

**Bylaws**  
**Of**  
**Evangelical Free Church of Lander**  
**September 9, 2004**

**Section 1 – Statement of Government**

1. Ultimate authority in the church shall reside in the membership of the congregation. They shall annually approve Biblically qualified Lay Elders. The Elder Board shall oversee the routine operation and government of the church as delegated by the congregational meetings.
2. In order to meet state legal requirements of incorporation, the Elder Board will elect from its members the following officers each year: A President; a Secretary. These men shall serve as the corporate officers of the church.

**Section 2 – Elders**

**1. Qualifications**

The Elders shall be members of this church who are mature, godly men, who fully support the Bible, the Statement of Faith of this church, its Constitution, Bylaws and Policies and who manifest the qualifications stipulated by the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3: 1-7; Titus 1: 5-9).

**2. Selection**

- A. It is the Holy Spirit who must select men for leadership. Only He knows the hearts and motives of men. His choices, however, must be expressed through human agency. Acts 6.
- B. Selection will be made on the basis of spiritual qualifications, leadership qualifications, and commitment to this church and to the Evangelical Free Church of America.
- C. At any such time as the need arises to appoint an Elder, the Elder Board shall nominate men to fill the position. These nominees shall be prayerfully evaluated and screened by the Elder Board according to the qualifications of an Elder (1 Timothy 3: 1-7; Titus 1: 5-9).The results of a nominee’s evaluation shall be privately shared with him by the Elder Board.

- D. The Elder Board shall submit their selection(s) to the membership for affirmation by closed ballot at the annual or special business meeting.

### **3. Term of Service**

- A. Each Lay Elder shall be affirmed by the congregation each year. There shall be no limit to the number of terms an Elder may serve if he serves well and does not disqualify himself.
- B. Any Elder who does not fulfill the qualifications or duties of his office, or does not faithfully attend the stated services of the church shall, after notice and attempt to restore said member, be asked by the Elder Board to resign from the Elder Board.

### **4. Evaluation, Discipline and Accountability**

The Elder Board shall evaluate itself and its members. It shall be a self-disciplining board according to Matthew 18: 15-20; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14-15; 1 Timothy 5: 19-20. However, the Elders are directly accountable to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, for all their actions and decisions (Hebrews 13:17). They are also accountable to the membership.

### **5. Function**

The Elders will have essentially a three-fold function: (1) To build and develop their own families in the Lord (1 Timothy 3: 4-5); (2) To feed, shepherd and pray for the flock of God (John 21: 15-17; Acts 10: 17-32; Acts 6: 1-4), which includes positive impartation of truth, refutation of error, and administration of discipline; (3) To oversee and manage the entire ministry of this local Body (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5: 2-3), assess the needs of the entire body, plan, evaluate and appoint those to assist in various areas of responsibility.

### **6. Basis of Authority**

The basis of authority for all the deliberations and activities of the Elder Board shall be the Scripture.

### **7. Decision Making Process**

The Elder Board shall approach decisions in prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit. They shall earnestly seek to reach a unanimous decision without coercion.

### **8. Quorum for Elder Board Meetings**

A quorum for an Elder Board Meeting shall consist of a minimum of half of the members of that board. (amended 12/07/06)

## **9. Organization**

The Elder Board shall be self-organizing. That is, the various functions and areas of responsibility of the Elder Board shall be delegated among the Board members. A Moderator, other than a Pastor, shall be selected each year by the Elder Board. He shall preside over Congregational Business Meetings. A Vice Moderator shall also be selected from among the Board members. The role of the Vice Moderator shall be to preside over Congregational Business Meetings in the absence of the Moderator.

## **SECTION 3 – TEAMS AND COMMITTEES**

### **1. Selection**

Ministry Team members as well as Financial Secretary and Treasurer shall be recommended by the Elder Board to the congregation for appointment. Members of other committees and personnel needed for effective service in the church may be directly appointed by the Elder Board.

### **2. Affirmation**

The members of each respective ministry team shall be affirmed by the church membership. All Ministry Team members, Financial Secretary and Church Treasurer must be members of the church.

### **3. Policies**

The Elder Board shall maintain a current manual which shall include policies and all pertinent information and instructions for efficiency in the day-by-day operation of the church. The information contained in this may be amended or changed by the Elder Board as needed. This manual shall be available to the congregation upon request.

## **SECTION 4 – BUSINESS MEETINGS**

### **1. Scheduled Meetings**

The congregation as a whole shall have at least one scheduled business meeting during the year. This will be the Annual Meeting held on the first Thursday of December, or such other date as set by the Elder Board.

### **2. Special Meetings**

- A. Special congregational business meetings may be called at any time by the Elder Board or by a written request by ten or more church members presented to the Elder Board.

- B. These meetings, along with the stated purpose of the meeting, shall be announced publicly at the morning worship service on two consecutive Sundays, immediately preceding the special business meeting, or by written notice to the members and public announcement at the morning worship service on one Sunday, immediately preceding the special business meeting.

### **3. Voting Rights**

Members eighteen years of age or older shall be eligible to vote.

### **4. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> and end the following December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **5. Decisions By Affirmation**

We will, as a congregation, operate under an affirmation of approval of all issues brought before the congregation by the Elder Board.

