

BYLAWS OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF KINGSBURG

Revised May 2015

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. Expectations: Members will work to demonstrate the love of Christ to one another (John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7); seek to grow in Christ, and encourage others to grow in Him (Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25); pray for one another (Ephesians 6: 18); be thoughtful and courteous to one another, slow to take offense, and quick to forgive (Ephesians 4:29-32; James 1:19); use their spiritual gifts in ministry (1 Peter 4: 1 0); give financially to our church, to relief of the needy, and to the evangelization of people as God provides (1 Corinthians 9:3-18; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:6-15); read the Bible and pray daily, establishing family devotions whenever possible (Psalm 1:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 5: 17); bring up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Ephesians 6:4); live honestly before all people so the name of Christ will be well spoken of as a result of our testimony (Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12); work by example, word and prayer to win others to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord (Matthew 28: 19-20; Acts 1 :8); attend worship services consistently and seek to become part of a small group for spiritual accountability and growth (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25); live in submission to the leadership of our church (Hebrews 13: 17); and seek to resolve disputes through the process of Christian peacemaking (Matthew 18: 15-20; 1 Corinthians 6: 1-11).

2. Requirements: Membership into our church may be granted to any adult who confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who appears to be living a life consistent with biblical Christianity; who is willing to affirm and live by our Statement of faith; and who is willing to participate peaceably with the members, leaders, Constitution, and other policies of this church. A person not yet an adult may request membership with parental approval. A call to serve as a pastor assumes membership qualification for the pastor and his wife, and is automatically granted. Our Leadership Team is directed to maintain a membership list, including current members for current purposes, and the names of past members for historic reasons.

3. Application: Anyone desiring membership may request so to anyone on our Leadership Team. The applicant will be expected to share a biographical testimony of faith in Christ with the Leadership Team, and affirm agreement with this constitution and bylaws. Although we do not require baptism for membership, we do strongly urge obedience to our Lord in this important step of spiritual growth. Upon favorable consideration of the request, the Leadership Team will recommend an affirmative vote to the congregation, and then welcome the member at any worship service or business meeting. The person will be urged to share a testimony at some appropriate service, for the joyful encouragement of others. We neither accept nor grant formal transfers of membership among other congregations, but will happily send notice of actions we have taken, or a letter of recommendation to another church.

4. Advantages: Any and all peaceable people are welcome to attend worship services. Regular attendees who are growing and honoring the Lord are generally welcome to participate in ministry, but not in leadership positions (as determined by our Leadership Team). All active members are granted voting rights, and the privilege of holding leadership positions, so long as other appropriate spiritual and legal qualifications are met. Our Leadership Team reserves the right to limit, regulate, or discontinue an individual's ministry to or with our church for any reason, unless otherwise specified herein or in another policy. Furthermore, active members are granted the privilege of counsel and opportunity for peacemaking in case of disagreement, conflict, or lapse in conduct.

5. Associate: Any member who becomes unable to participate consistently in congregational life may continue to be included as an associate member by our Leadership Team. We will do all we can to provide pastoral services and a church connection for associate members, but do not anticipate regular attendance nor keeping up with the family concerns of the congregation. Associate membership means non-voting, and not available for leadership or ministry positions. Regular membership (voting and again available for ministry) may be reinstated at any time by our Leadership Team, if consistent participation resumes. Associate members might include ones who have moved from the area but wish to continue membership; ones who are "shut-in;" ones away in the military, college, or serving on a mission field; or ones who simply decline to participate by consistent attendance, but wish to retain membership.

