

**CONSTITUTION
OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
OF THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA**

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**CONSTITUTION
OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
OF THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA**

Article I Name, Organization and Purpose

Section 1. Name

The name of this church is the Evangelical Free Church of Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

Section 2. Organization and Incorporation

The church was organized as the Scandinavian Evangelical Church of Thief River Falls, Minnesota on March 21, 1901 and incorporated on March 17, 1902.

Section 3. Affiliation

This church shall be a member of the North Central District Association and the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Section 4. 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, and to own and maintain such buildings and equipment as may be required to carry out the above stated purposes.

Article II Confession of Faith

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 all 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. Gen. 1:1; II Cor. 13:14; Col. 2:9
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Ghost 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 now is our High Priest and Advocate. I Cor. 15:3-4; I John 2:1
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. John 15:26; John 16:7-14
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. Gen. 1:27; Rom. 3:23; John 3:3

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. Heb. 9:22; Heb. 7:25; Rom. 5:1; John 3:16
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 means of salvation. Matt. 28:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-26
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. Eph. 4:1-6; I Cor. 12:13
9. We believe that only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. Acts 2:47
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. Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18
11. We believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing the personal life and service of the believer. I Thess. 4:14-16; Acts 1:11; I John 3:1-3
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. II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 15:50-56; II Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:15

Article III Membership

Section 1. Qualification

Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the assurance of salvation, whose conduct is in accord with his confession, who subscribes to the above Confession of Faith and who is willing to support the church with faithful attendance, prayer and contributions may become a member of this organization.

Section 2. Pastoral Staff

The calling of a Senior Pastor or other pastoral staff member into ministry in the church shall concurrently include acceptance into membership in the church, unless otherwise directed by the Board of Elders.

Article IV Government

Section 1. Government

The government of this church is vested in the body of members who compose it.

Section 2. Leaders

The primary elected leaders of the church shall be the Board of Elders.

Section 3. Annual Meeting

The first congregational meeting of the year shall be the Annual Meeting.

Section 4. Business Meetings

- A. Regular Meetings: Regular business meetings of the Church shall be held annually, and at such times as are designated in the Bylaws, Article V, Section 1.
- B. Special Meetings: Special business meetings of the Church may be called at any time by the Church Chair, by the Board of Elders, or by members of the Church, according to the procedures set out in the Bylaws, Article V, Section 2.
- C. Conducting of Business Meetings: All business meetings of the church and of the Board of Elders shall be governed by the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order unless superseded by the Constitution and Bylaws of the church.

Section 5. Organizations and Affiliates

- A. Formation: Organizations and affiliates shall submit their statement of purpose, plans, and constitution to the Board of Elders for its consideration and its recommendation for approval by the Church.
- B. Relationship to the Church: All organizations and affiliates shall conform to the over-all program of the Church and shall cooperate with the procedures adopted by the Board of Elders or the Church. Further, the leaders of the organizations and affiliated shall be members of the Church who are actively carrying out their responsibilities as members, except in special cases individually approved by the Board of Elders. All organizations and affiliates shall submit written reports of their activities to the Annual Business Meeting of the Church, and shall be permitted to submit a request for inclusion in the annual budget.

Article V Officers and Leaders

Section 1. Elders

The Elders shall be the Senior Pastor and members of the Board of Elders as provided for in the Bylaws, Article II, Section 1. Each Elder shall be a member of the church and fulfill the qualifications for office stated in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

Section 2. Commissions

The church shall have six or more Commissions which shall carry out various aspects of the total ministry of the church. The Chair of each Commission shall be elected by the members of the Church and shall be a member of the Board of Elders. The other members of each Commission shall be elected at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church. The purpose, duties, and responsibilities of each Commission shall be as set forth in Article III of the Bylaws.

Article VI Church Property

Section 1. Property Rights

In the event of division (which God forbid), the property shall belong to that part of the congregation which remains true to this Constitution.

Section 2. Disposition of Property

In the event that this Corporation ceases to function or for any reason suspends its activities, the officers of said Corporation, after paying all of its known debts, shall transfer all of its assets, real and personal to the North Central District Association, incorporated in the State of Minnesota, a District Organization of the Evangelical Free Church of America with headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota, which Association shall make final disposition of same.

Article VII Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution must be introduced at an Annual Meeting, and for adoption must receive the affirmation vote of three-fourths of the membership present and voting.

All proposed amendments to the Constitution must be presented to the membership by the Board of Elders in writing at least sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting.

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OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
OF THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA**

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**BY-LAWS
OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
OF THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA**

Article I Membership

Section 1. Admission

- A. Qualification: Admission to membership in this church shall be according to the standards set forth in Article III of the Church Constitution.
- B. Procedure: Each person desiring to unite with the church must complete a written application and appear before the Membership Committee consisting of or appointed by the Board of Elders. The recommendation of the Membership Committee shall be presented to a regular business meeting of the church. Admission to membership shall be by a majority vote of the members at that meeting.

New members shall be welcomed into the church fellowship at a worship service following admission.

- C. Responsibilities: All members should regard it a duty and a privilege to attend the services of the church as regularly as possible, and to use their gifts, spiritual and material, for the furtherance of the work of the church. I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6,7; Hebrews 10:25; Luke 4:16; Romans 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:12-14; Acts 20:35.

