

**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF CORONA**

ARTICLE I

Name

We, the members of the Evangelical Free Church of Corona, in order to set forth our stand on the Word of God and to facilitate the orderly transaction of business, do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE II

Statement of Faith

- A. We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the divine and final authority for all Christian faith and life.
- B. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- C. We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Advocate.
- D. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age, to convict men of sin, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.
- E. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit, can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
- F. We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ by faith are born of the Holy Spirit, and thus become children of God.
- G. We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. These are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.
- H. We believe that the true Church is composed of all such persons who, through saving faith in Jesus Christ, have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are united together in the body of Christ, of which He is the head.
- I. We believe that only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.
- J. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and the Head of the Church and that every local church has the right under Christ, to decide and govern its own affairs.
- K. We believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service

- of the believer.
- L. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

ARTICLE III

Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be for the building up of the Body of Christ in order to equip the believers for the work of service and fulfillment of the Great Commission to the glory of God.

ARTICLE IV

Affiliation

This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America and with the Southwest District Conference of said denomination. While so affiliated, this church shall remain independent, self-governing, and its own highest authority under God.

ARTICLE V

Property Rights

The church shall have the right to buy, own and sell real and personal property in its own name. If a division occurs in the church, the name and all property shall be retained by those adhering to this constitution. If the church ceases to function and its organization is dissolved, the property shall automatically become the property of the Southwest District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

ARTICLE VI

Period of Duration

The period of duration of corporate existence shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE VII

Membership

A. Qualifications for Membership

Any person shall be eligible for membership in this church who has accepted Jesus

Christ as his/her personal Lord and Savior, and has acknowledged agreement with the statement of faith and this constitution.

B. Admission to Membership

1. Application for membership shall be made to the Pastor or any member of the Board of Elders.
2. The examination of applicants for membership shall include the individual's verbal testimony before the Board of Elders regarding his/her salvation and indicated agreement with the statement of faith and this constitution.
3. Instruction on the statement of faith and other pertinent information shall be a regular part of a new members' class available to all prospective members which they are encouraged to attend.

- a) Any member of the Board of Elders objecting to the admission of an applicant for scriptural and/or constitutional reasons shall state the reason to that Board.
- b) Any applicant not recommended for membership shall be notified within one week by two or more members of the Board of Elders as to the reason they were not recommended and shall be given the opportunity to appear before that Board to clarify his/her position.

4. The names of the individuals recommended for membership shall be announced in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting in which they are to be voted upon. Any member of the congregation objecting to the admission of an individual for scriptural and/or constitutional reasons is encouraged to present the evidence to the Board of Elders.
5. Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, admission to membership shall be by majority vote of the members present at any regularly scheduled or specially called congregational meeting.
6. Individuals recommended for membership by the Board of Elders shall be admitted by majority vote of the members present at any regularly scheduled or specially called congregational meeting.

A. Exhortation to Members

The members of this congregation are encouraged to live a life in submission to and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit according to the Word of God, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Members are additionally expected to support the church with their regular attendance, faithful financial contributions and active involvement in ministry of the church according to their gifts and abilities. Members' privileges include voting rights.

B. Termination of Membership

Any member who absents himself from all church services for one year or more, except for illness, essential occupation or temporary absence from the community, and expresses

no interest in the church as a result of personal contact, shall automatically cease to be a member of the Evangelical Free Church of Corona and shall be advised in writing of the termination of his/her membership.

Any member desiring to withdraw from membership in order to become a member of another congregation shall receive, upon written request a letter stating his/her status as a member of this congregation.

A member may be removed from membership upon recommendation of the Board of Elders by a majority vote of the members present at any regular or specially called congregational meeting.

C. Discipline, Dismissal and Restoration of Members

If any member is guilty of gross misconduct or of unsound doctrine contrary to the teachings of the Bible, he is to be dealt with according to the pattern of discipline set forth in Matthew 18:15-17. The restoration of the erring member shall be the single purpose, and love the motivating force, in these interviews.

If the erring member should choose to continue in his unrepentant condition, he shall be deprived of his membership.

The recommendation for removal from membership shall be by majority vote of the Board of Elders for scriptural and/or constitutional reasons upon the testimony of two or more witnesses.

