

**Ministerial Association The EFCA Network Bylaws**

**Article I – Introduction**

**A. Name**

The name of the organization is The ~~Ministerial Association of The Evangelical Free Church of America~~ EFCA Network, hereafter referred to as the ~~Association~~ Network.

**B. Purpose**

As an organization of pastors and ministerial leaders of the Evangelical Free Church of America, this ~~Association~~ Network exists to ~~minister to the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical well being of its members in ways that enhance their overall effectiveness in ministry~~ support district, national, and international initiatives for the care and effectiveness of all EFCA leaders.

**Article II – ~~Confession~~ Statement of Faith**

**The Statement of Faith of the Network shall be the Statement of Faith of the EFCA, as may be amended by the EFCA from time to time, and currently states as follows:**

*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

~~Membership opportunities are available to those seeking the mutual benefits and responsibilities offered by participation in this Association:~~

~~1. **Full Membership** is open to those who hold a ministerial credential with the Evangelical Free Church of America:~~

~~A. Full membership provides the following benefits *consists of those ministry leaders who:*~~

- ~~(1) the right to vote in the association's business and to participate as a voting delegate at the EFCA National Leadership Conference;~~  
~~(2) the opportunity to serve on the Ministerial Association board or other committees and councils established by the Board;~~  
~~(3) the opportunity to identify oneself as a supporting participant with other Association members in various cooperative ministry efforts;~~  
~~(4) access to EFCA benefits programs such as the FCMM Retirement Plan;~~  
~~(5) discounts on various conferences, placement services, training materials and the like as provided through the Association;~~

~~**(1) hold a current ministerial credential in good standing with the EFCA or have been granted LIFE membership in the Network; and**~~  
~~**(2) are members in good standing of an EFCA church; and**~~  
~~**(3) subscribe without mental reservation to the Statement of Faith of the EFCA; and**~~  
~~**(4) demonstrate a cooperative spirit with the purposes and policies of the EFCA and a lifestyle consistent with the biblical standards of Christian conduct.**~~

~~B. Full Membership also carries with it certain responsibilities to maintain one's membership in the Association by **provides the following benefits:**~~

- ~~(1) maintaining one's EFCA ministerial credential;~~  
~~(2) keeping one's membership dues current;~~  
~~**(1) the right to vote in the Network's business and to participate as a voting delegate at the EFCA National 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** is available to those individuals who are presently serving as pastors in the Evangelical Free Church of America or in other recognized EFCA ministerial positions. This would include such individuals as: (1) those~~

serving in the EFCA without credentials but intending to pursue credentials with the EFCA. (2) those serving in the EFCA and holding ministry credentials with other credentialing groups. (3) those serving in the EFCA (whether credentialed or not) who are formally recognized for their ministerial position by the local EFCA church in which they serve.

A. Associate Membership provides the following benefits *consists of those leaders within the EFCA who do not hold ministerial credentials with the EFCA but who are engaged in vocational or bi-vocational ministry and 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. In addition, associate members must:*

(1) the opportunity to identify oneself as a supporting participant with other Association members in various cooperative ministry efforts.

(2) access to EFCA benefits programs such as the FCMM Retirement Plan.

(3) appropriate discounts on various conferences, placement services, training materials and the like provided through the Association.

*(1) be members in good standing of an EFCA church; and*

*(2) subscribe without mental reservation to the Statement of Faith of the EFCA; and*

*(3) 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 also carries with it certain responsibilities to maintain membership in the Association *provides the following benefits:*

(1) a signed affidavit at enrollment indicating one's full agreement with the EFCA Statement of Faith, one's desire to be supportive of EFCA Ministerial Association ministry endeavors, and an ongoing affirmation of that commitment throughout one's associate membership.

(2) keeping one's membership dues current.

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

3. Change of Membership Status - At the time that an Associate Member receives a ministry credential with the EFCA, that person's status will be changed to Full Membership, and he or she will be eligible for all the benefits of full membership.

## **B. Procedure**

Upon receiving an application for membership at the Association office, pending membership will be granted by the Executive Director. The approval of an application is completed when the Board of Directors presents it to the annual business meeting of the Association and it is received by a majority vote.

## **C. Annual Dues B. Annual Contributions**

Annual dues *A voluntary contribution* will be requested of each member. The amount *Suggested amounts* will be proposed by the Board of Directors for approval by the members. Reduced membership dues will be established for those with limited annual income. *All gifts are tax-deductible.*

## **D. C. LIFE Membership**

Members will be granted LIFE membership following their 65<sup>th</sup> 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 either full or associate membership if:

1. A Full ~~M~~ **member's** EFCA ministerial credential is surrendered or revoked.
2. An Associate ~~M~~ **member's** conduct is such that it would call for surrender or revocation if he or she had an EFCA ministerial credential.
3. A Full or Associate member fails to remain current in payment of Association dues: **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 Association, ~~four other members, and the Executive Director of the Association~~ **Network and no less than three nor more than eight 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 Association **Network.** ~~to be held in conjunction with the Annual Conference of The Evangelical Free Church of America.~~ They shall oversee the activities of the Association, **Network and** establish and appoint members to all committees needed for the work of the Association, ~~and review annually the work of the Executive Director of the Association.~~ **Network.**
- b. The Chairman will preside at the annual meeting of the Association **Network,** provide leadership for the Board of Directors and serve **or appoint a representative from the Board of Directors to the** ~~on 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 Association **Network** and the Board of Directors.
- e. The Treasurer shall oversee the financial affairs of the Association **Network.**

#### *2. Election.*

- a. A nominating committee will present nominees for Chairman and Board of Directors. Candidates may also be nominated from the floor. All candidates must be **voting** members of the Association: **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 reelected for one additional term. Board Members may be reelected for one additional term. A Board Member may be elected as Chairman of the Association: **Network.**
- 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.

### B. The Executive Director

#### *1. Election:*

- a. ~~A candidate for Executive Director shall be nominated by the Board of Directors which may seek the assistance and recommendation of a search committee.~~

~~b. The Executive Director shall be elected by the Association for a term of three years.~~

~~2. Duties.~~

~~The primary duties of the Executive Director shall be defined in a job description approved by the Board of Directors. In general, the Executive Director shall provide vision and administrative leadership to the Association.~~

**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 Association the 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 Association 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 Association 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 – February, 2019