

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF THE
EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

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CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Evangelical Free Church of Naperville, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be "The Evangelical Free Church of Naperville."

ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY AND AFFILIATION

Authority: The congregation, at its regular and special business meetings, is the legislative and governing body of this organization.

Affiliation: This Church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America through its Great Lakes District Conference and shall send delegates to their conferences, support their Home and Foreign Missions, and unite in all mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ in the measure that the church itself may officially decide.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every way prescribed or approved by the Holy Scriptures, to engage in such religious, educational, charitable, and benevolent work as the Constitution and By-Laws of this organization may determine.

ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith of this organization shall be the same as that of the Great Lakes District Conference and the Evangelical Free Church of America, which reads as follows:

1. We believe the Scriptures, both Old and 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 and the Divine and final authority for Christian faith and life.
2. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and 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 and Advocate.

ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT OF FAITH continued

4. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service.
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore lost, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
6. We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and, thus, become children of God.
7. We believe that water baptism and 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.
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 and are united together in the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.
9. We believe that only those who are, thus, members of the Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.
10. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church and that every local church has the right, under Christ, to decide and govern its own affairs.
11. We believe in the personal premillennial and imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.
12. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord; of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this CHURCH shall be composed of individuals who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who give evidence by their confession and their conduct that they are living in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE VI - PROPERTY

Section 1: This CHURCH shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Illinois and as is deemed necessary for the business of the CHURCH, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of the CHURCH.

Section 2: In case of a division of the CHURCH, the name and property of the CHURCH shall belong to those who abide by its Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 3: In case of dissolution of the CHURCH organization, the property shall be assigned to the Great Lakes District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America, to enable said conference to renew the work or use the values thereof for further Gospel enterprises. The CHURCH shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the organization, or when the CHURCH has not held an annual meeting for three years, or when less than six members remain.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution must be submitted to the members in writing and adopted as a preliminary step at a regular business meeting of the CHURCH at least three months prior to the Annual Meeting. At the succeeding Annual Meeting, they can be acted upon and must then receive the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership present and voting for adoption.

ARTICLE VIII - PROVISION FOR BY-LAWS

The Constitution recognizes the existence and force of its By-Laws, a supplemental document providing specific rules, procedures and requirements for membership, government and meetings of the CHURCH.

Rules and procedures for amendments or additions to the By-Laws shall be as provided for in the By-Laws.

BY - LAWS

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Qualifications

Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the assurance of salvation, and whose character, conduct, and reputation is in accord with his or her confession, who subscribes to the Statement of Faith set forth in the Constitution, who accepts the Constitution and By-Laws of this organization, and who is willing to support the Church in attendance, prayers and material means, may become a member of this organization, here-in after referred to as the "CHURCH".

Membership in good standing is required for voting, serving in an elected position and serving in an appointed leadership position and for serving on an advisory search committee. Membership is strongly recommended for serving on committees, teaching Sunday education classes, working with club programs, or serving in other areas not prescribed by the By-laws. Qualifications for positions would be determined by the Elder Board.

Section 2 - Admission

Admission to membership in the CHURCH shall be as follows:

- a. Application for membership shall be made to the Senior Pastor, any other pastor, Chairman of the CHURCH, or to any member of the Elder Board. Applicants shall be given a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the CHURCH and shall attend a membership class that provides instruction in CHURCH doctrine and policy under the supervision of the Pastor and the Elder Board.
- b. Following such instruction, applicants shall meet with members of the Elder Board, or their designated representatives to give personal testimony of their salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give evidence of their understanding of and submitting to the Statement of Faith and the Constitution and By-Laws of the CHURCH.
- c. Upon recommendation of the Elder Board, the names of the applicants shall be published for CHURCH members for at least two Sundays or by letter to members. This communication will request members in the congregation to comment on the candidates offering scriptural basis for which any candidate should not become a member. Based upon the response to this communication, the Elder Board will vote qualified candidates into membership at any regular, or special, Elder Board meeting.
- d. The accepted applicants shall be publicly welcomed into membership at some subsequent regular worship service of the CHURCH.
- e. Membership is strongly recommended for all regular attenders and demonstrates commitment to the ministry of the local body of believers.

Section 3 - Conduct

- a. Regular attendance at the services of the CHURCH, daily reading of the Bible, private and family devotions, personal and public testimony, and the winning of others to Christ are urged upon each member. It shall be the sacred duty of parents to provide Christian instruction for their children. Each member shall consider it a sacred duty and privilege to make full use of his or her talents for the Lord's service whenever opportunity affords.