Every person against whom such proceedings are to be instituted shall be notified in writing at least fifteen days prior to the date of the meeting. Such notice shall state the charges and the time and place of the meeting.

Every person so charged shall have the opportunity to appear at such a meeting in his own behalf.

At the meeting the accused shall be faced by his accusers with the evidence of the charges made.

D. Membership Records

An accurate record of the current and prior members of this church shall be kept.

ARTICLE VIII

Church Leadership and Boards

1. Church Officers

Pastor - to be called

Board of Elders - to be elected

2. Qualifications

Other Boards and Committees as appointed by the Elders to carry on the ministry of the Church. Refer to Policy Manual for committee list.

All officers of the Church are to be individuals of demonstrated faithfulness to the Lord, with interests and giftedness in the particular area of service to which they devote their official endeavors. Their manner of living should be such as not to detract from their service, but should demonstrate commitment to and harmony with this fellowship.

- A. Pastor(s) - The Pastor(s) shall be a minister licensed by the Evangelical Free Church of America, who is sympathetic and cooperative with said denomination, and who subscribes to this constitution and the statement of faith herein. Also, the Pastor(s) shall meet the scriptural qualifications of Elders referenced below.
- B. Board of Elders - The qualifications of the Elders are set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7, and in Titus 1:6-9. In addition, an Elder shall be a member in good standing.

3. Duties of the Church Leaders

- A. Pastor(s) - The Pastor shall fulfill his divine calling by coordinating the public services, preaching the Word of God, administering the ordinances of the New Testament, watching over the spiritual welfare of the fellowship, and leading its members in accomplishing its purpose (Article III). He shall be available for counseling to all organizations, and members of the church and, in so far as is possible, visit the members and others in the community. He shall be a member of the Board of Elders and an ex-officio member of all other Boards, committees and organizations of the church. He is to be a leader among leaders. The relationship of other pastoral staff members to the Board of Elders shall be defined by that Board.
- B. The Board of Elders - The Board of Elders shall have the responsibility to watch over the spiritual life and ministries of the church, and shall assist the Pastor in the performance of his duties. It shall have responsibility for the administration of all church business, subject to the final authority of the congregation. It shall review and report its decisions to the congregation on a monthly basis. The Board shall elect its own officers, consisting of:
 - 1. Chairman - who shall serve as Moderator of the church. In addition to presiding over all meetings of the Board of Elders, the Chairman, or his elder designate, shall preside over congregational business meetings. He shall have power to call meetings involving the Board of Elders, and also to call special congregational meetings at the direction of the Board of Elders (Article XIV). He shall be an ex officio member of all committees.
 - 2. Vice Chairman - shall act in the absence of the Chairman. An elder designate may be appointed by the Chairman as required.
 - 3. Secretary - who shall serve as the legally appointed Secretary of the Corporation to certify actions of the Board of Elders and congregation. The secretary or Chairman's designate shall maintain legal records of the church, including minutes of congregational meetings.
 - 4. Misc. offices - the following are typical, but not exclusive other offices that the Board of Elders may choose to appoint with the confirmation of the congregation as seen in the policy manual.

The following are typical, but not exclusive offices to be filled by Deacons:

- Treasurer - The duties of the Treasurer shall be to hold and disburse the church funds in accordance with the decisions of the membership, the Board of Elders and the Finance Committee. He/she shall keep books of account of same and submit a written report at Quarterly Business Meetings of the church and the monthly meeting of the Board of Elders. The Treasurer's record shall be accessible at all times to those authorized by the congregation.
- Financial Secretary, Committee- The Financial Secretary shall record accurately all church income and is responsible for depositing said funds to the bank accounts of the church.
- Children's Ministry Coordinator - The Coordinator shall supervise and direct the Children's Ministry through the Christian Education committee. He/she shall coordinate the enlistment of teachers and the selection of teaching materials.
- Music Coordinator - He/she shall coordinate the organization and the supervision of the music activities of the church through the worship committee.
- Deaconess Committee - The Deaconesses shall perform such duties as are assigned to them by the Board of Elders. At their regular meetings they will pray and plan for their ministries to the women of the fellowship as well as to the total membership. This committee shall initially be set at five (5). The Board of Elders may periodically vary its size to meet the need, subject to the approval of the membership. The committee shall be directly responsible to the Board of Elders.

