

The EFCA Network Bylaws

Article I – Introduction

A. Name

The name of the organization is **The Evangelical Free Church of America Network**, hereafter referred to as the Network.

B. Purpose

As an organization of pastors and ministerial leaders of the Evangelical Free Church of America, **this Network exists to support District, National and International initiatives for the care and effectiveness of all EFCA leaders.**

Article II – Confession of Faith

Our Confession of Faith shall be the same as the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America. This statement currently (February 2019) reads:

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

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 III – Membership

A. Qualifications

1. Full membership

A. Full membership consists of those who either hold a current ministerial credential with the Evangelical Free Church of America or those who have been granted LIFE membership in the Network.

B. In addition to the above (A), a full member is a leader within the EFCA that fulfills the following:

- (1) Must be a member in good standing of a local EFCA church or in the case of a chaplain or missionary have an ongoing relationship in good standing with an EFCA church.
- (2) Must subscribe without mental reservation to the Statement of Faith of the EFCA.
- (3) Must be engaged in a vocational or bi-vocational ministry that qualifies for a ministerial credential. This includes, but is not limited to: senior pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, children's pastors, administrative pastors, pastors of music/worship, ministry directors, seminary professors, chaplains, church planters, missionaries, institutional ministry leaders, and parachurch ministry leaders.
- (4) Must demonstrate a cooperative spirit with the purposes and policies of the EFCA and a lifestyle consistent with biblical standards of Christian conduct.

C. Full membership provides the following benefits:

- (1) the right to vote in the Network's business and to participate as a voting delegate at the EFCA National Leadership Conference.
- (2) the opportunity to serve on the Network board or other committees and councils established by the Board.
- (3) the opportunity to identify oneself as a supporting participant within the Network in various cooperative ministry efforts.

2. Associate membership

A. An associate member is a leader within the EFCA that fulfills the following:

- (1) Must be a member in good standing of a local EFCA church or in the case of a chaplain or missionary have an ongoing relationship in good standing with an EFCA church.
- (2) Must subscribe without mental reservation to the Statement of Faith of the EFCA.
- (3) Must be engaged in a vocational or bi-vocational ministry that qualifies for a ministerial credential. This includes, but is not limited to: senior pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, children's pastors, administrative pastors, pastors of music/worship, ministry directors, seminary professors, chaplains, church planters, missionaries, institutional ministry leaders, and parachurch ministry leaders.
- (4) Must demonstrate a cooperative spirit with the purposes and policies of the EFCA and a lifestyle consistent with biblical standards of Christian conduct.

B. Associate Membership provides the following benefits:

(1) the opportunity to identify oneself as a supporting participant within the Network in various cooperative ministry efforts.

B. Annual Contributions

A voluntary contribution will be requested of each member. Suggested amounts will be proposed by the Board of Directors for approval by the members. All gifts are tax-deductible.

C. LIFE Membership

Members will be granted LIFE membership following their 65th birthday.

D. Voting Membership

In order to have voting rights in the Network an EFCA leader must meet the qualifications above and **hold a ministerial credential in good standing**. Only voting members may be elected to the Network Board.

E. Dismissal from Membership

Members will be dismissed from **both full and associate** membership if:

1. A Member's EFCA ministerial credential is surrendered or revoked.
2. A Member's conduct is such that it would call for surrender or revocation if he or she had an EFCA ministerial credential.
3. A Member transitions from vocational or bi-vocational ministry apart from being granted LIFE Membership.

Article IV - Officers

A. The Board of Directors

1. Composition.

The Board of Directors shall consist of the Chairman of the Network and **three to eight more** Voting Members. The Chairman will appoint a Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer from the Board of Directors.

Duties.

- a. The Board of Directors shall arrange for an Annual Meeting of the Network. They shall oversee the activities of the Network and establish and appoint members to all committees needed for the work of the Network.
- b. The Chairman will preside at the annual meeting of the Network, provide leadership for the Board of Directors, and serve or appoint a representative from the Board of Directors to the Board of Ministerial Standing of The Evangelical Free Church of America.
- c. The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman.
- d. The Secretary shall keep minutes and records of all business meetings of the Network and the Board of Directors.
- e. The Treasurer shall oversee the financial affairs of the Network.

2. Election.

- a. The Board may appoint a nominating committee to present nominees for Chairman and other members of the Board. Candidates may also be nominated from the floor. All candidates must be Voting Members of the Network, holding

a ministerial credential in good standing.

- b. The Chairman and the Board of Director shall serve for three years. The Chairman may be re-elected for one additional term. Board Members may be re-elected for one additional term. A Board Member may be elected as Chairman of the Association.
- c. Vacancies in the office of Chairman or on the Board of Directors shall be filled by election at an Annual Meeting. Those elected will serve the remaining years of the vacated term and will be eligible for re-election.

Article V – Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at an annual meeting, provided that any such amendment shall have been published and distributed to all members no less than ninety days before that meeting, with an invitation for comments and suggestions. Any such published amendment may itself be amended by a majority vote before its approval at the meeting, except that no such secondary amendment may materially expand the subject matter or the scope of the published amendment.

Article VI – Dissolution

Dissolution of Network may be accomplished only by the vote of two-thirds of the members at an Annual Meeting. In the event of dissolution, any assets of the Network remaining after the payment of or provision for debts shall be conveyed to such other organization or organizations as are, in the judgment of the members at the meeting which effects the dissolution, best suited to carry out the purpose and objectives of the Network, provided, however, that any such successor organization, at the time of conveyance, must be exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of said Code, as Amended, or under any successor federal law that may then be in effect.

Adopted – June 1994

Amended – June 2009

Amended – October 2017