- b. All members are encouraged to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, and to be courteous in speech and slow to anger.
- c. Each member is urged to pledge himself or herself to a systematic contribution of a portion of his or her income for the support of the CHURCH, according to principles laid in I Corinthians 16:2.
- d. Each member is called upon to heed the admonition of the Lord: "Do not love the world or the things of the world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (I John 2:15; Romans 12:2; I Timothy 4:12). He or she is expected to abstain from any act or practice which may be harmful in its influence or a stumbling block to the weak (Romans 14:13, 21).

Section 4 - Absence

- a. The CHURCH membership list shall be reviewed each year by the Secretary prior to the Annual Meeting. Members who have moved away from the local area or who have not been in attendance during the previous year shall be listed as inactive, non-voting members. This action shall be taken by the Elder Board upon the recommendation of the Secretary.
- b. The Secretary will attempt to notify, by mail, those who have been moved to an inactive, non-voting status. Unless the CHURCH receives information stating they wish to retain their membership, their names will be removed from the membership list. This action shall be taken by the Elder Board upon the recommendation of the Secretary.

Section 5-Withdrawal

Any member who wishes to withdraw from the CHURCH shall make that request for withdrawal in writing.

Section 6-Discipline

- a. If a member shall conduct himself or herself in a manner which, in the opinion of the Senior Pastor and Elder Board, is not in harmony with the Scriptural principles and for which he or she does not show evidence of repentance, he or she shall be interviewed and counseled by the Senior Pastor and the Elder Board after the matter clearly indicated in the Word of God. (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1). The restoration of the erring member shall be the single purpose and love the sole motivating force in these interviews.
- b. If, however, the member should choose to continue in his or her unrepentant condition, he or she shall be deprived of membership. This can be done only by the CHURCH upon a recommendation from the Elder Board and by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at the regular business meeting of the CHURCH.

Section 7-Property Rights

- a. Any member who has withdrawn or has been excluded from the CHURCH loses all rights to the CHURCH.
- b. The private property of the individual members of the CHURCH shall be exempt from corporate debt.

ARTICLE II-GOVERNMENT

Section 1: Officers, Boards & Committees

The officers of the church shall be the Senior Pastor, Chairman, Elders, Treasurer, and such other officers as shall be deemed necessary by the CHURCH. Officers are authorized to act on behalf of the CHURCH when in their designated area of responsibility. All officers of the CHURCH must be of strong Christian character, tithers, having a "good report" as consistent with biblical principles as found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9. Their election or appointment and duties are set forth in the continuation of this section. The Elder Board will annually approve a policy to delegate authority to act on behalf of the Church for the various non-officer positions.

A. Senior Pastor

1. The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, lead the public services of the CHURCH and watch over the spiritual welfare of the CHURCH. His purpose among the believers is to lead them to a life of discipleship by instruction from the Word of God and by an example of faith and good works. He shall report to the Annual Meeting as to the work and condition of the CHURCH. By virtue of his position, he shall have power to address and vote in all committees of the CHURCH.
2. The Senior Pastor shall be chosen by a two-thirds affirmative vote, taken by secret ballot of the members of the congregation present and voting at any regular or special business meeting of the CHURCH. Fifty percent (50 %) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the vote regarding the call of the Senior Pastor.
3. The resignation / termination of the Senior Pastor can be a very sensitive matter. It is essential that the Pastor and his family be protected from personal and professional harm and that the CHURCH body be protected from divisive situations. These matters must be handled with wisdom, mature love and a desire for unity.

The full Elder Board will be responsible for investigating and reviewing termination issues and for recommending an appropriate course of action, by a two-thirds majority of the full Elder Board to the congregation. Final approval of any action shall require a majority vote, taken by secret ballot of the members of the congregation present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the CHURCH. Fifty percent (50%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the vote regarding retention of the Senior Pastor.

4. Termination of the Senior Pastor's ministry requires three months notice by the Pastor or by the CHURCH, unless otherwise by mutual consent.
5. The Senior Pastor is an Elder.

B. Chairman of the Church

The Chairman shall be elected for a three year term, with a maximum of three successive terms. He must then be off from the Elder Board for at least one year. He shall preside at all Congregational and Elder Board meetings. In his absence, he shall appoint another Elder to preside at the meeting. The Chairman of the Church shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees. The Chairman shall be a member of the Elder Board. In case the Chairman is unable to serve, the Elders will elect one of their number as Chairman. The vacant Elder position will be filled by congregational vote.

C. Elders

A Board of Elders shall be elected and form a governing body of the CHURCH as the principal leadership and decision-making body of the CHURCH, subject to the final authority of the congregation. The Elder Board shall oversee all functions of the church to promote the highest level of spiritual health and vision in order for the body to be able to reach those without Christ wherever found.

