenant exists for the sanctification and flourishing of the body of Christ. While discipline may be necessary, it is to be administered in the spirit of restoration and reconciliation of the Member.

2. No accusation shall be considered by the church against any Elder or Member that is not brought in accordance with biblical principles.

3. If the Elders determine that a Member is not willfully and/or sincerely abiding in the Membership Covenant, is found to be living or teaching contrary to the Bible and/or the Statement of Faith, then membership may be put "In Trust for Discipline." Members under discipline shall be counseled in love and biblical truth by the Elders to bring about restoration and reconciliation.

4. If efforts to bring about restoration and reconciliation are resisted or rejected (as determined by the Elders), then the Member may be dismissed, requiring him/her to cease attending this church. A dismissed Member's membership shall be held "In Trust for Discipline" until which time restoration and reconciliation have been achieved.

5. If Members under discipline decide to leave or request removal from membership at this church before and/or without resolving the underlying discipline issue, their membership will remain "In Trust for Discipline" until which time restoration and reconciliation can be achieved.

6. The Elders reserve the right to share the status of discipline and/or membership with other churches that Members under discipline decide to attend, for the purpose of achieving restoration and reconciliation of the Member. The discipline process implies no inherent right to privacy apart from that which local/state/federal laws and those herein provide.

7. Frequent attenders meeting the standard(s) for discipline shall likewise be counselled in love and biblical truth by the Elders.

Section 5 - Junior Members

1. Candidates under the age of 18 years shall be received as "Junior Members" if they otherwise meet the requirements for adult membership.

2. Junior Members may not vote, or participate in the affirmation of elders, the budget, and ministry leads but Junior Members in Good Standing are encouraged to engage in the process and discussion of church business.

3. Upon reaching the age of 18, a Junior Member shall automatically become a regular Member and receive the full rights and privileges thereof.

4. All Members under the age of 18 and still living at home are subject to their parent(s) authority and any discipline undertaken must be done so in consultation with and with permission of the Junior Member's parent(s) (as defined by those with legal custody of said minor aged person) and in accordance with local/state/federal laws.

ARTICLE V - RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1 - Local Autonomy

This church is independent and free so far as relates to its internal organization and the regulation of its own affairs. It is in subjection to no ecclesiastical body, except by its own consent. It controls the admission, discipline and removal of its Elders, Members and leaders according to its own understanding of the Bible.

Section 2 - Denomination

1. Realizing the necessity and advantage of united effort and being in general accord with the aim and scope of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA), this church has applied for and has been accepted for partnership in such, and endeavors to cooperate with the Evangelical Free Church at large and its various functions that prove in accord with its purpose. In order to maintain its membership in the Evangelical Free Church of America, this church understands that: (1) Its Statement of Faith must be verbatim that of the EFCA at the time of this writing, (2) Its Constitution and Bylaws must conform to the policies and practices of the EFCA and RMD, and (3) Individuals applying for membership in this church must preclude disagreement with any of, and willingness to live in harmony with, all ten (10) articles in the EFCA Statement of Faith (as contained in Article III of this Constitution).

2. As an independent and autonomous church, Covenant Grace Church voluntarily associates with the EFCA, retaining all intellectual property rights, monies, and property held under this corporation. The church name, all monies, all intellectual property, and all church property (real or otherwise) belong to and shall be retained by Covenant Grace Church.

ARTICLE VI - PROPERTY RIGHTS

1. This church shall have the power to buy, own, and sell property (real or otherwise) in its corporate name.

2. Conveyance or encumbrance of all or any real property may be made, provided, however, that any such action receives affirmation from a quorum of Members in good standing (in accordance with the Affirmation Process found in the By-laws, Article IV Section 5) present at a business meeting duly called meeting. Instruments of conveyance or encumbrance so authorized shall be executed in the name of the church by a designee appointed by the Elders. All acquisition of other property (non-real estate such as materials, etc) shall be done in accordance with a church budget affirmed by Members in good standing at a meeting duly called for that purpose.