Sections 2. Removal

- A. Letters of Recommendation: Upon receipt of a request for membership credentials a letter of recommendation shall be sent to another church upon recommendation of the Membership Committee to the Board of Elders.
- B. Request for Removal: A member of the church may request removal of his/her membership. After consultation with the member by a pastor or other appropriate person, the Membership Committee shall recommend to the Board of Elders that the request be granted.
- C. Inactive Membership: Any member of this church, who for a period of one year, has not attended the regular services and supported the work of the church with some degree of regularity, shall be contacted by the Elders. Upon agreement of the individual and discretion of the Board of Elders, their name shall be put on an "Inactive" membership list, or removed from the membership. An inactive member shall not have voting privileges.

Whenever such "Inactive Members" shall again participate in the regular activities of the church, they shall have their names restored to the active membership roll upon agreement and discretion of the Board of Elders.

- D. Church Discipline: In all cases of grievances between members, the persons involved shall follow the rules set forth in the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. If this procedure does not lead to reconciliation, charges in writing shall be submitted to the Board of Elders for consideration, for counsel to the persons involved, and appropriated Church action, if necessary.

After the submission of written charges to the Board of Elders, the following procedures shall be followed: The Board of Elders or its appointed agency shall make confidential inquiry and offer counsel to the members involved. The spirit of this inquiry and counsel shall be supportive, and shall express the acceptance, help, and forgiveness of the Church. If the member responds favorably to the fellowship of the Church and demonstrates the acceptance of forgiveness through repentance and a changed life, no specific report to the Church shall be necessary. The issue shall then be considered closed, except that friendship and counsel may continue to be given as needed.

Should the member fail to respond favorably to the fellowship of the Church, or fail to demonstrate the acceptance of forgiveness through repentance and a changed life, then the Board of Elders shall recommend to the Church that the name of the member be removed from the membership records of the Church. If possible, a member whose removal is being considered must be notified of the meeting of the Church at which the removal will be voted on, and must be given an opportunity to speak in opposition to the removal recommendation of the Board of Elders at said meeting. Upon evidence of restoration to the faith and/or the Church, a member dismissed through the removal procedures described above may be reinstated as a member of the Church through the regular procedures for admission to the membership of the Church.

All problems involving the failure of members to maintain their Christian obligations, to attend the services of the Church for one year, or to share in the support of the Church for one year shall be considered by the Board of Elders or its appointed agency, which consideration shall include confidential inquiry, counsel to the members, and recommendation to the Church for appropriate action, if necessary, as specified in these Bylaws.

Article II Election of Officers and Other Leaders

Section 1. The Positions

A. The Elders:

The elected officers of the Church shall be the Church Chair, the Worship Commission Chair, the Nurture Commission Chair, the Discipleship Commission Chair, the Witness Commission Chair, the Fellowship Commission Chair, the Stewardship Commission Chair. The elected officers of the Church, together with the Senior Pastor, shall constitute the Board of Elders.

B. The Other Elected Leaders:

The other elected leaders of the Church shall be the members of the Nominating Committee, the Secretary, the Recording Financial Secretary, and the Treasurer.

C. The Operating Commissions:

The Church shall have six Commissions which shall carry out various aspects of the total ministry of the Church. The Chair of each Commission shall be elected by the members of the Church, and shall be a member of the Board of Elders. The other members of each Commission shall be members of the Church and be elected at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church. The six Commissions shall be the Worship Commission, the Nurture Commission, the Discipleship Commission, the Witness Commission, the Fellowship Commission, and the Stewardship Commission. The purpose, duties, and responsibilities of each Commission shall be set forth in Article III of the Bylaws.

Section 2. Election Procedures

All of the elders of the Church, the other elected leaders of the Church, and the members of the commissions shall be elected at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church. The Nominating Committee described in Article IV, Section 1 of these Bylaws shall post a preliminary ballot on the official bulletin board not less than four weeks prior to the election, and post and mail a final ballot to the membership not less than two weeks prior to the election.

The Nominating Committee shall attempt to present at least two names of candidates for each office and shall have the discretion to determine whether the ballot shall be totally competitive, partially competitive, or totally non-competitive.

Incumbents shall be identified on the ballot, and all candidates shall have given their permission to place their names in nomination. The ballot shall clearly indicate the term of office for which nominations have been made. Once the final ballot has been posted publicly no changes will be permitted, either prior to the Annual Business Meeting, or at the Annual Business Meeting in the form of nominations from the floor.

Voting shall be by closed ballot. In cases where more than one nominee has been nominated for a position, the nominee receiving the greatest number of votes for that position shall be elected. In the case of a tie vote, another vote shall be taken at the same meeting, limited to resolving the tie.

In cases where only one nominee has been nominated for a position, members will have the opportunity to vote “yes” or “no” for that nominee. The nominee will only be elected if he or she receives an affirmative vote from a majority of those who vote, either in person or by absentee ballot. Because of this requirement, the ballot should contain instruction reminding the members of the Church participating in the Annual Business Meeting in person or by absentee ballot of the importance of voting affirmatively or negatively for positions where only one nominee has been nominated, since the failure to vote at all may inadvertently become the equivalent of a “no” vote.

Absentee ballots shall be admissible in connection with the election of officers, other leaders, and commission members. In order to be admissible, absentee ballots must be specifically requested from the Chairman of the Nominating Committee, must be completed according to the instructions provided, and must be returned to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee before the election of the Elders, others leaders, and commission members at the Annual Business Meeting.

Section 3. Terms of Office

All of the Elders of the Church shall be elected for terms of three years - in such manner that one-third of them are elected each year. Other elected leaders and Commission members shall be elected annually.

Section 4. Re-election and Limitations on Consecutive Years of Service:

No person shall serve more than six consecutive years in the same elected position of the Church. Nine months or more of service during a fiscal year of the Church shall constitute a year of service for purposes of this limitation on consecutive years of service.