6. Peacemaking: Peacemaking will be based on such passages as Matthew 5:23-24 and 18:15-20. A more complete process may be set forth in a separate policy, but hearts are more important than procedures. The following is an outline of what we intend.

a) Approach: Peacemaking will never be regarded as punitive, always restorative. We recognize that any disgruntled member is free to walk away. However, one privilege of membership is the structured counsel, supportive prayer, and limiting guidelines of Christian brothers and sisters, especially those appointed to lead and protect the church. Therefore, members recognize the availability and privilege of biblical peacemaking, and agree to submit, in keeping with 2 Timothy 3: 16-17, Matthew 18: 15-20, and other pertinent passages. In all situations, our intentions will be to help, not harm members; to promote peace, not discord; and to protect, not afflict our flock.

b) Process: Ideally, a member will request intervention. However, if an issue comes to light wherein peacemaking may be in order, our Leadership Team-in keeping with 2 Timothy 3:16-17 is authorized to initiate peace by teaching and clarifying biblical truths, by holding conferences and consultations, by giving appropriate correction, and by providing advice for training in righteousness. In accord with Matthew 18:15-20, we affirm three overall steps to peace:

(1) The PERSONAL step: Whenever something comes between believers, the one who perceives the difficulty (whether apparent sin or mere disagreement) is expected to approach the other and no one else, and to make every honest effort to set things right. Both parties (and "sides") are expected to interact and respond with intentions of honoring the Lord, with Christ-like love, and with the purpose of quitting sin and / or making peace. As much as possible, we prefer to keep peacemaking at an informal level of one-on-one or small group conferences.

(2) The PEACEMAKING step: When personal private conferences do not suffice, the aggrieved parties (or "sides") are expected to accept intervention by the Leadership Team, which may appoint a qualified peacemaking team, or refer for professional counseling, or enlist whatever other intervention as would seem most likely to bring peace. When there are accusations of sin, the peacemaking team will consider evidence and circumstances in their effort to achieve agreement. When there is merely misunderstanding, the peacemakers will help to clarify issues to produce agreement. When there is disharmony over personal preferences, the peacemaking team will make recommendations to the aggrieved parties in hopes of bringing about agreement. The peacemaking team and all parties concerned are expected to act as promptly as is practicable and maintain confidentiality, to avoid the spread of dissension and confusion.

(3) The PUBLIC step: When the peacemaking team is not able to produce a plan for peace or bring the parties to agreement, they may report their findings and recommendations to the Leadership Team. If the peacemaking team deems it appropriate, they may request the Leadership Team to consider further efforts at peacemaking. However, if one of the parties ("sides") is resistant to peace, the peacemaking team will report this to the Leadership Team. If discord continues, the Leadership Team will report this to the full congregation. The congregation will be expected to treat the resistant one(s) with respect, yet with the sad recognition that the person(s) ("sides") is acting as an unbeliever, and has thus forfeited membership.

c) Appeal: As a congregational church whose leadership is entrusted to a Leadership Team, there is no higher place to appeal. However, should circumstances arise wherein the Leadership Team believes that outside intervention may be potentially valuable, the Leadership Team may follow the way of prudence by requesting help either from our District leadership, or from a qualified Christian mediation and peacemaking service outside our congregation. One such circumstance might be when someone(s) on our Leadership Team itself has become embroiled in conflict.

7. Discontinuing: Membership may be discontinued as follows:

a) Resignation of a member: A member may discontinue attending and resign membership by giving notice at any time.

b) Non-participation by a member: A member who neglects to attend, give, or participate over the duration of six months will be regarded as disinterested. The member may then be continued as an associate member, or discontinued by action of our Leadership Team, as seems most appropriate.

c) Release of a member: As a final step in the peacemaking process, our Leadership Team is authorized to discontinue membership, and to limit attendance and participation if the person has become disruptive, uncooperative, or a threat to the peace of our congregation.

B. LEADERSHIP TEAM and PASTORS:

1. The Leadership Team: As stated in our Constitution, our Leadership Team is comprised of a congregationally elected group of men who we choose to call by the biblical term "elders." They will give direction, set policies, maintain standards, and make sure we continue to function as a Bible-based church honoring our Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the Leadership Team will arrange for the ongoing teaching and equipping of our church, for our bonding together as a family of believers, for maintaining our mission, and for fulfilling all the biblical duties of elders/overseers/shepherds.