3. In the event the church otherwise permanently disbands or should the corporation be dissolved (by two-thirds majority vote of the Members in good standing), the right, title, and interest in and to all of the real and other property of the church shall come under the stewardship of remaining Members in good standing to dispense with as they see fit, in such manner as to not personally benefit any Elder or Member of the church, and in such a manner to advance the glory of Christ and his church. In the event of a division of the church without a two-thirds majority vote, the church name and all church property shall be retained by those Members remaining and adhering to this Constitution and these Bylaws regardless of number.

4. In the event the church otherwise irreparably ceases to function (and no Members in good standing remain), the right, title, and interest in and to all of the real and other property of the church shall accrue to the benefit of, and be vested in the Rocky Mountain District of the Evangelical Free Church of America or the successor to said Church Body, provided, however, that the Rocky Mountain District of the Evangelical Free Church of America or its successor organization shall at the time of designation, be exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, or under such successor provision of the Code as may then be in effect. If the Rocky Mountain District of the Evangelical Free Church of America is not so exempt from federal income tax at the time of dissolution of the church, then all of the real and personal property of the church shall be distributed to the Evangelical Free Church of America.

ARTICLE VII - MARIAGE

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Covenant Grace Church will only recognize marriages between one man and one woman as determined biologically at conception. Further, the Elders, pastors, and staff shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages of the same. Finally, the facilities and property of Covenant Grace Church shall only be used to support weddings of Members that meet these criteria.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

Amendments, additions, or changes to this Constitution may be made at a duly called business meeting by way of the Affirmation Process (See By-laws Article IV Section 5). Motions may be made by unanimous agreement of Elders in good standing or by Members in good standing provided they produce written support from at least 25% of the Members in good standing. Motions must be provided in writing to the Elders enabling sufficient time for review and application of the Affirmation Process. If the Elders deem the motion to be unbiblical and/or immoral, or inconsistent with the statement of faith, the motion will be denied, and the applicant informed.

BY LAWS

ARTICLE I - STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT

1. Ultimate authority over the church resides with the Lord Jesus Christ himself, as revealed in Scripture.
2. The governance of the church is vested in the Members in good standing, who constitute the highest human authority under Christ in Covenant Grace Church.
3. The leadership and operation, of the church is vested in a duly appointed plurality of Elders (more than one), a body of equals, none possessing more authority or privilege than the next. Elders shall be affirmed by the Members through the affirmation process (Article IV Section 5 of these Bylaws) and are accountable to the same.
4. Covenant Grace Church is thereby Elder Led, Congregationally Ruled.

ARTICLE II - ELDERS

Section 1 - Qualifications

1. The Elders shall be men and Members of this church who:
 - Exhibit godly character, living above reproach in accordance with biblical principles.
 - Fully believe in and submit to the inerrancy and authority of the Bible.
 - Fully believe and publicly support the Statement of Faith of this church.
 - Agree to abide by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies of this church.
 - Manifest the character called for by the Scriptures (1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9, 1 Pet 5:1-3).
2. The determination as to whether any sitting Elder or candidate thereto meets these qualifications belongs to the sitting Elders in good standing.

Section 2 - Selection

1. To serve in the office of Elder is a calling from God, revealed by the Holy Spirit, and affirmed by the church. On occasion and as the needs of ministry require, the Elders shall select qualified men as candidates to serve in the office of Elder, to present to the congregation for affirmation.
2. Selection will be made on the basis of biblical character (Section 1 above).

3. The staff pastors will serve as an Elder by virtue of their position. Biblical character consistent of an elder is a condition of employment.

Section 3 - Term of Service

1. Each Elder shall be affirmed by the Members of the church each year, normally at the annual business meeting. New elders may be affirmed at any congregational gathering (as deemed necessary by the sitting elders) so long as the affirmation process is followed.

2. There shall be no inherent limit as to how long an Elder may serve if he serves well and does not disqualify himself. However, the Members may develop policies that impose term limits to give men rest and make opportunities for other qualified men to serve.

3. Members shall be made aware of any additions to or removals of Elders and the reasons for the change(s).

Section 4 - Evaluation, Discipline and Accountability

1. As Members of this church, Elders are subject to the same standards and accountability as Members, but Scripture levies additional requirements, maturity, and accountability above and beyond that of membership.