In all affirmation votes, if there is not a 75% affirmation by the members present on any given issue, the issue will be considered to be not affirmed by the membership.

- A) For affirmation of appointments such as an elder, each dissenting voter must be identified so that the Elder Board can investigate the objection(s) and determine the validity of the objection(s) and then report back to the congregation whether or not the candidate has been affirmed.
- B) On issues of budget, property, etc., affirmation by the membership will be requested after an explanation of the policy or issue has been offered. Each issue may be amended by motion and simple majority vote during the meeting before the affirmation vote is taken. If there are objections to the final proposal, each dissenting voter's concern will be investigated as to validity and the elders will make a final determination as to whether the concern has enough merit to declare a lack of affirmation.

### **6. Quorums**

The voting members attending any business meeting which has been properly announced shall constitute a quorum to conduct business. A member must be present at any meeting to vote.

## **SECTION 5 – PASTORS**

### **1. The Calling of a Pastor**

- A. The Elder Board shall recommend suitable candidates for Pastoral positions. Candidates shall be presented to the congregation one at a time.
- B. Candidates for Senior Pastor must be ordained ministers and must agree in writing to fully support the Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America.
- C. Candidates for pastoral positions other than Senior Pastor must either be an ordained minister or willing and qualified to become ordained and must agree in writing to fully support the Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America.
- D. The candidate shall have opportunity to preach at a church service(s) as the Elder Board may direct, and be interviewed by that Board. Candidates for Associate Pastor or other ministry staff positions may or may not be asked to preach but shall be given adequate opportunities to become acquainted with the congregation.
- E. Once the Elder Board determines it has a man to recommend as a candidate for a call, the congregation shall be convened for a special business meeting. The recommendation should be presented with all the reasons for suggesting him as a candidate. The congregation shall then vote as to whether or not it desires to send the recommended candidate a call. If the candidate receives at least a three-fourths majority vote, each dissenting voter must be identified so that the Elder Board can investigate the objection(s) and determine the validity of the objection(s). The Elder Board will then report back to the congregation as to whether or not the call will be extended. Should the candidate receive less than a three-fourths majority vote, the matter goes back to the Elder Board for the presentation of new recommendations. No candidate may be presented to the congregation for a vote the second time until at least two other candidates have been voted upon. Each candidate shall be voted upon separately following his meeting with the Elder Board and the church.
- F. The Elder Board shall notify the Pastor-elect of the action of the church immediately, and upon his affirmative reply make arrangements for his moving and installation.

### **2. Termination of Office**

- A. A Pastor shall serve an unlimited term of service unless other arrangements are made at the time the call is accepted.
- B. The relation between a Pastor and the church may be dissolved at the option of either, by the giving of one months notice, or by mutual consent.

C. If a Pastor should depart from the Word of God in his conduct or in doctrine as contained in the Statement of Faith of the church, or demonstrate proven ineffectiveness in ministry as determined by the Elder Board, the Elders shall admonish him in love, and should this not have the desired result of restoration, said Pastor shall be discharged by action of the church. Should a Pastor be discharged for this reason, advance notice shall not be required.

D. A Pastor may be discharged from his term of office by the church subject to the following conditions:

- i. A Pastor may only be dismissed by the congregation at a properly called business meeting called specifically for that purpose.
- ii. After hearing the reasons for his recommended dismissal, a Pastor shall be accorded the right of stating his position before the congregation. He (and his family) shall absent themselves at the time of voting.
- iii. A ballot vote of simple majority of the members present shall make valid determination of the term of office of a Pastor

E. The Pastor may be required to step down from his duties while waiting for the business meeting if, in the decision of the Elders, his presence would be damaging to the testimony of the church.

### **3 The Duties of the Senior Pastor**

A. He shall perform all of the scriptural duties of this office, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have freedom of the pulpit. These shall include leading and preaching at the stated services of the church, overseeing the entire ministry of the church, administering the ordinances of the church, caring for the spiritual welfare of the members of the church, and discipling and equipping lay people to serve in various ministries of the church.

B. He shall be a member of the Elder Board, and an ex-officio member of all ministry teams, committees, and all other organizations of the church.

C. He shall supervise all church staff in consultation with the Elder Board.

D. He shall not qualify for any elected office or appointed office on the Elder Board, nor can he serve as the Church Moderator or Vice Moderator.

E. He shall abide by the Word of God in his life, teaching and preaching, taking great care in all his conduct so as to be esteemed a man of respect in the congregation and community.

#### **4 The Duties of an Associate Pastor**

- A. He shall perform such duties in connection with the work of the church as prescribed by the Senior Pastor.
- B. He shall be a member of the Elder Board and an ex-officio member of all ministry teams, committees, and all other organizations of the church.
- C. He shall not qualify for any elected office or appointed office on the Elder Board, nor can he serve as the Church Moderator or Vice Moderator.
- D. He shall abide by the Word of God in his life, teaching and preaching, taking great care in all his conduct so as to be esteemed a man of respect in the congregation and community.

#### **SECTION 6 – AMENDMENTS AND PROVISIONS FOR BY-LAWS**

Amendments, additions or changes to these Bylaws may be made at any business meeting of the church by a three-fourths majority of votes cast when said proposed amendments, additions or changes have been presented in written form and discussed at a previous regular or special meeting for discussion.