

Constitution And By-Laws

The Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church
Of Huntington Station, NY

Revised and Amended June 2024



ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this congregation is the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church of Huntington Station, chartered as a non-profit organization under the laws of the State of New York.

ARTICLE II – AFFILIATION

This church is affiliated with The Evangelical Free Church of America and its Eastern District. It shall, however, remain as its own authority in matters of purpose, governance and operation.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

We seek to be found pleasing to God; to encourage each other in biblical faith; and to share the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with others in our community and our world.

ARTICLE IV – DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around certain theological convictions with which the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church is in agreement:

God

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 V – Biblical Authority and Right of Convictions

We believe that God compels us to lovingly proclaim both in word and in action the truth, values, morals, and ethics that are taught in the Bible. Biblical authority is over and sometimes against the culture of the world.

Our organizational structure, Membership policies, leadership, pastoral staff, hiring and firing and discipline will be according to our understanding of biblical teaching.

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Elders is the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). 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 (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.)

We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church's members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

We believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hatful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Dix Hills Evangelical Free Church.

We concur with the 1st Amendment that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

ARTICLE VI – CONGREGATIONAL AUTHORITY

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church from whom the church takes her direction. The Membership of the church, at all its duly called congregational business meetings in matters of vote, holds final authority. Any person who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may apply for membership.

ARTICLE VII – ELDER GOVERNANCE

The Board of Elders will be elected by and be responsible to the membership. Men meeting the qualifications of an elder (Titus 1:1-10) will be our spiritual leaders. The governance of the church shall be vested in a Board of Elders according to the principles of Scripture and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE VIII – PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

This church will have a Senior Pastor who meets the qualifications of an overseer (1 Timothy 3:1-7). He is a member of and accountable to the Board of Elders and together

they are accountable to the Congregation. Members of the pastoral staff are accountable to the Senior Pastor. Staff members may be called as elder but they are not automatic members of the Board of Elders. Recommendations for additions and removals to the pastoral staff are approved by the Board of Elders. The call and removal of the Senior Pastor is the responsibility of the congregation according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and our By-Laws.

ARTICLE IX – BUSINESS MEETINGS

An annual business meeting of the congregation shall be held prior to the start of the church fiscal year. Additional business meetings may be held as deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE X – PROPERTY

The membership shall have, in the corporate name, the right to own, buy, lease and sell property. In case of dissolution, the property shall be transferred to The Eastern District of the Evangelical Free Church of America. In case of a division of the membership, the ownership of property shall remain with those members abiding by this constitution as determined by the Board of the Eastern District.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be introduced in writing at any Congregational Business Meeting and they cannot be voted upon by the Members until the next Congregational Business Meeting. Motions must receive a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Members present and voting. Members shall receive reasonable notification at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be voted upon.

ARTICLE XII – BY-LAWS

A supplement to this constitution, known as the by-laws, shall contain procedural matters not outlined herein. Should there be an inconsistency between the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution and By-Laws, the Board of Elders will have the authority to resolve the inconsistency. When a resolution is settled upon it will be included in the minutes of the Board of Elders meeting.

ARTICLE I – PARTNERSHIP

Section 1.1 Partnership Qualifications

Any person (minimum age of eighteen) who professes faith in Jesus Christ, who manifests a lifestyle that evidences a saving relationship with Jesus, who agrees with the doctrinal statement, who will work in harmony with this Constitution, and who is willing to support the church in attendance, prayers, gifts and service may become a partner.

Section 1.2 Partnership Applications

Persons desiring to affiliate with this church may make an application for partnership. Each applicant shall give a personal testimony of Christian experience at a venue approved by the Elder Board. The applicant shall become a partner upon approval by a majority of the votes cast at an Elder Board meeting. New partners shall be required to sign the Partnership Covenant and shall be acknowledged at the next available church business meeting, or in other public formats which may be deemed reasonable. Pastoral staff members and spouses shall be accepted into partnership concurrent with installation into the local church ministry. Partnership records shall be maintained by the Elder Board.