Persons ineligible to serve in an elected position as a result of having served six consecutive years in that position shall again become eligible to serve in that position for up to six consecutive years after being out of office for at least one full year.

Section 5. Attendance and Participation

The Elders of the Church shall attend the regular meetings of the Board of Elders, and shall participate actively in the functions of the Board of Elders, as well as the functions of all other Church Commissions, Committees, and organizations with which they are involved. In the event of prolonged absence of more than three months from these meetings and other functions, or new residency which will prohibit active participation in Church life, such officers shall submit their resignations to the Board of Elders, so that their offices may be kept active. The above statements shall also apply to other elected leaders, Commissions and Commission members.

Section 6. Holding More Than One Office at One Time:

No one shall hold more than one elected office simultaneously, except that not more than two members of the Board of Elders may also serve on the Nominating Committee while serving on the Board of Elders. If any person is elected to a second office, the first office held by that person shall be declared vacant.

Section 7. Vacancies:

- A. The Causes of Vacancies: Vacancies in office may be caused by resignation, by death, or by the removal of an incumbent elder or other elected leader by the vote of two-thirds of all of the members of the Board of Elders. Members of the Board of Elders may vote to remove an incumbent elder or other elected leader if that person fails to meet the applicable qualifications set out in Article III, Sections 1A of the Bylaws of the Church, and if the members of the Board of Elders believe that the removal of the elder or other elected leader would be in the best interests of the Church. No elder or other elected leader shall be removed by the Board of Elders until the grounds for removal have been thoroughly investigated, and until the person whose removal is being contemplated has had an opportunity to appear before the Board of Elders to contest the existence of grounds for removal.

The circumstances and the procedures for removing the members of the Commissions of the Church shall be the same as the circumstances and the procedures for removing the officers and other elected leaders, as set out in this Article II, Section 7 of the Bylaws of the Church.

- B. The Filling of Vacancies in Office: With the exception of vacancies on the Board of Elders, which shall be filled by election at a meeting of the members of the Church (Article IV, Section 1B), the Board of Elders shall appoint replacements to elected offices which are vacated for reasons other than the expiration of the normal term of the office. This action shall be reported to the members of the Church at the next business meeting of the Church. The appointee shall hold an interim assignment to that office until the next Annual Business Meeting of the Church. Prior to the next Annual Business Meeting of the Church, the Nominating Committee shall, in its regular deliberations, nominate one or more candidates to fill the unexpired term for that office, or to stand for election for a new term for that office, as the case may be.

Article III Duties and Responsibilities of
the Board of Elders,
the other Leaders, and the Commissions

Section 1. The Board of Elders

- A. Purpose and Qualifications: The members of the Board of Elders shall be the primary elected leaders of the Church. The board of Elders shall have overall responsibility for the direction, planning, coordination, and control of the goals and objectives of the Church, as well as overall responsibility to see that the Church as a whole operates in a manner consistent with those goals and objectives.

The Board of Elders and its individual members shall be the leader of the Church in life, thought, and ministry. The members of the Board of Elders shall fulfill the qualifications for office state in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9

- B. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Elders shall be as follows:

1. The Board of Elders shall, at least annually, review and establish annual objectives that shall be designed to accomplish the purpose of the Church. As part of this process, the Board of Elders shall request a list of annual objectives from each of the Commissions. The Board of Elders shall also establish long range objectives.
2. The Board of Elders shall regularly review and evaluate the overall ministries of the Church to determine whether or not its objectives are being met, and shall establish policies as necessary to guide the Church toward the accomplishment of its objectives. When the objectives of the Church are not being met, the Board of Elders shall take or recommend corrective action, or shall revise the objectives that are not being met.
3. The Board of Elders shall represent the Church in certain relationships with the staff of the Church, including in the following matters:
 - a. The Board of Elders shall make suggestions regarding the Senior Pastor's ministry, in order to encourage and assist the Senior Pastor in the Word of the Lord. They shall also annually evaluate the ministry of the Senior Pastor.
 - b. Annually reviewing the compensation of all the members of the staff of the Church, and recommending any changes in compensation for the following year.

- c. When funds are budgeted, authorizing the hiring of all non-pastoral staff, and establishing the terms of their employment and their job descriptions.
 - d. Establishing the terms of employment for the members of the Church staff, including but not limited to policies related to matters such as hours, working conditions, vacations, and time off. However, the Board of Elders shall only be responsible for the administration of these policies as they relate to the Senior Pastor, and the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the administration of these policies as they relate to the other members of the Church staff.
 - e. Approving revisions to the job descriptions of members of both the pastoral staff and the non-pastoral staff, as long as the revisions do not substantially alter the primary function of the position as originally approved by the Church.
4. The Board of Elders shall review and make recommendations on matters to be brought before the Church, other than matters brought by committees directly responsible to the Church. The Board of Elders shall also call meetings of the Church as necessary.
 5. The Board of Elders shall act as a Budget Committee, and shall present a budget to the Church each year at the Annual Business Meeting. As part of the process of establishing each annual budget, the Board of Elders shall hold a meeting to give the members of the Church an opportunity to discuss budget recommendations.
 6. The Board of Elders shall have the right to authorize expenditures not included in the budget of the Church, in amounts not exceeding \$1,000 per project or \$5,000 per year. The Board of Elders shall make recommendations to the Church on any unbudgeted expenditure requests in excess of those amounts.
 7. The Board of Elders shall listen carefully and sensitively to suggestions and constructive criticisms from the members of the Church, and from other sources.
 8. The Board of Elders shall appoint persons to the positions and to the committees specifically described in these Bylaws in the manner set out in these Bylaws, Article IV. In addition, the Board of Elders may appoint ad hoc committee from time to time to better accomplish the work of the Church.