a) Function: Because the Bible uses three terms for those on a church leadership team, we ask and expect our Team to function according to the three concepts inherent within the meaning of each. "Elder" refers to maturity and wisdom. "Overseer" refers to the administrative duties and tasks. "Shepherd" (pastor) refers to the caring heart and concern for the flock. Although we call our Leadership Team "elders," the other terms also apply.

b) Authority and responsibility: Authority is held by the Leadership Team as a group, not by any individual acting in isolation from the Team, except when duties and projects are delegated. For example, certain functions are delegated to the (paid) teaching pastor(s), but he is not allowed to make major decisions apart from Leadership Team approval.

c) Qualifications: Because we are a "congregational" church, we agree to elect and support godly members as our leaders, to meet with the Lord and direct our affairs. The qualifications for an elder are given in I Timothy 3: 1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. We will seek to elect men who commit themselves to these qualifications. Furthermore, we will expect our Leadership Team to review these qualifications several times a year, and to hold one another accountable to maintain integrity in these areas.

d) Number and term: We affirm that qualification to hold this office is more important than how many are on the Leadership Team. However, we hope to have no fewer than five or more than ten elders on the Leadership Team, including our Lead Pastor. Staff pastors may serve on the Leadership Team if elected separately from their placement as a staff pastor. (In most cases, a staff pastor becomes eligible to serve upon call to a staff position; else he would not have been called. A possible exception could be a pastor in training.) The regular term of service will be one year, with no term limits. The exception to these rules is our Lead Pastor, who will serve in permanent tenure until he resigns, or is asked to resign by the Leadership Team.

2. Nomination and placement:

a) Nominating Committee: At least three months prior to the annual congregational business meeting or at other times if election of an elder is needed, the Leadership Team will appoint a Nominating Committee to take charge of proposing candidates. The Nominating Committee will consist of the Lead Pastor, two elders, and three people from the congregation, at least one of whom should be a woman. To serve, these must be qualified by evident spiritual character, and know the people of the congregation well. They will meet, determine one(s) seemingly best qualified, interview them, and submit the name(s) to the Leadership Team. Unless there is strong reservation regarding the nominee, the Leadership Team will post the name(s) at least six weeks ahead of the business meeting. If anyone in the congregation has strong reservations about the qualifications of an elder candidate, he is honor-bound to discreetly share reasons for his reservations with the Nominating Committee, who will investigate the challenge, and withdraw the nomination if the committee determines that a misjudgment was made.

b) Election: If there are no verifiable challenges (see above), the congregation will vote by secret ballot. The vote on each candidate will be a simple "yes" or "no," with no one "running against" anyone else. The affirmative vote must be 75% for an elder candidate to be elected. Those elected will be publicly installed by the Lead Pastor and Leadership Team within 30 days.

c) Discontinuance: We expect those placed in elder leadership to fulfill commitments and faithfully serve the duration of a term, unless moving from the area or some other serious circumstance makes it impossible to continue. We expect an elder to resign if there is any lapse of character qualification. If someone detects any lapse of qualification on the part of an elder, they may initiate investigation by use of the Peacemaking clause of this document.

3. Decision making: The normal process for decision-making shall be to come to consensus. This requires the Leadership Team and also each of our Ministry Teams to learn to think together, but not merely to think the same. Consensus means that all on the team are able to accept a decision, with no team member holding the view that the decision is immoral, contrary to conscience, or grossly inappropriate. After prayerful deliberation, plus exploration of biblical principles and the application of Christian wisdom, if there remains someone(s) in sharp disagreement with an apparently developing consensus, he is duty bound to explore and carefully explain reasoning. If the issue at hand is one with major moral, spiritual, or legal implications, then further time for deliberation will be taken. If the

decision is a standard judgment call, the consensus need not have the strength of unanimity. Leadership Team members (especially), and also Ministry Team members agree to carefully hear the wisdom of one another, and to defer to the consensus of thinking by supporting the final decision.