5. Terms of Office

The Pastor - The Pastor shall serve for an indeterminate term.

Members of the Board of Elders shall be affirmed by the congregation for terms of three fiscal years and, as far as practicable, one-third of the Board shall be affirmed each year. Elders will be eligible for re-affirmation at the end of each three-year term, with no limitation on successive terms.

Elder's terms shall begin and end with the January annual congregational meeting, with the Elder Chairman serving and presiding through the conclusion of the meeting. Prior to the annual congregational meeting the Elder Board will meet to reorganize itself, designating its Chairman and other offices and responsibilities as it sees fit.

Elders who by reason of necessity are affirmed to the board in mid-fiscal year shall serve for the current fiscal year plus two additional years. They will then be eligible for re-affirmation, with no limitation on successive terms.

Deacons and Deaconesses - The term of Deacon and Deaconess appointments shall be one year commencing with the January business meeting, with no limitations on successive terms.

ARTICLE IX

Board of Elders

1. Number

The Board of Elders shall consist of a minimum of five (5) elected members. The Board may vary its size subject to approval of the congregation.

2. Vacating Office

An Elder may be removed from office for failure to attend three consecutive regular meetings of the Board without reasonable cause, or for conduct unbecoming an Elder. If, after being admonished, there is no correction or resignation from office, he shall be removed upon a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders and ratification by the membership.

3. Supervision of Ministries

The Board of Elders shall organize itself annually according to the recognition of its members' spiritual gifts, interests and experience. Each Elder shall oversee one or more ministry areas.

4. Nomination of Elders

The Nominating Committee shall nominate Elders. The Nominating Committee shall consist of two (2) or more members from the Board of Elders, selected annually by that Board, and three or more persons elected annually by the congregation. One of the representative Elders shall serve as the chairman of this committee. The committee shall obtain the names of those qualified to serve as Elders. Nominations for Elders are to be approved by the individuals being considered and the Board of Elders prior to their names being released to the congregation. Nominations shall be published at least two (2) Sundays before the next congregational meeting. This committee shall prepare, distribute and count the ballots at the congregational meetings. It shall meet whenever necessary to perform its responsibilities as stated herein.

ARTICLE X

Pastoral Relations

1. Pulpit Committee

When it becomes necessary to call a pastoral staff member, a representative Pulpit Committee, consisting of four members from the Board of Elders and three members at large, shall be named by the Board and ratified by the congregation. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the necessary steps to secure a pastoral candidate. In seeking a suitable candidate, the committee shall consult the leaders of our district and take suggestions from the members of the church. The committee shall investigate the merits of every candidate under consideration in regard to his agreement with the Statement of Faith and the Constitution, his personal character, education, ministerial record and preaching ability, in determining his fitness for this pastorate. Only one candidate shall be presented to the congregation at a time. When a suitable person has been found, the committee shall recommend him to the Board of Elders, who shall make its recommendation to the congregation for its consideration.

2. Calling a Pastor

The proposed call of a pastor shall come before the congregation at a specially called business meeting; notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. A vote of 85% of the members present and qualified to vote shall be necessary to extend a call. The vote shall be by secret ballot.

3. Pastoral Salaries

The initial terms of a pastoral staff member's salary and other benefits shall be established as a part of the call. In addition, the senior pastor shall be entitled to attend the National and Southwest District Conferences. Any additional conferences shall be submitted to the Board of Elders for approval. The Elders shall be responsible for the pulpit supply in the pastor's absence. The pastoral staff members' salaries shall be reviewed by the Board of Elders prior to the finalization of the annual budget. Any additional changes to the initial terms accompanying a pastoral staff members' call shall be first recommended by the Board of Elders and then confirmed by vote of the congregation.

4. Ministry Review

On an annual basis the Elder Board shall meet individually with the members of the pastoral staff to review that Pastor's work of ministry for the previous year.

5. Terminating of Pastorate

A. Calling and Supervision

The term of this office may be ended upon thirty (30) days notification in writing on

the part of the Pastor or the Board of Elders as representing the congregation. A Pastor shall first give his resignation to the Board of Elders before it is presented to the church.