9. The Board of Elders shall investigate and take appropriate action in all cases involving the need for Church discipline or involving grievances between the members of the Church and the staff personnel of the Church, in the manner set forth in Articles I and VII of these Bylaws.
10. The Board of Elders shall perform all of the statutory functions of the Board of Trustees of a religious association incorporated under Minnesota law, and the members of the Board of Elders are hereby designated as the trustees of the Church for purposes of Minnesota law.
11. The Board of Elders shall designate persons to represent the Church at the Annual Meetings of the Evangelical Free Church of America and the North Central District Conference, and at other appropriate functions.
12. The Board of Elders shall oversee the administration of the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.
13. The Board of Elders shall recommend any appropriate ordinations or licensing to the members of the Church.
14. Except in cases where removal procedures for particular positions are already set out in the Constitution or the Bylaws of the Church, the Board of Elders shall have the discretion and the authority to establish and implement removal procedures for Committee members, and persons serving the Church in any other capacity.

Section 2. Other Officers and Leaders:

- A. The Church Chair: The Church Chair shall, in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, evaluate the work of the Board of Elders.

The Church Chair shall be a member of and the Chair of the Board of Elder, and shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of all other Church Commissions, Committees, and organizations. The Church Chair shall provide leadership to the Board of Elders, preside at all of the meetings of the Board of Elders, and serve as the moderator of all the business meetings of the Church.

The Board of Elders shall elect one of its members as the Vice Chair of the Board of Elders each year, to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the Church Chair in the absence of the Church Chair.

- B. The Commission Chairs: The Chairs of the Commissions of the Church shall be responsible for guiding and directing their Commissions to accomplish their respective purposes. They shall call meetings and shall take all other necessary steps, in cooperation with the Church Chair, to bring about the achievement of the goals and objectives established for their respective Commissions. The Commission Chairs shall have the authority to organize their respective Commissions effectively, and may delegate primary responsibility for operating the Commissions on a day to day basis to one or more Vice Chairs or other Commission members.
- C. The Secretary: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all business meeting of the Church, be in charge of all Church correspondence, and keep in good order such minutes, correspondence, and records as pertain to the office.
- D. The Recording Financial Secretary: The Recording Financial Secretary shall receive and account for all monies of the church, deposit them to the proper accounts and give to the treasurers receipts for funds deposited to their accounts. He shall keep a record of individual contributions to the work of the Church, shall send financial statements of gifts made during the calendar year to each contributor of record, and shall sit in consultation with the Stewardship Commission at its invitation.
- E. The Treasurer: The Treasurer shall control the disbursement of all funds by check, and shall require proper approval for all disbursements based on an approved Church budget, or based on appropriate action by the Church or the Board of Elders.

The Treasurer shall maintain books of account, or see that they are maintained, and shall submit written financial reports at regular Stewardship Commission, Board of Elders, and Church business meetings. The financial reports shall compare actual expenditures, categorized by account and by organization, with the budgeted amounts for those accounts and organizations.

The Treasurer shall, working together with the Board of Elders, coordinate the development of a budget for presentation to the Church each year at the Annual Business Meeting.

The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Stewardship Commission.

Section 3. The Worship Commission

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Worship Commission shall be to develop and promote programs and practices that pertain to the public services of the church in order to facilitate corporate worship.
- B. Composition: The Worship Commission shall consist of a Chair, three or more regular members, and one Pastor designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member.

C. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Worship Commission shall be as follows:

1. The Worship Commission shall coordinate the functions of the worship services with the Senior Pastor, including matters such as music, ushers, baptism, and communion.
2. The Worship Commission shall appoint and supervise the activities of all the music and drama ministries and work closely with the Senior Pastor and the Director of Music to coordinate the music program of the Church, including choirs, accompanists, song leaders, special music, worship teams and children's musicals.
3. The Worship Commission shall see that ushers, greeters and sound technicians for the public services of the Church are obtained, trained, and scheduled.
4. The Worship Commission shall arrange for the decoration of the Church in connection with special occasions and special services such as Christmas and Easter.
5. The Worship Commission shall annually submit its objectives to the Board of Elders for approval, along with a budget covering the matters within scope of its responsibilities.
6. The Worship Commission shall submit minutes of its meetings to the Board of Elders.
7. The Worship Commission shall first develop for the review and approval of the Board of Elders, and shall then update and revise as necessary, a written statement describing the policies and the procedures that it will follow in connection with the accomplishment of its purposes, goals and objectives. The Worship Commission shall refer to the Board of Elders recommendations involving major changes in accepted policy, as well as the initiation of new policy.

Section 4. The Nurture Commission:

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Nurture Commission shall be to plan and provide for the religious instruction of all ages and groups represented in the Church, to assist the pastoral staff, education leaders, and teachers in carrying out the various programs of Christian education that the Church is involved in, and to bring the Christian lives of individuals with whom the Church has contact closer together in bonds of Christian love, within the context of a common commitment to Jesus Christ.
- B. Composition: The Nurture Commission shall consist of a Chair, three or more regular members, and one Pastor designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member.

C. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Nurture Commission shall be as follows:

1. The Nurture Commission shall oversee the activities of the Sunday school, children's church, youth program, and shall provide classes through grade twelve, coordinate curriculum, establish and record standards, train teachers, and develop a total Christian Education program that is consistent and unified.
2. The Nurture Commission shall review the programs for Vacation Bible School, nursery, camp, and club work, among others, to be sure that those programs complement the small group congregations, the Sunday school program, and the youth program.
3. The Nurture Commission shall assist and advise all staff and other personnel in charge of the teaching activities of the Church.
4. The Nurture Commission shall appoint such Committees, administrators, and leaders as may be needed to carry out the Church's Christian Education ministry, offering consultation to these appointed workers as well as delineating their specific duties.
5. The Nurture Commission shall promote and supervise the use of the Church Library.
6. The Nurture Commission shall allocate space and equipment for all of the activities that it sponsors, and shall otherwise solve problems which may arise in the administration of the Church's Christian Education program.
7. The Nurture Commission shall annually submit its objectives to the Board of Elders for approval, along with a budget covering the matters within the scope of its responsibilities.
8. The Nurture Commission shall submit minutes of its meetings to the Board of Elders.
9. The Nurture Commission shall first develop for the review and approval of the Board of Elders, and shall then update and revise as necessary, a written statement describing the policies and the procedures that it will follow in connection with the accomplishment of its purposes, goals, and objectives. The Nurture Commission shall refer to the Board of Elders' recommendations involving major changes in accepted policy, as well as the initiation of new policy.

Section 5. The Discipleship Commission:

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Discipleship Commission shall be to develop and to promote programs and practices that will bring the Christian lives of individuals with whom the Church has contact into a closer relationship with God, individually as well as in groups and families, and to develop in the Christian lives of individuals with whom the Church has contact a lifestyle which reflects the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- B. Composition: The Discipleship Commission shall consist of a Chair, three or more regular members and one Pastor designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Discipleship Commission shall be as follows:
 - 1. The Discipleship Commission shall promote the practice of individual and family devotions in the lives of all the members of the Church.
 - 2. The Discipleship Commission shall encourage the development of mini-congregations, with appropriate leadership, structure, and record keeping practices.
 - 3. The Discipleship Commission shall coordinate the organization of small groups formed to study God's Word together.
 - 4. The Discipleship Commission shall organize and supervise appropriate Bible instruction classes for new Christians or for individuals interested in learning basic Biblical truths.
 - 5. The Discipleship Commission shall assist the Board of Elders or Membership Committee in organizing and supervising membership classes.
 - 6. The Discipleship Commission shall provide a training class for persons interested in a discipleship ministry, establish a program for bringing those persons together with others who desire to be discipled, and establish procedures for evaluating and following up the discipleship ministry.
 - 7. The Discipleship Commission shall promote new opportunities for spiritual growth through such activities as conferences and retreats.
 - 8. The Discipleship Commission shall annually submit its objectives to the Board of Elders for approval, along with a budget covering the matters within the scope of its responsibilities.

9. The Discipleship Commission shall submit minutes of its meetings to the Board of Elders.
10. The Discipleship Commission shall first develop for the review and approval of the Board of Elders, and shall then update and revise as necessary, a written statement describing the policies and the procedures that it will follow in connection with the accomplishment of its purposes, goals, and objectives. The Discipleship Commission shall refer to the Board of Elders recommendations involving major changes in accepted policy, as well as the initiation of new policy.

Section 6. The Witness Commission:

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Witness Commission shall be to promote and coordinate the sharing of the Gospel with non-Christian individuals, most of whom are not normally in contact with the Church, in order to bring those individuals to personal faith in Jesus Christ, and to make them disciples, and to promote and coordinate the sharing of the Gospel in and beyond the local congregation and to minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people.
- B. Composition: The Witness Commission shall consist of a Chair, three or more regular members, and one Pastor designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Witness Commission shall be as follows:
 1. The Witness Commission shall promote the practice of evangelism in the lives of all members of the Church through training classes, annual periods of emphasis such as speakers, films, etc. in the services of the Church, and other appropriate means and shall promote missions in the lives of all the members of the Church by encouraging the commitment of individual lives to vocational Christian missionary service, planning and organizing an annual Missions Conference, promoting generous and consistent giving to missions, and encouraging the supporting of missionaries through prayer and correspondence.
 2. The Witness Commission shall establish policies to guide the Church in connection with its support of short and long-term missionaries, foreign outreach ministries, and special projects related to missions.
 3. The Witness Commission shall encourage the members of the Church to participate in short-term missions projects, and shall establish policies and seek to provide funding for such projects as it deems appropriate.
 4. The Witness Commission shall recommend to the Board of Elders the commissioning of missionaries.

5. The Witness Commission shall promote the missions program of the Evangelical Free Church of America, the North Central District Association and other mission programs of immediate interest to the Church.
6. The Witness Commission shall annually submit its objectives to the Board of Elders for approval, along with a budget covering the matters within the scope of its responsibilities.
7. The Witness Commission shall submit minutes of its meetings to the Board of Elders.
8. The Witness Commission shall first develop for the review and approval of the Board of Elders, and shall then update and revise as necessary, a written statement describing the policies and the procedures that it will follow in connection with the accomplishment of its purposes, goals, and objectives. The Witness Commission shall refer to the Board of Elders recommendations involving major changes in accepted policy, as well as the initiation of new policy.

Section 7. The Fellowship Commission:

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Fellowship Commission shall be to arrange and provide for Church social functions, to further caring relationships in the Church family, and to provide appropriate opportunities for the Church to express social concern and to promote social justice in Christ's name beyond the Church family in the local community, the nation and the world.
- B. Composition: The Fellowship Commission shall consist of a Chair, three or more regular members, and one Pastor designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Fellowship Commission shall be as follows:
 1. The Fellowship Commission shall oversee the fellowship activities and auxiliary organizations of the Church.
 2. The Fellowship Commission shall provide for Church social functions which are intergenerational in nature.
 3. The Fellowship Commission shall assist the Pastors and Elders in the pastoral care of individuals and families of the Church.
 4. The Fellowship Commission shall attempt to meet the special spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of individuals and families with whom the Church has regular contact by providing counseling, food, clothing, and financial assistance in appropriate circumstances.