4. Professional pastoral staff:

a) Lead pastor: Our church will normally expect to call a professionally trained pastor to teach and lead by emphasizing the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, according to Ephesians 4:11-16. This includes teaching the Bible, training others to make disciples, and envisioning the future. It also includes providing strong leadership in implementing our currently stated mission, target, and vision. We intend our pastor to work through others by delegating both responsibility and authority to serve. Upon call and placement to office, our lead pastor automatically becomes part of our Leadership Team. Additional specifics may be included in the annual "Pastoral Agreement."

b) Staff pastor(s): As our Leadership Team and congregation deem appropriate, our church may call and support various staff pastors, to work in conjunction with and be responsible to our lead pastor and our Leadership Team. After call and placement, any staff pastor becomes eligible to serve on our Leadership Team, but may not necessarily be placed on the Leadership Team. In any case, he also remains accountable to our lead pastor, who is authorized to give directives, and bound to promote pastoral team-work. The responsibilities and authority of a staff pastor may be further defined by his annual "Pastoral Agreement."

c) Interim pastor: If the position of lead pastor becomes vacant, an interim pastor may be engaged by the Leadership Team until a lead pastor is called. An interim pastor shall have the qualifications of a lead pastor. The Leadership Team shall establish compensation for the position as allowed within the annual church budget.

d) Calling a pastor: When in need of a professional lead or staff pastor, the Leadership Team will determine a plan of action. Our EFCA District may be consulted. To be proposed to the congregation, a candidate for any permanent pastor position must have the recommendation of the Leadership Team, as well as any committee which may have been engaged in processing options. The decision to call a permanent pastor must be by congregational vote, by secret ballot. To issue a call, the affirmative vote must be 75% of those members in attendance.

e) Annual pastoral agreement: A pastoral agreement will be written and updated annually for each permanent pastor. It will contain confirmation of call, full details of compensation, an understanding of pastoral approach, key expectations, principles for evaluation, and other matters which the Leadership Team (including the pastor) may deem appropriate. This agreement will be accessible and available to be read by any member of our congregation.

f) Discontinuance: Once we place a permanent pastor, tenure will be considered indefinite unless otherwise specified and agreed upon in the "Pastoral Agreement." In all cases, it will be expected that a pastor will take initiative to tender his resignation if anyone of three circumstances prevail: 1) He adopts beliefs contrary to our Statement of Faith or our form of church government; 2) He violates his calling by gross immorality or sub-ethical behavior; 3) He loses credibility with the Leadership Team and/or congregation to the extent that he can no longer lead nor function effectively. Resigning will be discussed with the Leadership Team first and offered to the congregation with Team acquiescence. Terms of departure will be worked out with the Leadership Team, and/or according to the Pastoral Agreement.

5. Specific Officers on the Leadership Team: The Leadership Team will organize itself internally by choosing a chairman, a clerk, and any other assignments which seem important. The one chosen to act as Leadership Team chairman will normally act as chairman at congregational business meetings. However, this position does not give additional authority in either forum. The Leadership Team may appoint anyone of its number to conduct a business meeting. Preferably, a lead or staff pastor will not serve as chair of the Leadership Team nor congregational meetings, to help mitigate undue influence.

C. PROVISION FOR MINISTRY TEAMS AND ALL OTHER WORKERS:

1. Ministry Teams: The Leadership Team is authorized to create and commission, or de-commission and terminate the existence of Ministry Teams as needed, for tasks and duties, which need to be done. When a Ministry Team or person is commissioned, responsibility and authority is delegated by the Leadership Team. Also, a coordinating tie or liaison between the Leadership Team and the Ministry Team (or person) will be established. When a Ministry Team is decommissioned, any residual duties revert to the Leadership Team. A Ministry Team may be "standing" (always needed), "ongoing" (a lengthy ministry but not expected to be permanent), or "ad hoc" (for a short-term specified task). The Leadership Team may grant a Ministry Team authority to create sub-ministries or committees, or appoint individuals for various ministries. The purpose is to allow as many people as possible to serve, according to their developing areas of interest and expertise, and their God-given "spiritual gifts."