Section 1.3 Reaffirmation of Partnership

All partners will be asked annually, as a group, to verbally reaffirm their commitment to the partnership as stated in the Partnership Covenant.

Section 1.4 Partner Duties and Responsibilities

The privilege of partnership has certain duties and responsibilities. Partners, by God's grace, should honor, love, and pray for the leadership; honor, love and pray for one another; endeavor to preserve unity and harmony in the body; serve the body, advance the mission of the church by regularly using their God-given gifts and talents; regularly attend church worship services and business meetings; contribute, as the Lord leads and according to His Word, with time, talent, tithes, and offerings.

Section 1.5 Partner Rights

All partners in good standing shall have equal rights, including the right to vote and hold elected or appointed positions for which they qualify. No individual shall have rights of ownership to any church property, real or personal, since all contributions to this non-profit organization are freely given for the work of the gospel ministry.

Section 1.6 Partner Discipline

Partners are expected to conduct themselves according to the standards set forth in the Scriptures. Those found living or teaching contrary to the Word of God and the doctrinal statement of this church shall be counseled, in love, first by fellow believers, and if necessary, by the pastor and elders. If efforts to bring repentance and restoration fail, then the pastor and the Elder Board will follow biblical principles outlined in Scripture, including: Matt 18:15-18, 1 Cor 5, 2 Cor 2:5-11 and Gal 6:1-2.

Section 1.7 Partner Terminations for Cause

Any partner wishing to leave the partnership shall notify the Elder Board. Those in good standing may request a letter of recommendation. Any partner who holds false or heretical doctrines contrary to the Word of God, or who is living a life in violation of the Scriptures may be subject to removal from partnership. If judged necessary, the Elder Board shall have authority for such removal. This step requires a unanimous vote of the entire Elder Board. A partner who dies or becomes a member or partner of another church shall automatically be removed from partnership. Partners who are not reasonably active (per Section 1.4) will be contacted with encouragement to re-engage. Partners who remain disengaged may be subject to removal from partnership. Circumstances that prevent partners from active involvement in the church, such as shut-in status, will be taken into consideration.

ARTICLE II • ELDER GOVERNANCE

Section 2.1 Elder Board

We shall strive for a board of at least five elders, but not less than two lay elders and the senior pastor. There may be as many elders as deemed available and appropriate to the needs of the church. Only men shall be considered for the position of elder. Nominees for elder will be presented for vote at duly-called congregational business meetings. The term is three years. No elder may serve more than two consecutive terms without at least a one-year sabbatical from service. A two-thirds majority of partners present and voting at a congregational business meeting shall be necessary for affirmation of a new elder or an elder returning from sabbatical.

Men who serve as elders are respected as elders for life. They serve and benefit the congregation at large. The office of elder is not a paid position. Elders currently not serving on the Elder Board may, at the discretion of the Elder Board, be invited to attend Elder Board meetings in an advisory capacity, but without voting privileges. The Elder Board may also invite partners, male or female, to attend Elder Board meetings in an advisory capacity, but also without voting privileges. Qualifications shall include the following:

1. Confidence in God's call to this role (1 Tim 3:1; 2 Tim 1:5-11; Acts 20:24)
2. Character of humble growth (1 Tim 3:1-7; Phil 3:10-14; Rom 7:14-8:4)
3. Confirmation by God's people (Acts 1:21-26, 6:3, 13:1-3; 1 Thess 2:4-12)
4. Caring as a good shepherd for Jesus' flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2-4; John 13:12-17)
5. Consistency (perseverance) for the task (Gal 6:9; Luke 9:51, 62; 2 Tim 4:7)
6. Unity with other elders and the senior pastor (John 17:21; Eph 4:1-6; Rom 12:3-8)

Section 2.2 Elder Board Responsibilities to the Partnership

The Elder Board shall be directly accountable to the partnership. The Elder Board shall recommend to the partnership the following matters for action:

1. Election of elders (as proposed by the Nominating Committee)
2. Election of the Auditing Team and Pastoral Search Team (as proposed by the Nominating Team)
3. Calling of the senior pastor (as proposed by the Pastoral Search Team) or the dismissal of the senior pastor

4. Calling of senior staff, consisting of pastoral or director-level personnel.
5. Approval of the annual budget (as advised, with input, from those charged with financial management)
6. Purchase or disposing of property in excess of 5% of the annual budget
7. On-premises construction or improvement in excess of 5% of the annual budget.
8. Amendments or changes to the Constitution and/or By-Laws.

