

CONSTITUTION
of
WAYZATA EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

705 County Road 101 North
Plymouth, MN 55447

Revised January 2016
Previous Revision January 2002

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Wayzata Evangelical Free Church, 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 the organization shall be the Wayzata Evangelical Free Church.

ARTICLE II **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 purpose.

ARTICLE III **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The statement of faith of this church shall be the same as that of The Evangelical Free Church of America (most recently updated June 26, 2008), which reads as follows:

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

Response and Eternal Destiny

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

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

Any person who confesses personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the assurance of salvation, and whose conduct is in accord with his confession, who subscribes to the above confession of faith, and who is willing to support the church in faithful attendance, prayers and material means may become a member of this organization, hereafter referred to as the church.

Section 2. Method of Admission to Membership

1. Admission to membership in this church shall be in the following manner:

2. After completion of an information/membership class, application for membership may then be made to the pastor or the Elder in charge of membership. One member of the Board of Elders and one member of the Membership Commission (or two members of the Board of Elders) shall then meet with and examine all applicants for membership.
3. The names of all satisfactory candidates shall be recommended to the Board of Elders at their next meeting, by the Elder in charge of membership.
4. The Board of Elders will subsequently recommend the names of all qualified candidates at any business meeting of the church for approval of admission and shall be admitted and accepted by a unanimous vote of the members present. Candidates shall not be present in the meeting when their applications are being considered.
5. The accepted applicants shall then be publicly welcomed into the membership at a regular worship service at the church.

Section 3. Absent Members

- A. If any member has been absent for twelve months, the Board of Elders shall make an attempt to contact him/her. Unless the member responds that they plan to continue being involved in the life of WEFC, they shall be removed from the membership roles.
- B. It is expected that every member who is absent for twelve months will communicate with the church if they desire to be put on an inactive members list. Inactive members shall reside outside the Twin Cities area and will not have voting privileges.

Section 4. Withdrawal from Membership

Any member who wishes to withdraw from church membership may receive a letter from the pastor upon request.

Section 5. Christian Conduct

Regular attendance at services in God's house, daily reading of the Bible, private and family prayer, 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.

All members are encouraged to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, and be courteous in speech and slow to anger.

Each member is urged to pledge himself to a systematic contribution of a portion of his income for the support of the church according to the principles laid down in I Corinthians 16:2. Each member shall consider it his sacred duty and privilege to make full use of his talent for the Lord's service whenever opportunity affords.

Section 6. Discipline

If any member shall conduct himself in a manner which, in the studied opinion of the Pastor and Board of Elders, is not in harmony with the above Scriptural principles and for which he does not show evidence of repentance, he shall be interviewed and counseled by the pastor and Elders after the manner 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.

If, however, the member should choose to continue in his unrepentant condition, he shall be deprived of his membership. This can be done only by the church upon a recommendation from the Board of Elders and by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular business meeting of the church. Further deliberation in the matter may be had at any regular business meeting of the church upon the request of that person in question.

Section 7. Property Rights

Any member who has withdrawn or has been excluded from the church loses all rights of the church.

ARTICLE V **GOVERNMENT**

Section 1. Authority

- A. The congregation has final authority under the headship of Christ.
- B. The congregation shall annually confirm elders as otherwise provided in this article.
- C. As a self-governing body, the congregation shall delegate its administrative responsibilities and authority to a board of elders who shall be trustees of the church for purposes of Minnesota law.
- D. The congregation shall retain the authority to rescind any decision of the elder board.
- E. The congregation shall retain the authority to call the pastoral staff, admit applicants for membership, purchase or sell church real property, determine any restrictive covenants within these by-laws and such other matters as it shall determine.
- F. The chairman of the Elder Board shall chair all business meetings. In his absence, he shall appoint a vice-chairman to chair the meetings.

Section 2. Elders

- A. Qualification of Elders

Elders shall be resident members of the church who meet the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Member must have attended Wayzata Evangelical Free Church for a minimum of two years and during that time been active in teaching, leadership, or assisting the pastoral staff.

B. The Function and Priority of Elders

1. To keep right with God
(Acts 20:28 and I Peter 5:2).
2. To feed and protect the flock
(Acts 20:28 and John 21:15-17).
3. To pray and study
(Acts 6:4).
4. To be free from any self interest
(Acts 20:33 and I Peter 5:2).

C. Responsibilities of the Elders

1. The Board of Elders shall protect the doctrinal statement of the church.
2. The Board of Elders shall direct all business and ministries of the church.
3. The Board of Elders shall select from among their number a chairman.
4. The Board of Elders shall appoint Deacons and Deaconesses and others to carry out specific ministries of the church. These shall be members in good standing, meeting the requirements of Titus 1, I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3.
5. The Board of Elders shall appoint a treasurer and financial secretary and other such officers as it deems necessary from within the membership of the congregation.
6. The Board of Elders shall propose an annual budget to the congregation.
7. The Board of Elders will communicate with the congregation and solicit response on all appropriate matters.

D. Selection of Elders

1. Apply through an Elder or be invited by an Elder on behalf of the Board. At this time the Elder Aspirant is given an Elder packet.
2. Written response by the Aspirant will be given to the Elder Board regarding the qualifications stated in Paragraph A (I Timothy 3:1-7).
3. Elder Board reviews Aspirant and assign two Elders to meet with him.
4. A meeting is scheduled with the two Elders and Aspirant before the next scheduled Elder meeting.
5. Report will be given by the two Elders to the Board.