The number of Elders is to be a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twelve (12) (including the Senior Pastor), with individual Elders to be elected considering a balance of spiritual gifts, talents and experience to provide the most effective leadership group. Vacant or new Elder positions shall be filled by congregational approval from qualified candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee within 60 days (or as soon as possible) of such vacancies. Candidates are to be men with at least two years membership in the CHURCH as well as having served in some other demonstrated leadership capacity in the Evangelical Free Church of Naperville. Elders may be dismissed from that office by action of, two-thirds majority of total remaining Elders, or the simple majority of the congregation for reasons of major CHURCH discipline.

The Elder Board shall meet monthly or whenever called together by the Chairman or the Senior Pastor.

Members of this Board or their designated representatives shall interview all applicants for membership in the CHURCH and recommend appropriate candidates to the congregation for membership. The Board shall deal alone or with the congregation in any CHURCH discipline matters, supervise the spiritual welfare of the CHURCH in general, submit the annual budget to the congregation for approval, carry out decisions of the congregation at its business meetings and keep the congregation informed of all appropriate matters. The Elder Board shall be recognized as the legally constituted board to meet State and other regulatory requirements and be authorized to sign documents on behalf of the CHURCH. The Elder Board may authorize others to sign documents committing the CHURCH.

Individual Elders shall be elected for three-year terms. Each Elder shall be limited to three consecutive terms (maximum of nine consecutive years). As far as possible, terms will be set so that no more than one third of the Elders shall be elected in any year. After having served as an elder for three successive terms, the individual is ineligible to serve on the elder board for one year.

Elder organization responsibilities includes:

1. Church chairman – Responsible to preside at all business, special, and Elder Board meetings to insure the governance of the Church.
2. Senior Pastor – Responsible for pastoral leadership by proclaiming the Word of God, by ministering to the needs of persons in the Church and globally, by leading and nurturing the staff, and by initiating leadership of vision and planning in conjunction with the Elder Board.
3. The Elders shall organize themselves to provide for maximum effectiveness and obtaining necessary information for their leadership responsibilities as a Board, to include appropriate oversight of Church activities; vision and other requirements. Consideration of those to be elected to the Elder Board should be given to those with gifts, talents and experience in the above areas, as far as possible, to provide a balance of responsibilities to achieve oversight. A Secretary is to be elected from within the Elder Board to be responsible for the official record keeping of the Elder Board and Church. The Elder Board shall be informed of the activities of the Pastoral Staff as necessary.

D. Church Treasurer

Responsible for the maintaining of all financial records of the CHURCH and provides regular reports on the status of the CHURCH finances, including receipt and disbursement of funds and the protection of CHURCH assets.

Elected by the congregation for a two-year term, with a limit of two successive, two-year terms allowed.

F. Other Pastoral Staff

Pastoral Staff members (Pastors and Directors) shall be responsible for specialized ministries in support of the CHURCH goals. These additional staff ministers may be added when the need is determined. The Elder Board will establish appropriate procedures to identify and hire candidates.

All pastoral staff members will be responsible to the Senior Pastor.

Termination of staff ministers may be done with the approval of at least two-thirds of the full Elder Board.

G. Committees

Standing Committees shall be elected by the congregation from those names provided by the Nominating Committee. Such other committees as are necessary for the proper functioning of the CHURCH shall be established upon Elder Board or Pastoral approval. Committees are expected to have approval for the specific function of the group.

No organization shall be permitted to function under the auspices of the CHURCH without approval of the Elder Board. This includes, but is not limited to, activities such as using parachurch programs involving church members, hosting Bible studies with leaders not members of the church and similar situations including rental of church facilities by others.

Methods of raising funds shall be subject to the approval of the Elder Board.

H. Standing Committees

1. Nominating Committee

This is a ten-member committee, four of which are elected from members by the congregation with staggered terms of two years. Two are appointed by the Caring Elder from Community Group leaders, one is the Senior Pastor, one is the Christian Education Elder, one is the Assimilation Elder, and one is the Support Elder. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee from its members, excluding the Elders and Senior Pastor.

This committee is responsible to provide nominations for each elected position. It meets throughout the year and plans for future needs by identifying potential leaders at various levels in order to make recommendations for filling vacancies which occur in the future.

2. Compensation Committee

Members are the Senior Pastor, except for his own review and compensation, the Chairman, and the Elders. This committee is to provide review and counseling for the professional staff and to recommend compensation for the professional staff within general guidelines pre-approved by the congregation and within budgeted provisions.