5. The Fellowship Commission shall supervise all athletic teams affiliated with the Church.
6. The Fellowship Commission shall bring to the attention of the Church areas of injustice and special need within the Church's sphere of influence, so that the Church can initiate the appropriate Christian response.
7. The Fellowship Commission shall encourage the Church to participate in seasonal offerings, the collection of food and clothing, and other appropriate projects.
8. The Fellowship Commission shall educate the members of the church with regard to the need for social action, and the need for promoting social justice.
9. The Fellowship Commission shall annually submit its objectives to the Board of Elders for approval, along with a budget covering the matters within the scope of its responsibilities.
10. The Fellowship Commission shall submit minutes of its meetings to the Board of Elders.
11. The Fellowship Commission shall first develop for the review and approval of the Board of Elders, and shall then update and revise as necessary, a written statement describing the policies and the procedures that it will follow in connection with the accomplishment of its purposes, goals, and objectives. The Fellowship Commission shall refer to the Board of Elders recommendations involving major changes in accepting policy, as well as the initiation of new policy.

Section 8. The Stewardship Commission:

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Stewardship Commission shall be to manage the business affairs of the Church, including matters related to its property and matters related to the collection and expenditure of its funds.
- B. Compositions: The Stewardship Commission shall consist of a Chair, three or more regular members, and one Pastor designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Stewardship Commission shall be as follows:
 1. The Stewardship Commission shall assume full responsibility for all of the property of the Church. This shall include caring for and maintaining the property of the Church. The Stewardship Commission shall also establish policies relating to the use of the Church facilities for purposes other than regular Church programs.

2. The Stewardship Commission shall work with the church staff to establish standards for property care and maintenance, as well as policies for the receipt and expenditure of all funds.
3. The Stewardship Commission shall have the right to authorize repairs not included in the budget of the Church, in amounts not exceeding \$500 per project or \$1,000 per year. The Stewardship Commission shall make recommendations to the Church on any unbudgeted expenditure requests for repairs in excess of those amounts.
4. The Stewardship Commission shall establish appropriate controls on the handling of all cash receipts and disbursements, and shall require regular financial reports from the Treasurer.
5. The Stewardship Commission shall see that the Church is adequately represented in all legal matters, and shall recommend any necessary contracts or other legal documents to the Board of Elders for signature.
6. The Stewardship Commission shall secure all necessary insurance for the Church.
7. The Stewardship Commission shall annually submit its objectives to the Board of Elders for approval, along with a budget covering the matters within the scope of its responsibilities.
8. The Stewardship Commission shall submit minutes of its meetings to the Board of Elders.
9. The Stewardship Commission shall first develop for the review and approval of the Board of Elders, and shall then update and revise as necessary, a written statement describing the policies and the procedures that it will follow in connection with the accomplishment of its purposes, goals, and objectives. The Stewardship Commission shall refer to the Board of Elders recommendations involving major changes in accepted policy, as well as the initiation of new policy.

Article IV The Committees and the Archivist

Section 1. The Membership Committee

The Membership Committee shall consist of the members of the Board of Elders or their appointees. It shall be the duty of the Membership Committee to be the custodians of the Church roll, interview candidates for membership, and receive correspondence regarding membership transfers. The Membership Committee shall also consider matters of Church discipline, shall recommend for the approval of the Church any admissions to and removals for membership, as set forth in these Bylaws. It shall be the further duty of the Membership Committee to appoint a clerk from its number to maintain the membership records of the Church, and care for the necessary correspondence pertaining thereto.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee

A. The Procedures for Selecting the Members of the Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members. Four of the members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected annually at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church in the manner described below. The fifth member shall be a member of the Board of Elders who shall be appointed by the Board of Elders within thirty (30) days after the election of the other four members. The Nominating Committee shall choose its own officers, and shall serve until a new Nominating Committee is selected in the same manner one year later.

No more than two members of the Nominating Committee, including the appointed member, may also be members of the Board of Elders while serving on the Nominating Committee. No member of the Nominating Committee may serve two consecutive terms, nor shall members of the same immediate family serve on the Nominating Committee concurrently.

B. The Duties and Responsibilities of the Nominating Committee:

It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to prepare the ballot for the election at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church, in the manner set forth in Article I and Article II of these Bylaws. The Nominating Committee shall notify the members of the Church when it begins the process of preparing the ballot, and shall formally invite the members of the Church to recommend possible nominees for all elected positions. The Nominating Committee shall also formally invite the Board of Elders, the Commissions, and the Committees to recommend possible nominees for all elected positions.

Members of the Church, the Board of Elders, the Commissions, and the Committees who desire to recommend possible nominees to the Nominating Committee shall make their recommendations in writing, preferably on forms provided by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall give serious consideration to each individual recommended in this manner. Except in the case of Nominating Committee members already serving on the Board of Elders, no member of the outgoing Nominating Committee shall be placed on the ballot as a candidate for the Board of Elders.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate replacements to the Board of Elders vacated between Church elections.

Section 3. The Audit Committee:

An Audit Committee of at least three members shall be appointed annually by the Board of Elders. It shall be the duty of the Audit Committee to audit all the books of the Church prior to the Annual Business Meeting, and at such other times the Board of Elders requests. The Audit Committee shall report the results of its audit to the Church at the Annual Business Meeting, and shall make suitable recommendations to the Board of Elders and the Stewardship Commissions concerning financial procedures that it considers advisable. The Board of Elders and/or the Church may vote at any time to employ a public accountant.