2. The Elders shall develop a covenant (to be shared with the Members) for Elders to agree to and abide in as a means of accountability and self-discipline. Such covenants agreed to by Elders are binding as to their word and honor. Failure to abide in such a covenant presents grounds for dismissal.

3. Elders are individually and directly accountable to the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, for all their actions and decisions (Hebrews 13:17). Therefore, the body of Elders shall evaluate itself and its Members as a self-disciplining body according to biblical principles (Matthew 18:15-20; II Thessalonians 3:14-15; I Timothy 5:19-20). The Elders are also accountable to the congregation according to biblical principles (1 Tim 5:19). Therefore, any charge against an Elder brought by two or three witnesses or brought by public evidence shall be duly considered and investigated by the remaining Elders as to the merits and substance of the claim or evidence.

4. If the Elders determine that an Elder is not fulfilling the duties of his office, is no longer qualified, or is disqualified, he shall be asked to resign in writing by the Elders. If he refuses to resign, he may be recommended to the Members for removal by a two-thirds majority vote by the Members in good standing.

Section 5 - Function

1. For the purposes of this incorporation, the Elders shall carry out the routine operation

and leadership of the church, serving as the officers of the corporation. Any such corporate titles serve the corporation only and do not indicate any special rights or privilege within God's church.

2. The primary biblical function of the Elders is prayer and the ministry of the word.
3. The basis of all deliberations and activities of the Elders shall be Scripture.
4. A quorum for an Elder meeting shall consist of a simple majority (but at least two) of the sitting Elders in good standing.

Section 6 - Organization

1. The Elders shall be self-organizing. That is, the various functions and areas of responsibility shall be decided among the Elders by the Elders.
2. The Elders will elect from the Elders in good standing the following officers each year:
 - a. President.
 - b. Secretary.

The role of President and Secretary exist for the purpose of administering the corporation only. These offices hold no special authority over the spiritual matters of the church, nor do they imply special status as all Elders are equals.

ARTICLE III – MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

1. Ministry teams, committees, and select representatives may be created by the Elders as needed for effective and efficient service in the church. Leaders of such shall be appointed from the Members in good standing by the Elders. Leaders may select team members from the congregation.
2. Elders shall develop guidance and policies outlining the roles, responsibilities, authorities, and delegations for such appointments. An Elder shall be appointed to oversee and advise each ministry team, committee, and select representative.
3. Members of ministry teams, committees, and representatives may be removed by Elders as biblical grounds warrant.
4. Ministries, ministry teams, and committees may be assigned an annual budget by the Members (via the affirmed church budget). These budgets may be executed under the supervision of the appointed ministry team lead, in accordance with the identified purpose of the budgeted funds. An affirmed budget is authority to spend funds (and/or incur costs for reimbursement) by the ministry teams.

ARTICLE IV - BUSINESS MEETINGS

Section 1 - Scheduled Meetings

1. This corporation shall have at least one scheduled business meeting during each fiscal year. This will be the Annual Meeting, normally held in the last month of the preceding fiscal year or the first month of the new fiscal year, on a date set by the Elders and published to the Members.

2. The Annual Meeting date and time shall be announced at least 28 days prior to the meeting in writing or at a Sunday at worship service.

3. The proposed budget, persons, and decisions to be affirmed, and business agenda shall be made available to Members at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the meeting. This notice shall be accomplished on two (2) consecutive Sundays at worship services prior to the meeting, or by written notice to the Members with public announcement on at least one (1) Sunday service prior. Email suffices for written notice.

4. The church budget, Elders, and candidates for Elder will be presented for affirmation by the Members at the annual meeting.

5. By-law and Constitution changes are not typical or expected each annual meeting but may be offered (See Article VII for nomination process).

6. Other business items may be included but must be presented to the Elders at least fifteen (15) days prior to the annual meeting (to give at least a day for consideration).

7. A Quorum (section 6 below) is required to affirm the budget, Elders, and other decisions in accordance with the Affirmation Process (Article IV Section 5 of these Bylaws).

Section 2 - Special Meetings

1. Special congregational meetings may be called to address any business not normally addressed in the annual meeting, or as occasion necessitates.

2. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Elders or by a signed written request from at least twenty-five (25) percent of the Members in good standing.