The Elder Board is allowed to increase/decrease the annual budget by up to 5% of the approved annual budget. This refers to the total budget amount. It also applies to individual line items and sections, which would not be changed without diligent communication with the associated ministry leaders. The aggregate amount of increases/decreases of individual line items and sections may not exceed 5% amount. Congregational approval is required for increases above 5% of the annual budget.

Section 2.3 Elder Responsibilities

1. Doctrine (Acts 6:4, 20:26-32; 2 Tim 2:2,15; Titus 2:1)
 - Declare the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27)
 - Uphold beliefs and values (Acts 17:10-12; 15:28-29)
 - Promote edification and evangelism (John 13:34-35; Matt 28:19-20)
 - Guard the Flock (Acts 20:28)
2. Direction (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 13:1-3; 15:6-35; Titus 1:7)
 - Mission, vision, values
 - High-level strategy and goals
 - Approving policies
 - Budget and financial oversight in alignment with the mission
 - Guiding/challenging the flock toward spiritual growth
3. Delegation (Acts 6:1-7; Eph 4:7-12; Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:4-31; Titus 1:5)
 - Recognition, recruitment, and release to do God’s work
 - Organizational structure for equipping and implementing
 - Equipping, enabling and empowering
 - Establish and oversee deacons/deaconesses and ministry teams.
4. Discipline (Matt 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 1 Tim 5:19-21; Titus 1:9; Heb 13:17)
 - Encouraging believers to lovingly confront and admonish one another
 - Seeking full repentance and reconciliation with God, and in all relationships
 - Willingness to remove, if necessary, individuals from church responsibilities or church relationships

Section 2.4 Elder Organization

The Elder Board shall organize itself annually by the internal election of a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. The chairman and vice-chairman shall also serve as the chairman and vice-chairman of the church. The vice-chairman shall fill the role of chairman in his absence.

The Elder Board shall have at least one monthly meeting at a time and place set by the chairman. A majority of the elders is required to constitute a quorum for business. A majority of votes cast shall be necessary for transaction of business.

Minutes of all elder meetings will be maintained. Partners may request access to such unless the minutes referred to a matter that the Elder Board considered private, for the sake of maintaining confidentiality.

Elders may issue a temporary ministerial license in recognition of an individual's call to ministry pending denominational licensing. Such are evaluated annually.

The Elder Board has the authority to approve or disapprove of staff hires by the senior pastor.

Section 2.5 Elder Discipline

If an elder is found to be living in sin, or is willfully neglecting his responsibility as an elder, another elder and the senior pastor will address the matter in accordance with biblical principles, such as: Matt 18, 1 Cor 5, 2 Cor 2:5-11, Gal 6:1-2 and 1 Tim 5:19-20. Discipline may result in voluntary resignation or, if necessary, a recommendation to the partnership for removal from office. A two-thirds majority vote of partners present and voting at a congregational business meeting will be required for removal.

Section 2.6 Church Officers

In compliance with state regulations for legal issues, incorporation, and external-to-the-church operations, the church must have a chair, secretary, and treasurer. These may be called upon for information and to speak with authority on behalf of the church. These officers shall be:

- The chair shall be the chairman of the Elder Board.
- The secretary shall be the secretary of the Elder Board.
- The treasurer shall be the deacon/deaconess of the Building Team. The treasurer shall be responsible for the creation and monitoring of the annual budget. A monthly budget reconciliation shall also be maintained.

For all matters of internal operations of the church, the following shall be considered officers:

The church chairman shall be the chairman of the Elder Board. The treasurer and financial secretary shall be appointed by the Elder Board. These individuals must have been partners of the church for at least one year prior to appointment. The Elder Board may replace the treasurer or the financial secretary as may be deemed appropriate. The term for these two positions will be three years.