Section 4. The Archivist:

An Archivist shall be appointed annually by the Board of Elders. It shall be the duty of the Archivist to acquire and properly preserve the records of the Church and its organizations when these records cease to be currently useful, and to collect and preserve other materials pertinent to the historical record of the Church.

Article V Business Meetings

Section 1. Regular Business Meetings:

- A. **The Annual Business Meeting:** The Annual Business Meeting of the Church shall be held in two segments each year. The first segment of the Annual Business Meeting shall be held no later than the 15th day of December. The second segment of the Annual Business Meeting shall be held no later than the end of the 31st day of January. By special Church action at least four weeks in advance, the dates of the Annual Business Meeting may be changed.

- C. A regular business meeting shall be held no later than the end of July on a date set by the Board of Elders. Notice of the regular business meeting shall be publicized by the Board of Elders at least two Sundays in advance of the meeting.

Section 2. Special Business Meetings:

Special business meetings may be called by the Church Chair, by the Board of Elders, or by the members of the Church through a petition signed by at least ten members of the Church. The time, place, and purpose of such a special business meeting shall be announced to the Church in a suitable manner, and as far in advance as feasible.

Section 3. General Business Procedures:

- A. **Fiscal Year:** The fiscal year shall be January 1 to December 31.

- B. Quorum Requirements and the Conducting of Business at Business Meetings: Twenty or more of the members of the Church shall constitute a quorum necessary for the transaction of business at any business meeting called according to the provisions of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Church.
- C. The Annual Business Meeting:
 - 1. The Annual Election: The annual election shall be held during the first segment of the Annual Business Meeting. The election shall be the first major item of business on the agenda. The results of the election shall be announced before the meeting is adjourned. In case of a tie for any office, a run-off vote shall be taken before adjournment.
 - 2. The Annual Budget: The annual budget shall be voted on for adoption during the first segment of the Annual Business Meeting. Prior to its presentation for adoption, the proposed budget shall be posted on the Church bulletin board, distributed to the members of the Church at least one month before the Annual Business Meeting.
 - 3. The Second Segment of the Annual Business Meeting: The second segment of the Annual Business Meeting shall be concerned principally with the review of the Church's previous year through the presentation of reports by the Board of Elders, the Commissions, the Committees, and other Church organizations. The members of the Church may also take action on any other appropriate matters of business at that time.
- D. The Calling of a Senior Pastor or Other Salaried Personnel: Meetings to consider the calling of a Senior Pastor or other salaried personnel shall be called and conducted according to the procedures outlined in Article VII of these Bylaws.
- E. Purchasing and Selling Real Property and Incurring Indebtedness: Business meetings to consider the purchase or sale of real property or the incurring of indebtedness by the Church shall be called and conducted in accordance with the laws of the State of Minnesota.
- F. Qualifications of Voters: All matters of church business shall be voted on only by the members of the Church in good standing who are 18 years of age or older.

Article VI Salaried Personnel

Section 1. The Senior Pastor:

- A. Qualifications and Responsibilities:

1. **Spiritual Leadership:** The Senior Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall fulfill the qualifications for office stated in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9; and in particular the duties of teaching and exhorting from the Word, leading in public worship and prayer, and providing visionary leadership to the Church as it seeks to minister in its community and to reach out into the broader world with the message of Jesus Christ. The Senior Pastor shall administer or supervise the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and shall lead the members of the Church by example by modeling practical Christian living. The Senior Pastor shall be, or shall become, an ordained minister in agreement with the faith and practices of the Evangelical Free Church of America. The Senior Pastor shall have freedom of the pulpit, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
2. **Church Staff Leadership:** The Senior Pastor shall direct the pastoral staff, providing counsel, encouragement, and Christian discipline, so as to assist in the accomplishment of the objectives established for each member of the pastoral staff. The Senior Pastor shall annually evaluate the performance of the other members of the pastoral staff, including the various Ministry Directors, as well as the performance of any interns working at the Church. The Senior Pastor shall also direct the non-pastoral staff. The entire pastoral and non-pastoral staff of the Church shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor, either directly or through another supervising staff member appointed by the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall represent the staff of the Church before the Board of Elders.
3. **Administrative Leadership:** The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Board of Elders, and an ex-officio non-voting member of all other Church Commissions, Committees, and organizations. The Senior Pastor shall faithfully and diligently work toward the establishment and the accomplishment of the objectives of the Church, in conjunction with the Board of Elders and the other Church Commissions, Committees, and organizations. The Senior Pastor shall not be expected or required to regularly attend all of the meetings of all of the Church Commissions, Committee, and organizations of which the Senior Pastor is a member. However, the Senior Pastor shall be expected to regularly attend the business meetings of the Church, the meetings of the Board of Elders, and the meetings of the pastoral staff.

B. **Calling a Senior Pastor to the Church:**

1. **The selection of a Pastoral Search Committee:** When it is necessary to call a Senior Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee of seven members shall be formed. Three of the members shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, and three elected by the congregation so as to be broadly representative of the membership of the Church. The other member of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be the Church Chair. The Search Committee shall choose their own chair from among these seven members.