Concern regarding the ongoing effectiveness of the Pastor's ministry for whatever reason are to be communicated in written form to the Board of Elders for resolution or action. Should the Elder Board deem it necessary, the matter shall be brought before the congregation in a special business meeting, or in whatever form it deems appropriate, for consultation and resolution.

ARTICLE XI

Ancillary Employees

The Board of Elders shall have authority regarding the employment of any worker deemed necessary. All salaried employees shall be under the general supervision of the senior pastor and the Board of Elders. Such employees shall be provided with a written job description and reviewed as determined by the Elder Board.

ARTICLE XII

Ministry Areas

1. Formation of Organization

The formation of ministry areas may be initiated only with consent of the Board of Elders.

2. Leaders of Organizations

Presidents and/or chairmen of all organizations, including organized classes, shall be members of the Evangelical Free Church of Corona. Exception to this rule may be made on a temporary basis in cases of specific need by approval of the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE XIII

Finances

1. Income

Necessary finances for conducting the church, its programs and missionary outreach, shall be obtained through voluntary tithes and offerings. Additional pledges and free-will offerings may be taken as deemed advisable by the Board of Elders. Any projects to be held by the church or auxiliary organizations for fund-raising purposes must be pre-approved by the Board of Elders. This corporation shall not afford pecuniary gain,

incidentally or otherwise, to its members.

2. Liability

No member, officer, director or other associates of this corporation shall be personally liable for any corporate obligations.

3. Stock

This corporation shall have no capital stock.

4. Expenditures

Every conveyance, sale or mortgage of church property, real or personal in excess of 5% of the church's annual general fund budget, must be ratified by the congregation. Expenditures not provided for in the budget and greater than 5% of the church's annual general fund budget for one item in any one fiscal year shall be made only with the approval of the congregation.

5. Transfer of Funds

No money shall be permanently transferred from one fund to another without 85% authorization of voting members present at a congregational meeting. Temporary transfers must be approved by the Board of Elders and reported to the congregation at the next business meeting.

ARTICLE XIV

Meetings

1. Public Services

Regular public worship services shall be conducted every Sunday. Other public services may be arranged by the Board of Elders.

2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be observed as deemed appropriate by the Pastor and the Board of Elders. All believers shall be invited to participate.

3. Congregational Meetings

The Congregation will meet twice during the years. The Fiscal year shall be August 1st to July 31th.

4. Special Congregational Meetings

Special congregational meetings may be called as often as the Board of Elders considers necessary. Such meetings must be announced at all Sunday morning public services for two Sunday's prior to the meeting. Announcements of a special congregational meeting must specify the purpose for which the meeting is being called.

5. Rules for Business Meetings

The chairman of the Board of Elders or a designated elder shall moderate at all business meetings.

1. Rules of Order

- a. Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) shall be the parliamentary manual of this church except where it may be contrary to Scripture and this constitution.
- b. A simple majority of members present shall decide every issue except when otherwise stipulated by this constitution.

ARTICLE XV

Authority

The congregation, at its regular, special and annual business meetings, shall grant legislative and governing authority to the Board of Elders of this corporation.

ARTICLE XVI

Voting

A. Eligibility

Any member who attained the age of eighteen (18) years of age is eligible to vote.

B. Elder Election

The election of elders shall take place annually at the October quarterly meeting of the congregation. Newly elected elders will serve alongside the existing elders following their affirmation by the congregation, with their term

of service beginning officially in January.

C. Officer Elections

All church officers shall be affirmed by secret ballot. Election of officers shall be based on qualifications as outlined in Article VIII. Nominees must receive a two-thirds majority vote of members present to be elected. –

ARTICLE XVII

Amendments

A. Rules

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any quarterly business meeting by a two-thirds majority of members present when said proposed amendments have been presented in written form and discussed at a business meeting at least three (3) months prior to the time of its adoption. These amendments must be mailed to all members at least two weeks before the meeting at which action will be taken. Voting shall be done by closed ballot.

B. Exceptions

Articles I, II, III, IV, V, VI and XVII-B cannot be repealed or revised except by 90 percent majority vote of the membership.