The financial secretary shall be responsible for timely and accurate recording and reporting of funds. The treasurer shall be responsible for the accurate recording and prudent disbursement of funds.

Section 2.7 Nominating Team

The duties of this team shall be to prepare a list of candidates for affirmation by the congregation at a duly-called congregational business meeting for the following positions:

1. Elder

2. Members of the Pastoral Search Team
3. Auditing Team

The Nominating Team shall consist of no less than five (5) members, comprised of a pastor, an elder and a minimum of three (3) deacons/deaconesses. The Elder Board will call for volunteers.

The Nominating Team will make every effort to present one candidate for each vacant position. No nominations shall be received from the floor at a congregational business meeting. A two-thirds majority of partners present and voting shall be necessary for affirmation. Such votes shall be by secret ballot. (The chairman of the Nominating Team shall be responsible for the tally of the votes and the safekeeping of the ballots for a period of 30 days.) In the event that a candidate does not receive the two-thirds majority vote, the Elder Board may appoint a candidate to temporarily assume the position until such time as another congregational business meeting can be called for another vote. In the event that a candidate for elder does not receive the required two-thirds vote, the position will remain unfilled until a new vote can be taken at the next congregational business meeting.

Section 2.8 Pastoral Search Team

This Pastoral Search Team shall be elected for the process of calling any new pastoral staff.

The team shall consist of seven (7) partners. Four (4) of them shall be elected from the partnership at a congregational business meeting by a two-thirds majority of the partners present and voting. In addition, the elders shall select from among themselves three (3) elders to serve on this team. If less than three elders currently serving on the Elder Board are available (due to less than three currently serving on the Elder Board or due to personal scheduling or time constraints), then the Elder Board may appoint either a former elder or may request the partnership to vote for additional Pastoral Search Team members at a congregational business meeting.

Section 2.9 Auditing Team

The Auditing Team shall consist of two partners, elected annually, who are responsible for the audit that will be presented at the next Annual Congregational Business Meeting. At the discretion and instruction of the Elder Board, the Auditing Team may handle the audit by soliciting assistance from anyone within the church family, from among formal partners or attendees at large, or they may solicit the services of an outside firm or personnel.

Section 2.10 Ministries (Ministry Teams, Deacons/Deaconesses)

The Elder Board shall be responsible to approve the formation and dissolution of ministry teams organized to serve the church in fulfilling its mission and vision.

The broad oversight and management of ministries is the responsibility of the senior pastor and/or those whom the senior pastor may appoint, including other pastoral, leadership, and support personnel (whether paid or unpaid positions). All such appointments shall be approved by the Elder Board.

Most Ministries will function as teams, such as the Benevolence Team, Fellowship Team, Discipleship Team, Missions Team, Building Team, Outreach Team, Prayer Team and Worship Team. Team titles should promote understanding of the function of each ministry. Such titles may be changed as agreed upon by the ministry team in question and the Elder Board.

The Elder Board will appoint ministry team leaders, who will be given the title of deacon or deaconess. All ministry team leaders are accountable to the Elder Board. Deacons and deaconesses must meet the qualifications as described in 1 Tim 3. Each will serve at the discretion of the Elder Board. The term is three years, and no ministry team leader may be appointed to serve more than two consecutive terms without a one-year sabbatical from service. Exception: Paid pastoral staff members may also serve as ministry team leaders either temporarily or indefinitely by the appointment of the elders.

Each deacon/deaconess will appoint his/her team members. All team members must be approved by the Elder Board prior to appointment by the deacon/deaconess. Only team members who are partners will have voting privileges within that ministry. If deemed necessary, and upon due diligence, the Elder Board shall have authority to remove any ministry team member.

Ministry teams may determine their own guidelines and expectations for levels of responsibility and for management of their tasks.

At their discretion, deacons/deaconesses may also appoint non-voting helpers to carry out the functions of the ministry. They would not have to be approved by the Elder Board.