3. The Elders may adjust any line item in the budget by 10% so long as the total annual budget of the church does not increase by more than 5% over the affirmed budget total. Any other changes will require an amendment through a special meeting. Line items will be established by the budget at the time of affirmation at the annual meeting, or by subsequent amendment. New line items require amendment and affirmation by the Members.

4. Special meetings, along with the stated purpose of the meeting, shall be announced

at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the meeting. Announcement may be made on two (2) consecutive Sundays during worship services or by written notice to the Members and announcement on one (1) Sunday service prior to the meeting.

Section 3 - Voting Rights

Members in good standing eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be eligible to vote when appropriate and/or participate in the Affirmation Process (Article IV Section 5 below). The Affirmation Process is the ordinary means for decision making, votes being by exception.

Section 4 - Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall begin January 1st and end the following December 31st. of each year.

Section 5 – Decisions by Member Affirmation: The “Affirmation Process”

Covenant Grace Church shall operate under an “Affirmation Process” for all decisions made, unless otherwise described herein. They include affirming:

- Installation of Elders and Staff Pastors
- Determining Members
- Annual budget and major purchases
- By-law or Constitution adoption or amendments

The Affirmation Process consists of the following steps.

1. Decision topic or item to be affirmed is announced to Members in good standing.
 - a. In writing*, 14 days in advance of the annual business meeting.
 - b. Announced on two (2) consecutive Sundays at worship services prior to the meeting, or by written notice* to the Members with public announcement on at least one (1) Sunday service prior.
2. Opportunity is provided for Members to offer amendments, feedback, or objections.
 - a. Anonymous feedback/amendments/objections shall not be considered or discussed.**
 - b. Only written feedback/amendments/objections will be considered.***
 - c. Elders will consider all reasonable feedback/amendments and biblical objections for incorporation.
 - d. Elders shall investigate any disqualifying information or biblical objections to determine the validity or applicability to the decision at hand.
 - e. Elders shall seek resolution with the party making valid objections.
 - f. Un-biblical objections or unsubstantiated accusations will be dismissed.
3. Amend proposal for decision (if necessary).
 - a. If Elders deem an amendment or alteration is necessary, it shall be made

known to the Members in writing and by announcement at Sunday service prior to the decision.

- b. The meeting shall be rescheduled if Members are not afforded one (1) full week to review amendments, or if the Elders deem the amendment is significant enough to restart the Affirmation Process.

4. Affirmation.

- a. A quorum must be present (in person or by written proxy) at the decision.
- b. Because objections have had an opportunity to be heard and resolved, new objections will not normally be heard at the meeting unless extenuating circumstances prevented previously attention. The Elders will determine if extenuating circumstances warrant the hearing of new objections.
- c. Amendments/feedback or motions that would substantially or materially change the item to be affirmed will also not normally be heard. If the Elders determine that extenuating circumstances warrant new amendments, the Affirmation Process will be postponed and reinitiated for that item. Members may also motion to postpone a decision based on extenuating circumstances. A vote of Members will be held and the motion will be sustained if two-thirds of Members in good standing present agree.****
- d. The Elders shall present the decision topic, amendments, valid objections, and associated resolution measures to the congregation.
- e. The Elders shall ask Members if any cannot affirm the measure as presented, living in harmony with it.
- f. If a Member cannot affirm the measure in good conscience, the decision shall be deferred no less than two (2) weeks, allowing Elders to consider objections.

5. Resolution.

- a. After two (2) weeks of consideration and attempts to resolve objections, if the Elders deem the issue is still worthy of consideration, a second affirmation decision will be held.
- b. If the objecting Member still cannot live in harmony with the decision, it will be put to a vote.
- c. The matter will be considered affirmed with a four-fifths or greater majority (based on a quorum present or by proxy). Otherwise, it will not be affirmed.
- d. If affirmed by four-fifths vote, the objecting Member will be once again asked if he/she can live in harmony with the decision. If the answer is "no," the objecting Member will be asked to withdraw membership without prejudice. If he/she refuses, membership will be placed in trust for discipline until such a time as the he/she can consent to live in harmony with the church's decision.

* Email is sufficient for written notice. Read receipts and responses are not necessary.