2. The role of women on Ministry Teams: In keeping with biblical principle, we believe that the Leadership Team (elders, overseers, pastors) is reserved for men. However, we also believe the Bible allows for wide ranging participation in ministry on the part of women. The primary principle is that anyone is eligible to minister, but authority finally goes back to the Leadership Team, who may delegate but not totally convey authority. On the part of both men and women in ministry, we simply ask for the humility of servant-hearts instead of "lording it over," as Jesus spoke of in Mark 10:42-45. Concerning any man or woman for whom this is an issue, we ask for deference instead of demands.

3. Qualifications and placement: In all cases, the qualifications for Ministry Teams or individual ministry positions will be the simple ones established in Acts 6:3.

a) The person must have sufficient credibility in the eyes of the church to do the ministry s/he is asked to do.

b) The person must have a sufficient level of spiritual qualification for the task. The Leadership Team is authorized to devise appropriate lists of qualifications for given ministries. Two biblical lists are in I Timothy 3:8-12.

c) The person must have sufficient wisdom (practical know-how) to perform the given ministry. • The Leadership Team may choose to appoint people to any Ministry Team, OR may ask the Nominating Committee to seek qualified individuals and ask the congregation to affirm by vote. Once appointed, the expectation is that a Ministry Team person will serve faithfully for the duration of a term.

4. "Standing" (always needed) Ministry Teams: To insure that the Leadership Team has time to tend to the "people" matters of our church, the following Ministry Teams are hereby created. However, if circumstances change such that there are not enough people to fill roles, or the ministry requirements change, then the Leadership Team is authorized to assume duties or reorganize the teams.

a) Finance Team: This Ministry Team will consist of a Treasurer, a Financial Secretary, and any others whom the Leadership Team may choose to add. The task of this Team is to safeguard our various funds, issue appropriate receipts to donors, pay bills, and maintain all things financial.

This team will keep the Leadership Team apprised of our financial affairs on a monthly basis. To serve in these positions, a person needs to be highly respected in the eyes of the congregation as being honest, ought to be well qualified by such items as are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and should have excellent ability with numbers and basic book-keeping tasks. Other fiscal policies are described in Section D, and this Team must be diligent to help the Leadership Team maintain financial integrity. The Leadership Team will determine terms of service.

b) Facilities Team: This Ministry Team will consist of one or more individuals who will care for property and possessions of our church, and make sure that facilities are maintained, utilities are in order, equipment is in good repair, and maintenance projects are accomplished on a timely basis. A term of service will be two years. To serve on this Ministry Team, a person needs to be respected by the congregation, ought to be qualified by such items as are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and should have ability and common sense concerning the maintaining of physical facilities and equipment. The work of this team will be funded by items in the annual budget, which the Team will have responsibility to spend wisely to keep our facilities in a state of readiness for ministry.

c) Missions Team: This Ministry Team will consist of three or more individuals who are charged with the task of looking after the various missionaries and mission ministries we support. A term of service will be two years. To serve on this Team a person needs to be respected in the eyes of the congregation, ought to be qualified by such items as are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and should have a good level of interest in missions and the missionaries we support. The work of this Team shall be funded as designated in the church budget.

5. Provision for non-clergy paid employees: To accomplish the work of our church, other workers may be employed as deemed necessary by our Leadership Team. Selection, establishing terms of employment, defining responsibilities, evaluating and terminating employment shall be the ultimate responsibility of the Leadership Team, but may be delegated to a Ministry Team by decision or policy.

D. FISCAL CONCERNS:

1. Fiscal year: Our fiscal year shall be the calendar year. We may keep the books of the previous year open for three weeks into the New Year for the purpose of paying bills, but not for contributions.

2. Contributions: All contributions are received only with the understanding that no strings are attached, and become the immediate possession of our church as a legal corporation. In keeping with state law: 1) Tax deductible receipts may be granted for legitimate charitable contributions. 2) Those designated for a stated purpose will be honored if possible as a matter of ethics, but contributors must realize that there is no obligation to do so, and the contribution may be redirected (not returned) if the church determines not to fulfill the designee's preference. 3) Those designated or intended for a stated person are not able to be legally received, if the contributor intends to convey a tax-free gift or gain and tax deductible advantage. 4) We consider giving to be an act of private worship, so we will not make the records of individual giving available to the congregation or anyone lacking a legitimate need to know. Information about an individual's giving will not be made available to our paid pastors without good reason, in order to help protect their ministry from financial influence.