While free to make determinations of how to manage their particular ministry function, all ministry teams are understood to support and be part of the larger unified church. As such, decisions such as scheduling, decorating, facility or property maintenance and/or improvement, must be made through consultation with appropriate church staff and/or leadership personnel and in concert with the church's mission and vision.

ARTICLE III – PASTOR AND STAFF

Section 3.1 Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall meet the qualifications as stated in I Tim 3:1-13 and Titus 1. He shall embrace in heart and practice biblical truth, the mission and vision of the church, the Constitution and By-Laws of the church and, along with the Elder Board, shepherd the congregation. He shall be responsible for the supervision of staff members. (He may appoint others to supervisory roles as best meets the needs of the church). The senior pastor shall be a man who is either credentialed with The Evangelical Free Church of America, or is willing to go through the process of such credentialing. It is expected that he will make every reasonable effort to obtain his credentialing within five years of becoming pastor. He shall also be an ex-officio member of all ministry teams and functions of the church.

The senior pastor is an elder and the de-facto leader of the church by virtue of God's call, his spiritual gifts, recognized credentials and abilities, and significant time commitment as the general overseer of the church. He is directly accountable to the Elder Board. As such, he reports to and receives input from the Elder Board on a

regularly scheduled basis. It is further expected that the entire Elder Board will be consulted for wisdom and unified insight on such matters that affect the management and health of the church body.

When a vacancy occurs, the Elder Board shall make temporary provisions to fulfill the duties of the senior pastor. Upon investigation, the Pastoral Search Team shall recommend a candidate to the Elder Board. Upon its approval, the Elder Board shall recommend the candidate to the partnership. A call shall require a three-fourths majority of partners present and voting at a congregational business held two weeks after public notice has been given. The vote shall be by secret ballot.

The senior pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period of time.

If the senior pastor desires to resign, he must notify the Elder Board in writing no less than ninety (90) days in advance of his date of resignation, unless waived by mutual consent of both the senior pastor and the Elder Board.

The senior pastor's tenure may be terminated by a three-fourths majority vote of partners present and voting at a business meeting. The vote shall be by secret ballot. The Elder Board must then provide notice of termination no less than sixty days in advance of the termination date unless waived by mutual consent of both the senior pastor and the Elder Board. The Elder Board, at its discretion, may remove some or all of the responsibilities of the senior pastor. This action will not affect pay or benefits during the 60-day period. Any further compensation or severance is at the discretion of the elders.

If the senior pastor is found to be living in sin or is willfully neglecting his responsibility, he shall be immediately censured from all ministry responsibilities, including immediate relief of his pulpit responsibility. Notice must be duly given to the congregation. Disciplinary proceedings or termination of employment will be at the discretion of the Elder Board. If termination is determined, the Elder Board shall also dictate the terms of termination. However, a minimum of 60 days' notice will be granted regarding pay and benefits (except in a case of embezzlement or financial mismanagement).

Section 3.2 Senior Staff – Leadership

The senior staff shall consist of pastoral and/or director-level personnel who are employees of the church. The hiring or termination process for any senior staff personnel shall be approved by the Elder Board. At the discretion of the Elder Board, a search team may be formed to find personnel. Candidates will be presented for affirmation by the congregation at a business meeting. A two-thirds majority vote of partners present and voting will be required for affirmation. (Exception: Section 3.1 - A three-fourths majority of partners present and voting is required to call a senior pastor).

Section 3.3 Support Staff

The support staff shall consist of all other employees of the church who are not senior staff. The support staff may be under the direct supervision of the senior pastor or others to whom the senior pastor and elders may delegate such authority. Such authority may also include responsibility for hiring, delegation of work, and performance expectations. Termination proceedings for support staff shall be handled through the senior pastor with council and approval of the Elder Board.

Section 3.4 Misconduct of Church Staff (exception: For senior pastor, see Section 3:1)

If a member of the senior staff or support staff commits a grievous act of misconduct, he/she may be terminated immediately by a vote of the Elder Board. Relief of duties and terms of separation will be determined by the senior pastor and the Elder Board.

ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS

Section 4.1 Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Congregational Business Meeting shall be held in the fourth quarter of the church fiscal year at the time and date set by the Elder Board. The fiscal year of the church will coincide with the calendar year. The purpose of the meeting shall be for elections, approval of church budget, receiving annual reports, and to transact other business as may be necessary. 25% of the partnership is necessary to constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business. A two-thirds majority of partners present and voting shall be necessary to pass all items of business. (Exception: Section 3.1 - A three-fourths majority of partners present and voting is required to call a senior pastor).

Partners who are out of town or homebound may participate in business meetings via a church-provided teleconferencing platform. Such partners shall count towards quorum and shall have the ability to vote via an Elder Board-appointed platform coordinator. Roberts Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary guide, used with biblical and practical discretion.

Minutes of all business meetings will be maintained. Partners may request access to minutes.

The chairman of the Elder Board will preside at congregational business meetings. However, at the chairman's discretion he may, with Elder Board approval, defer the presiding function to any other partner of the church. In the chairman's absence, the vice-chairman assumes this responsibility.

A recording secretary shall be appointed at each duly-called congregational business meeting with the responsibility of accurately recording the proceedings and decisions made at all such meetings. Such records shall be approved at the next congregational business meeting.

Section 4.2 Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called by the Elder Board as it deems necessary. A special congregational business meeting may be called by the partnership by presenting to the Elder Board a petition, signed by 25% of the partnership, requesting such a meeting. The Elder Board shall have two weeks time to respond and schedule the meeting.

Section 4.3 Notice of Called Business Meetings

Notice of a congregational business meeting shall be announced at least two weeks prior to such meeting and at two Sunday services.

ARTICLE V – PROPERTY

Section 5.1 Authority

In order to maximize the use of all the facilities and gifts of the church, and in keeping with the vision and mission of the church, the Elder Board shall have the oversight of all athletic, social, religious and community activities sponsored by the church or any of its organizations, and shall approve the use of the facilities for all church and non-church functions.

Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, the church may make its facilities available to approved non-partners as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice. But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's leadership, beliefs or moral teachings as expressed in the Church Constitution, By-Laws and policies.

Section 5.2 Conveyance or Encumbrance of Property

Conveyance or encumbrance of real or personal property in excess of 5% of the annual budget must be made at a congregational business meeting. Any action involving property in excess of 5% of the annual budget must receive at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the partnership at such meeting. Instruments of conveyance or encumbrance shall be executed in the name of the church by the officers of the church. The Elder Board shall have the authority to acquire and dispose of other property not in excess of 5% of the annual budget.

Section 5.3 Division of the Congregation

In the unlikely division of this congregation, the church name and all properties are retained by those adhering to the articles of this Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 5.4 Dissolution of the Church

In the unlikely dissolution of the church, the property shall be assigned to the Eastern District Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

ARTICLE VI – CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Section 6.1 Delegates to the Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America

Delegates may be appointed by the Elder Board in accordance with the constitution of the Evangelical Free Church of America and, if appointed, shall attend the conference as representatives of the church and shall be prepared to report to the church if called upon. The church will provide finances for conference admission, travel and lodging expenses. Appointees will be responsible for their own food and incidentals.

Section 6.2 Delegates to the Conference of the Eastern District

Delegates may be appointed by the Elder Board in accordance with the constitution of the Eastern District and, if appointed, shall attend the annual and/or semi-annual

conference(s) as representatives of the church and shall be prepared to report to the church if called upon. The church will provide finances for conference admission, travel and lodging expenses. Appointees will be responsible for their own food and incidentals.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-Laws may be recommended to the partnership by the Elder Board at a congregational business meeting, and shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast for approval. If approved, the amendments shall become effective immediately. A recommendation to amend these By-Laws must be introduced, in writing, by the Elder Board at least thirty days prior to the business meeting.

ARTICLE VIII – POLICIES FOR OPERATIONS

Regular church operations may require separate policies not included in these By-Laws, such as legal procedures, financial policies, wedding policies, use of church property, hiring agreements, etc.