

CHRIST COMMUNITY EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

Constitution

Article I - Name

The name of this church shall be the Christ Community Evangelical Free Church.

Article II - 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 membership 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 III - Mission

The mission of Christ Community Evangelical Free Church is to be a caring family of multiplying disciples, influencing our community and world for Jesus Christ.

Article IV - Church Affiliation

The Church shall affiliate with the Evangelical Free Church of America through membership of the local Evangelical Free Church District so long as they both stand true to the Word of God. The Church shall remain an autonomous body and shall not join itself to any other denomination or synod. It shall remain its own highest authority and conduct its business through its business sessions. The Church shall send delegates to conferences, support home and foreign missions, and unite in any mutual effort for the furtherance of the Gospel as the Church itself may decide.

Article V - Membership

Section 1 - Eligibility for Membership. Any person who confesses faith in Jesus Christ; whose character, conduct, and reputation reflect his confession; who subscribes to the Statement of Faith (Article II); who accepts and abides by the church constitution and bylaws; who supports the Church with attendance, prayer, and material means; and, who successfully completes a church membership class may become a member of this Church.

Article VI - Officers

The officers of this church shall be the Elder Leadership Team. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws, the Elder Leadership Team shall have charge of the conduct of the business affairs of this corporation.

Article VII - Business Meetings

The regular annual business meeting of the church shall be held at a time and place designated by the Elder Leadership Team. At the annual business meeting, the election of officers and transaction of such business as concerns the work of the year shall take place. Additional regular and special business meetings may be held during the year as set forth in the bylaws.

Article VIII - Conduct of Business

This church shall have power in its corporate name to buy, own, hold in trust, use, inherit, lease, rent, sell, exchange or dispose of such real and personal property as may be useful and necessary for the furtherance of the Lord's work. It shall also have the power to mortgage and encumber all or any part of the church property, and to borrow and raise money or other assets of any kind, for the furtherance of the Lord's work.

Article IX - Property Rights

The Church shall have power to buy, own and sell real property in its own name. Those adhering to the church constitution and bylaws shall retain the church name and property if the Church divides. The local district of the Evangelical Free Church automatically shall assume ownership of all church property if the Church dissolves the ELT and ceases to function. Any member who has withdrawn or who has been excluded from the Church loses all rights of church membership, including the right to attend church business meetings and the right to use personal and real property of the church. The private property of individual church members shall be exempt from church debt.

Article X - Amendments

Members may amend this constitution at any regular or special business meeting attended by at least ten percent (10%) of the church's voting members. Proposed amendments to the Constitution require a first and second reading at consecutive business meetings. Any motion to amend must receive at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the votes cast to

pass. Articles II and IX cannot be amended by virtue of our affiliation with the Evangelical Free Churches of America.

Article XI - Provision for Bylaws

Members may adopt or amend any bylaws not in conflict with this constitution at any regular or special business meeting attended by at least ten percent (10%) of the church's voting members. Any motion to adopt or amend a bylaw must receive a majority vote of those present. (Cf. Bylaw Article VII)

CHRIST COMMUNITY EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

Bylaws

Article I – Government

Section 1. Statement of Government

1.1 Elder Leadership Team. The congregation, through a group of godly men called elders who comprise an Elder Leadership Team (“ELT”), shall govern the Church. Authority for administering day-to-day matters resides in their hands. The ELT has the authority to amend the total annual budget by no more than ten percent (10%) without a congregational vote.

1.2 Authority. Ultimate authority in the Church shall lie with the congregation. The Congregation shall elect the elders during a congregational meeting for a term of four (4) years. An elder can serve a maximum of four (4) consecutive years and then shall be considered ineligible to serve on the ELT for a minimum of two (2) years. After the congregation elects the elders, the ELT shall have the authority to perform all church functions except amend the constitution and bylaws, approve the annual budget, call the lead senior pastor, and purchase land or permanent buildings over and above 10% of the annual budget. Any voting church member may bring a matter before the ELT at a regularly scheduled ELT meeting by making a written request to the ELT chairman at least two (2) weeks prior to the ELT meeting.

1.3 Additional Boards. The ELT shall provide oversight to any and all boards and task forces needed to administrate the Church's ministry. The ELT shall determine terms of service on these boards and task forces.

Section 2. Elder Leadership Team.

2.1 Qualifications. ELT members must be mature, godly men who display the qualifications stipulated by Scripture, including I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Potential ELT members must successfully participate in the Church Leadership Training Program as a prerequisite to ELT membership.

2.2 Selection. The Holy Spirit must select church leaders because only He can know our hearts and motives. He expresses His decisions through human agency. The following process is the means by which the Church shall seek to discern His choices:

Spiritual qualification shall be the primary basis for selection. Spiritual gifts and interest, along with the ministry function needing to be filled, shall be secondary considerations only. An elder nominating committee will be formed whenever the ELT deems appropriate. The ELT shall appoint a nominating committee composed of fifty percent (50%) elders and fifty percent (50%) Church members who are not ELT members to prayerfully evaluate and screen recommended elders. The nominating committee shall recommend potential elders to the congregation for a vote. To be elected, each elder candidate must receive at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the congregational votes cast.

2.3 Term of Service. The lead senior pastor will automatically be a voting member of the ELT. The lead senior pastor shall not be limited to a term of service on the ELT. No elder except the lead senior pastor shall serve on the ELT more than four (4) consecutive years during any six (6) year period.

2.4 Function. The ELT shall have three functions. First, the elders shall build and develop their families. I Timothy 3:4-5. Second, they shall feed God's flock. John 21:15-19. This requires imparting truth, refuting error, and administering discipline. Third, the elders shall oversee the entire ministry. Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2-3. This involves assessing the congregation's needs, and periodic church planning and evaluation in light of its overall goals.