3. Funds: We hereby establish a General Fund to be regulated by budget. Our Leadership Team may establish other funds and accounts, to be regulated by policy. No fund or account may be established for any program, by any person, or by any sub-group of our church, without specific Leadership Team approval, adequate governing policy, and final authority residing with our congregation. The books of all will be carefully maintained by our Finance Ministry Team; will be open (excluding contributions) to any

member; will be reviewed regularly by our Leadership Team via financial reports and surveying of ledgers; and will be reviewed and reported to the congregation annually.

4. Budget: Our Leadership Team is authorized to propose an annual budget, which becomes policy to be followed once adopted by the congregation, in so far as contributions allow. The budget may be amended by Leadership Team proposal and congregational approval. We agree that our budget limits spending and funds programs, but never requires spending nor creates programs. A budget figure alone does not set a salary, nor guarantee expenditure. The Leadership Team is authorized to spend up to but no more than 1 % of a year's budget amount for an unbudgeted need once each year, in case of an unavoidable emergency, if the amount is available in our accounts and does not conflict with any other policies. Such an action will be reported immediately to the congregation. Any non-emergency unbudgeted expenditure requires congregational approval.

5. Fiscal Accountability: All accounts will be reviewed in detail on an annual basis (as soon as possible after the close of the fiscal year) by at least two members appointed by (but not serving on) the Leadership Team. At least every third year, our Leadership Team will appoint someone outside our congregation to review the books and contributions records to make sure regulations and policies are being followed. If ever there comes a suspicion of malfeasance, the Leadership Team will ask the EFCA District leadership to provide a qualified person to review and help set things right.

E. MEETINGS:

1. Worship: Our primary purpose for meeting is worship. Therefore, our primary regular meeting will include the necessary components of worship, at least once a week (likely Sunday). All other meetings-for worship, teaching, training, planning, fellowship, or anything else-may be determined by our Leadership Team or ministry people, as needed.

2. Special business meetings: Business meetings may be called at any time by our Leadership Team, by giving notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Informational meetings (no business proposals need be included) will be held often enough to ensure that our membership is well apprised of the directions and decisions which our Leadership Team and Ministry Teams are pursuing.

3. Proposals: Our congregational business meetings will be "proposal driven." This means that business will be conducted and decisions made only by specific proposals announced in advance, allowing for due deliberation and discussion.

4. Announcing meetings: Our Leadership Team will notify our congregation of business meetings by providing clear verbal or written announcements at regular public services, or by written notices conveyed to members, so information is available at least a full week in advance of the meeting, and preferably longer. The purpose and proposals of business meetings will be provided as part of the notice.

5. Quorums and voting: The Leadership Team will make sure the membership is well informed concerning all matters requiring decision or vote. A quorum for a business meeting will be those attending. Decisions will be made by majority vote, unless otherwise provided in this constitution or bylaws. Election votes will be by secret ballot. Other voting will normally be in the open, but any member may request a vote be by secret ballot, subject to congregational approval.

6. Meetings of the Leadership and Ministry Teams: Our Leadership Team will meet regularly, normally once a month. Ministry Teams are also authorized to meet regularly, according to need or the policy established to give guidance to the Ministry.

7. Records: The Leadership and Ministry Teams will keep written records of their meetings, topics discussed, decisions made, and actions taken. Notes of recent meetings will be posted in a place easily accessible to the membership, and archived records will be available for viewing by any member upon request, except records that may contain private and sensitive information about individuals. When the Leadership Team must discuss sensitive matters concerning people, records of such meetings will be kept in confidential church files, and made available to anyone outside the Leadership Team only on a legitimate need-to-know basis. Church documents and records of all meetings are the possession of the church, not individuals, so the official file copy will be kept in church files, not personal files.