6. If Elder Board's response is "Yes", a formal letter of invitation is extended to the Aspirant indicating that he can attend Elder Board meetings without voting privileges for a minimum of six months. After this period the Elder Board will vote on the Aspirant. If the Elders approve, the Aspirant will be presented to the Congregation and voted on at the next business meeting. Appointment shall be by 66% majority of members present at the meeting. If Elder Board's response is "No", a meeting with the Aspirant, an Elder and the Chairman of the Elder Board will be scheduled to discuss concerns.

E. Term of Office for Elders

The term for Eldership is one year. An Elder can serve six consecutive terms before stepping off the Board for at least one year. However, eldership may be terminated as follows:

1. By withdrawal of membership from Wayzata Evangelical Free Church.
2. By failure to live according to I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
3. By voluntary resignation.
4. By vote of 66% of those present at any regularly scheduled business meeting.
5. By failure to receive annual confirmation by the congregation at the annual meeting. Confirmation would be denied without 66% positive vote of members present at the meeting.
6. By failure of the Elder Board to submit an incumbent's name to the congregation for its decision.

Section 3. Deacons - Deaconesses

A. Qualifications of Deacons-Deaconesses

Deacons-Deaconesses shall meet the qualifications as set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-6.

B. The Function of Deacons-Deaconesses

1. To keep right with God.
2. To carry out the directives of the elders in areas of ministry and service to the flock.
3. To have the responsibility for a specific area of ministry.
4. To have the authority to administer and direct their committees in the accomplishment of the assigned task.

Section 4. Pastor

- A. The pastor, as well as all members of the official board, must be of irreproachable character, having a "good report" (I Timothy 3:1-13).

- B. The pastor shall devote his time to the work of the church. He shall give a report at the annual meeting as to the work and condition of the church. By virtue of his position, he shall have power of address and vote in all boards, commissions, and committees of the church.
- C. Election and calling of the pastor may take place at a regular or special business meeting; by voting affirmative or negative on one candidate; but the final vote must be taken by closed ballots and a two-thirds vote must be had to retain the pastor when that issue is before the session. He shall be called for an indefinite time with three months' notice by him or by the church in case of resignation or dismissal.

Section 5. The Pastoral Staff

The pastoral staff shall be called as deemed advisable, using the same procedure as with calling a pastor.

- A. The pastoral staff shall be responsible to the pastor and the Board of Elders.
- B. The Sr. Associate Pastor shall be ex-officio member of all boards of the church.

Section 6. Commissions

The commissions are channels through which the ministries of the church will be implemented. A commission will consist of deacons and deaconesses who will act as a committee having responsibility for a specific ministry. The overseer will serve the commission as advisor, counselor, teacher, prayer supporter, and liaison between the commission and the Board of Elders.

Section 7. Committees

Committees will be formed as deemed appropriate and necessary by the elders.

ARTICLE VI
BUSINESS MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the church shall be held in June or July each year on such day and time as may be decided by the Elder Board. At this meeting annual reports shall be received, officers and boards elected and other necessary business transacted. The fiscal year shall end on June 30.

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Section 2. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings of the church shall be held during the first month of each quarter, unless otherwise decided by the Elder Board.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings, for the transaction of legitimate business, may be called either by vote of the church, by the Pastor, by the Chairman, or by any two members of the Elder Board.

Notice of such special meetings shall be given either by announcement at the regular Sunday services of the church at least three days previous to the date of the meeting, or written notice mailed in time to reach all resident members at least three days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 4. Reports

Written reports shall be presented to the annual meeting by those designated by the Elder Board Chairman.

Section 5. Quorum

Ten percent (10%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority of votes cast (one more than half of all votes cast) shall be required to decide all business transactions and elections unless otherwise specified by these by-laws.

ARTICLE VII
CHURCH PROPERTY

Section 1.

This church shall have the power to receive either by gift or by purchase and to hold such real, personal or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Minnesota 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. The Board of Elders shall have the power to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, lease, convey, mortgage, deed or otherwise transfer property of the church, only after having been duly authorized by the church at a business meeting of the church. All contracts, notes, mortgages, conveyances, assignments, leases, releases, and other papers and documents in behalf of the church shall be executed by the Board of Elders.

Section 2.

In case of a division of the church (from which may God in His mercy preserve us) the property of the church shall belong to those who abide by this constitution.

Section 3.

In case of dissolution of the church, the property shall be assigned to the North Central District Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Section 4.

The church shall be considered dissolved when only five or less than five members remain.

ARTICLE VIII
STANDING

This church shall remain free and independent and shall not join itself to any other denomination or synod. It shall remain its own highest authority and conduct its affairs through its own business session. This church shall be affiliated with the North Central District Association and the Evangelical Free Church of America, and its branches. It shall send delegates to their conferences, support home and foreign missions and other mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel as the church itself may officially decide.

ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to this Constitution or to the Bylaws may be introduced in writing at any regular or special business meeting. Amendments shall become effective upon passage with an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting members at a subsequent meeting where a quorum is present. A quorum shall be 10% of active members.