** For each objection, the objecting Member must be identified so that the Elders can investigate the objection(s) to determine its validity. The Elders must then be able to report back to the congregation whether or objection has merit.

*** Email suffices if the Elder notified responds having received the email.

Section 6 - Quorums

A quorum consists of two-thirds of active Members in good standing to be present, or present by proxy.

ARTICLE V – PASTORS / STAFF TEACHING ELDERS

Section 1 - The Calling of a Pastor/Lead Teaching Elder

1. As need and circumstance warrant, the Elders shall nominate a candidate to the Members to serve as the Lead Teaching Elder (a.k.a. Pastor). The nominee(s) shall be evaluated in by the same criteria as any Elder, with an emphasis on the ability to preach.

2. The elders shall devise a plan to select and introduce the nominee to the Members and familiarize them prior to affirmation with sufficient time and depth. Insufficient time or depth will be considered legitimate objections if offered by a Member in good standing (when offered in good faith) and shall be duly considered.

3. By way of the affirmation process, the Members shall affirm or not affirm a nominee to the Lead Teaching Elder role. This may be done at the annual or a special business meeting.

4. Candidates to any paid pastoral role must be credentialed with the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) or agree to become credentialed with the EFCA as a condition of employment. Lead Teaching Elders must agree to pursue ordination with the EFCA. A reasonable timeline to affect this requirement may be negotiated between the candidate and the Elders.

Section 2 – The Hiring of Staff

1. Candidates for other paid ministry, or staff positions shall likewise be nominated by the Elders and affirmed by the Members. Elders may make nominations as needs and circumstance present themselves.

2. Candidates for pastoral roles other than Lead Teaching Elder shall likewise be evaluated with respect to the qualifications of an Elder.

3. Credentialing in the form of licensing by the EFCA shall be highly encouraged for all paid staff, and likewise be considered with respect to compensation.

4. All paid staff must be eligible and become Members as a condition of employment.

3 - Termination of Office

1. Any staff member, pastor and/or Lead Teaching Elder shall serve, with no inherent term limit or guarantee of continued employment.

2. The employment agreement between any staff member and the church may be dissolved at the option of either (employee or Elders), by the giving of a one (1) month notice or by mutual consent. Employees giving at least one month notice will be allowed to move on without prejudice and receive a letter of recommendation.

3. If a staff pastor should disqualify himself with respect to the office of Elder, either by his conduct or his doctrine, it creates grounds for immediate dismissal and termination of pay and benefits. Elders may elect to pursue discipline to restore the staff pastor.

4. If any other staff member should disqualify himself or herself with respect to church membership it creates grounds for immediate dismissal and termination of pay and benefits. Elders may elect to pursue discipline to restore the staff member.

5. If a staff pastor demonstrates ineffectiveness in ministry, the Elders shall admonish him in love and provide written feedback to those ends. Should this not produce the desired result in a reasonable time, said pastor may be discharged by the elders (as action of the church), by the giving of a one (1) month notice.

6. A Lead Teaching Elder may be discharged from his office by the church Members subject to the following conditions:

- a. A quorum of the Members in good standing are present at a properly called business meeting called for that purpose.
- b. After hearing the reasons for his recommended dismissal, the Lead Teaching Elder shall be afforded the right of making a response before the Members. He (and his family) shall absent themselves at the time of voting.
- c. A ballot vote of two-thirds majority of all Members in good standing is required to make a motion to remove a Lead Teaching Elder valid. Absent Members, by virtue vote to retain the Lead Teaching Elder (proxy votes will not be considered). Termination by Member vote alone will constitute a "vote of no confidence" and not a termination on grounds of moral failure or other disqualification.

7. Elders shall oversee and be responsible for the termination of other staff Members, and they shall not be subject to a Member vote of no confidence.

ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS AND PROVISIONS

Amendments, additions, or changes to these Bylaws may be made at any congregational meeting by way of the forementioned Affirmation Process (Article IV Section 5). Motions may be made by a simple majority of Elders in good standing or Members in good standing provided they produce written support from at least 25% of the Members in good standing. Motions must be provided in writing to the Elders enabling sufficient time for review and application of the Affirmation Process. If the Elders deem the motion to be unbiblical and/or immoral, the motion will be denied, and the applicant informed.