3. Audit Committee

The Elder Board shall engage a reputable independent Certified Public Accounting firm to perform an annual audit (or review) of the financial books and records of the Church. A committee comprised of at least one Elder and two others knowledgeable in financial or accounting matters shall meet with the Auditors to review their report, with at least part of the meeting without Church staff present. The audit/review report shall be given to the Chairman, reviewed with the Elder Board and made available to the congregation in a timely manner.

Section 2: Approval Requirements

A. Congregational approval, in addition to those previously described, is required for:

1. Annual budget and adjustments to budget for additional staffing.
2. Expenditures exceeding 10% of the Operating Budget except for emergency situations.
3. Borrowing funds above 10% of the Operating Budget or encumbering any church assets.
4. Acquisition or disposal of all real property.
5. Significant program expansion; e.g. beginning a day school; Church planting; convalescent center.

ARTICLE III MEETINGS

Section 1-Scheduling of Meetings

- a. Worship Services, Sunday School services and other services shall be conducted at such times as decided by the CHURCH.
- b. The Annual Business Meeting of the CHURCH shall be held by the first Sunday of October each year, at such time as may be decided by the CHURCH. At this meeting annual reports shall be received, officers and Elders elected and other necessary business transacted. This fiscal year shall end August 31.
- c. Business meetings in addition to the Annual Meeting of the CHURCH shall be held in order to conduct the business of the CHURCH in a timely manner. Such special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor, Chairman, Elders, or by petition of a constitutional quorum of active membership of the congregation Board. Prior to any consideration of these issues at a congregational meeting, the representatives of the group calling for a special meeting will review the concerns with the Elder Board to resolve the issues or concerns. If the issues are not resolved, a congregational meeting would be called.

- d. Notice of all business or special meetings shall be given either by announcement at the regular services of the CHURCH on two Sundays preceding the meeting one of which would be the Sunday of the business or special meeting if the meeting is in the evening or by written notice to members at least ten days prior to the meeting. If a meeting is scheduled on a Sunday morning, the announcement must be given on two preceding Sundays not including the Sunday of the meeting. The announcement shall state the significant purposes(s) of the meeting.

Section 2-Rules of Order

- a. The Chairman shall conduct the Annual Meeting and other business meetings in the following order:

1. Reading of God's Word and prayer
2. Minutes of the previous meeting to be approved
3. Reception of new members
4. Reports from the various officers
5. Reports from committees on their activities
6. Undecided, unfinished or tabled business
7. Election of officers and committee chairpersons, if their terms expire or vacancies occur.
8. New Business-occasioned by the reports from officers and committees
9. New Business-prepared by members in the meeting
10. Closing prayer

- b. Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall govern the conduct of the Annual Meeting and all business meetings when not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the CHURCH.

Section 3-Quorums

- a. Twenty percent (20%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the CHURCH, unless otherwise stated in these By-laws. Associate members are not considered when calculating a quorum.
- b. Any six of the ten members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Elder Board when there are eight Elders plus the Chairman and the Senior Pastor. In the event of a larger Elder Board, a quorum is sixty percent (60%) of the designated entire Board.

Section 4-Voting

- a. All members age sixteen (16) years and over shall have the right of vote in all matters coming before the business meetings. These individuals are designated “active, voting” members.

Associate, non-voting members are members under sixteen (16) years of age. They cannot vote and are not considered when calculating a quorum. They shall not be counted at a congregational meeting when determining a quorum.

Associate, voting members are members, most likely missionaries, who are serving on the field. They are not considered in the number for calculating a quorum. They are counted when present at a meeting for the purposes of determining if a quorum is present. Members who meet the definition of associate, voting members will be so designated with the approval of the Elder Board at the recommendation of the Secretary.

Inactive, non-voting members who wish to be reinstated as active, voting members must do so in writing to the secretary. Inactive, non-voting members are those who have been designated by the Elders based on absence from attendance for one year or relocation from the area.

- b. All matters will be determined by majority vote (one more than one-half of all votes cast), except when otherwise specified in these By-Laws, or by decision of the meeting.
- c. It is intended that the business of the congregation be conducted without absentee ballots. However, some exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Elder Board where situations merit it.

Section 5-Eligibility of Candidates to be Voted On

- a. All officers, Elders, chairpersons of standing committees, and appointed chairpersons, except salaried officers, must be chosen from among members of the CHURCH.
- b. No officer, Elder, or chairperson of a committee can immediately succeed himself or herself after having served two consecutive terms in the same office.

ARTICLE IV-AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended or altered by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the CHURCH, providing notification of the proposed alteration or amendment has been made to the congregation at least two weeks prior to such meeting.