2. The Procedure to be Followed by the Pastoral Search Committee: The Pastoral Search Committee shall compile a list of possible candidates, using whatever resources it may have at its disposal, including suggestions from members of the Church; shall investigate the qualifications of the candidates; and shall continue its study and evaluation of the candidates until it reaches a consensus on one candidate for presentation to the Church. The Pastoral Search Committee shall give regular reports to the Board of Elders and the Church on its progress. The service of the members of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be completed when a candidate for the position of Senior Pastor has been called by the Church, and has accepted the call.
3. Voting to Call a Senior Pastor: The calling of a Senior Pastor shall take place at a specially called business meeting with the time and the purpose of the business meeting announced in a suitable manner and as far in advance as possible. Only one candidate shall appear on any one ballot, and the voting shall be by closed ballot, with a three-fourths majority of the ballots cast necessary to constitute a call.
4. Elements of the Call: The call to serve as the Senior Pastor of the Church shall include a position description and conditions of service which shall be prepared by the Board of Elders in consultation with the Stewardship Commission. The elements of the call shall be approved by the Church at the same time and in the same manner as the candidate for the position of Senior Pastor is approved.

C. Termination of Service:

1. Resignation: When a Senior Pastor chooses to terminate service to the Church, the Senior Pastor shall present a letter of resignation to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall present a recommendation to the Church regarding the acceptance of the resignation, and regarding the effective date and the terms of the dissolution of the relationship between the Senior Pastor and the Church.
2. Removal: When a grievance exists against the Senior Pastor, a petition signed by at least ten members in good standing, giving reason for the action, shall be presented to the Board of Elders. After investigation, the Board of Elders may present the matter to the Church at a specially called business meeting to which the members of the Church have been invited by mail at least one week before the meeting. At the meeting, the Senior Pastor shall be given an opportunity to respond to the matters set out in the petition. Voting shall be by closed ballot, and a simple majority of the votes cast shall be sufficient to terminate the Senior Pastor's services.

Section 2: Associate Pastors

- A. **Qualifications and Duties:** Other members of the Church Staff having the title of Associate Pastor shall meet the Scriptural and professional qualifications for office stated in Article VI, Section 1 above. They shall be under the supervision of the Senior Pastor, and shall cooperate with the Senior Pastor in carrying out the duties and the privileges of their offices in accordance with the conditions of their calls to office, their job descriptions, the Church Constitution, and the Church Bylaws. The call to office and the termination of service of such members of the pastoral staff shall follow the procedures provided in the Bylaws. Job descriptions, including qualifications, responsibilities, and relationships, shall be prepared and maintained for all members of the pastoral staff.
- B. **Calling of an Associate Pastor to the Church:** The Senior Pastor shall take the initiative in the search for and the nomination of other members of the full-time pastoral staff. When it is necessary to call an Associate Pastor a Pastoral Search Committee of seven members shall be formed. Three of the members shall be appointed by the Board of Elders and three shall be elected by the congregation so as to be broadly representative of the membership of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall serve as Chair of this committee which is entrusted with the responsibility of locating and recommending a candidate for the position to be filled.

Upon the recommendation of such a person, the procedures to be followed for voting to call that person shall be the same as the procedures set out in Article VI, Section 1 of these Bylaws relating to the calling of a Senior Pastor.

- C. **Working Relationships with the Board of Elders and Commissions:** Each Associate Pastor may be designated by the Board of Elders as a voting member of one or more commissions with duties related to their areas of ministry. No commission shall have more than one Associate Pastor designated as a voting member of that commission. The Associate Pastors may attend the meetings of the Board of Elders and of any of the commissions, but may vote only if they have been designated as the voting staff member for that commission. The staff members that work with the commissions shall be guided and directed by the Senior Pastor, and not by the commissions.

Section 3. Other Salaried Personnel:

- A. **The Need:** When it seems advisable to engage other non-pastoral salaried personnel for the work of the Church, the Board of Elders shall present the matter to the Church for discussion and agreement on the procedures for securing such persons.
- B. **Terms of Employment:** All employees of the Church shall receive in writing the terms of their employment, including salary and appropriate allowances, vacation specifications, a job description, a statement of the lines of authority in the particular sphere of their Church work, and other pertinent information. All employees of the Church shall accept the terms of their employment in writing, and shall submit said written acceptance to the Board of Elders.

- C. Termination of Service: Termination of an employee's service in the Church shall be handled in the same manner specified in Article VII, Section 1, Paragraph C, of these Bylaws, with the exception that persons hired directly by the Board of Elders shall have their service terminated by the Board of Elders and persons called by the Church shall have their service terminated by the Church.

Section 4. Church Staff Relationships:

- A. Basic Relationships: All salaried personnel shall be considered members of the Church staff, unless otherwise specifically stated.
- B. Chair of the Church Staff: The Senior Pastor of the Church shall be the Chair of the Church staff, and shall be responsible to direct its work. Full-time members of the Church staff shall meet together regularly for consultation and planning, and part-time members of the Church staff shall meet with the Senior Pastor periodically for the same purpose.
- C. Grievances: Should a grievance develop between members of the Church staff or between a staff member and a member of the Church, the matter shall be discussed with the Senior Pastor and/or the Board of Elders in order to resolve the problem.

Article VII Amendments

Section 1. Proposed Amendments:

Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed through formal motion at any regular business meeting of the Church, but may not be voted upon for at least four weeks after they are proposed.

Section 2. Informing the Membership:

Notice of all proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be promptly posted on the official Church bulletin board, along with a copy of the proposed amendments and a copy of the notice of the meeting of the members of the Church at which the proposed amendments will be voted on. A copy of the proposed amendments and a copy of the notice of the meeting of the members of the Church at which the proposed amendments will be voted on shall be mailed to all of the members of the Church at least two weeks before said meeting.

Section 3. Voting:

An affirmative vote by a majority of the members present at the meeting shall be required for adoption of the proposed amendments.

Adopted 12/13/94; Revised 1996