2.5 Meetings and Quorum. The ELT shall meet as often as necessary to adequately govern the Church. A quorum of one more than half of its members must be present for the ELT to transact business. Minutes of all ELT meetings shall be taken by an appointed secretary and shall be available to all church members within one (1) week after the ELT meetings. Certain confidential matters shall be discussed in executive session. The ELT shall keep the congregation informed as is appropriate within legal and ethical boundaries.

2.6 Decision-Making Process. The ELT shall make decisions in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit. All ELT decisions require a majority vote of the quorum.

2.7 Accountability. The ELT is directly accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ for all its actions. Hebrews 13:17. It also is accountable to the congregation. Individual elders are accountable to the ELT.

2.8 Organization. The ELT shall be self-organizing. The various functions for which the ELT is responsible shall be delegated among the elders. Interest, training and spiritual gifts shall be considered in delegating these functions.

Article II – Pastoral Staff

Section 1 – Senior Pastors.

1.1 Qualifications. The senior pastors shall qualify for this office according to the standards of I Timothy 3:1-7. The concept of disciple-making shall be their basic philosophy. They must possess a demonstrated understanding and proven experience in disciple-making.

1.2 Lead Senior Pastor. The Church shall call and support a lead senior pastor who shall devote his time to the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. Ephesians 4:11-16. This includes teaching the Bible, training others to make disciples, equipping laborers, and placing leaders in positions of influence. The lead senior pastor is to work through others and widen his influence and ministry through the scriptural method of multiplication. The lead senior pastor shall not hold the office of ELT chairman.

1.3 Lead Senior Pastor Search. The ELT will be responsible to oversee the search process for a new lead senior pastor should the need arise. A committee composed of elders and other members of the congregation will be utilized for the search process.

1.4 Lead Senior Pastor Selection. The election and calling of a lead senior pastor may take place at any regular or special business meeting that is attended by at least ten percent (10%) of the Church's voting members. Any candidate must receive at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the votes cast. A lead senior pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.

1.5 Other Senior Pastors. The ELT may call and support other senior pastors as needed to effectively execute its functions. Other senior pastors shall not serve as members of the ELT.

Section 2 – Campus Pastors. The ELT and senior pastors may call and support campus pastors as needed to effectively execute its functions. All campus pastors shall qualify for their respective offices according to the standards of I Timothy 3:1-7. Campus pastors shall work in cooperation with, and under the overall direction of, the senior pastors. Campus pastors shall have three functions. First, the campus pastors shall build and develop their families. I Timothy 3:4-5. Second, they shall feed God’s flock. John 21:15-19. This requires imparting truth, refuting error, and administering discipline. Third, the campus pastors shall oversee the ministry, at their respective campuses, under the direction and guidance of the senior pastors and the ELT. Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2-3. This involves assessing the congregation’s needs, and periodic church planning and evaluation in light of its overall goals.

Section 3 – Resignation and Termination. In cases of immorality, doctrinal impurity, or other serious offenses, a senior pastor or campus pastor shall be suspended immediately by the ELT pending final dispensation of the matter. The ELT shall have the authority to seek a resignation from or terminate a senior pastor or campus pastor if deemed necessary. The ELT shall determine a reasonable severance package. Throughout the process of a resignation or termination, the ELT shall keep the congregation informed as is appropriate within legal and ethical boundaries.

Section 4 – Additional Pastors. The ELT, senior pastors, and campus pastors may call and support as many pastors as needed to effectively execute its functions. Additional pastors shall work in cooperation with, and under the overall direction of their campus pastor and the senior pastors. They shall be voting members of the Church by virtue of their position and shall be in full accord with the Church’s statement of faith (Article II).

Article III – Church Membership

Section 1 – Admission. Any person who confesses faith in Christ, completes the Church membership class, is at least 18 years of age and who signs the Membership Covenant shall be a Church member.

Article IV – Marriage and Human Sexuality

We believe the Bible defines marriage as the lifelong union of one woman to one man for the purpose of mutual upbuilding and the formation of families.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexual and bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, or any attempt to change one's biological sex, is sinful and outside of God's design.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor with the doctrines of the church.

We believe that in order to preserve the mission and integrity of the local church as the body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church family and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

Article V – Meetings

Section 1 – Annual Meetings. The Church shall have at least one scheduled business meeting annually. The ELT must announce the annual meeting time, date and place during regularly scheduled services on two successive Sundays that precede the meeting. All church business meetings will be conducted according to generally accepted practices of parliamentary procedure. The Church will maintain an outline of such procedures as approved by the ELT.

Section 2 – Special Meetings. The ELT may call special meetings as necessary. The ELT must announce the special meeting date, time and place during the regularly scheduled service, or services, on at least one Sunday (and preferably two) that precedes the meeting. Notice may alternatively be in writing and mailed to all voting members at their home address at least one week before the meeting. The ELT is required to schedule a special meeting within four (4) weeks upon receiving a signed request of at least ten percent (10%) of the Church membership.

Section 3 – Quorums. At least ten percent (10%) of the Church's voting members must be present to conduct business meetings.

Section 4 – Voting. The ELT will have the authority to decide whether voting will be by show of hand, absentee, paper ballot or other appropriate method.

Article VI – Discipline

The ELT will seek to administer church discipline and, hopefully, restoration, according to the principles found in Matthew 18:15ff., on a member who is found to be living an ungodly life or teaching contrary to the word of God according to the principles found in Matthew 18:15ff.

Article VII – Amendments

Members may adopt or amend any bylaws not in conflict with this constitution at any regular or special business meeting attended by *at least ten percent (10%)* of the church's voting members. Any motion to adopt or amend a bylaw must receive a majority vote of those present. (Cf. Constitution Article XI)