



Constitution

Updated September 2015

**CONSTITUTION
OF
FAITH EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
705 North Madison Street
Stanley, Wisconsin**

PREAMBLE

We, the members of FAITH EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH, do ordain and establish the following constitution, including the Affirmation of Faith, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this church shall be FAITH EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH of Stanley, Wisconsin.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be the preaching of the Word of God to the mutual edification, instruction and discipline of its members and other believers; the winning of the unsaved to Christ; helping the young Christians to develop the spiritual life; instruct the children in the Word of God; make available, in a Godly environment, such other educational curriculum as deemed appropriate by the church membership; and furtherance of the Gospel work on mission fields at home and abroad.

ARTICLE III: AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

1) We believe the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit without error in the original manuscripts, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:21; I Corinthians 2:12, 13; John 10:35; Hebrews 1:1, 2; Mark 12:36; Acts 3:18; Romans 15:4

2) We believe there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons — God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son and the Holy Spirit; that they are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption (eternal life).

Matthew 3:16, 17; John 14:16, 17, John 15:26; Hebrews 9:14; I Corinthians 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:13,18; Jude 20, 21.

3) We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of man and that He hears and answers prayer. We believe that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ but He will eternally punish all who deny Him.

Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 5:30, 31; II Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 1:4-6; I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:17-20; John 3:16; Romans 2:16; II Timothy 4:1

4) We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death upon the cross whereby His shed blood cleanseth us from all sin. We believe in His bodily resurrection,

ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and visible return to earth.

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-23; Colossians 1:14; Colossians 2:9; I Corinthians 15:1-4;
II Corinthians 5: 19-20; Hebrews 7:25-27; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 7:14;
Romans 5:9; Acts 1:11.

5) We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict and convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ for Godly living and service. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide.

John 14:16, 17, 26; John 16:7-14; Matthew 28:19; Romans 8:9, 14, 16, 27; Hebrews 9:14;
Ephesians 1:13-14; John 1:33; Romans 15:16; I Corinthians 2:4, 9-16.

6) 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. 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 that only such as receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and thus become the children of God.

Romans 3:19-20, 3:23, 10:8-13, 6:23; John 3:18, 36; John 1:12; Luke 13:5; Ephesians 2:8-9; I Peter 1:23, 25; Titus 3:5-6; John 3:6, 7, 16, 17.

7) We believe that the Lord's Supper and water baptism are ordinances to be observed by the Church until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. These two ordinances are, however, not to be regarded as means for salvation.

John 4:1-2; John 3:23; Matthew 3:16; Matthew 28:1-20; Acts 8:36-39; Acts 2:38; I Corinthians 11:23-33; (Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 22:15-20) Romans 6:1-5; Mark 16:16.

8) We believe in the universal Church, a living, spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary purpose of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12, 20; Ephesians 21:23;

Ephesians 4:3-12; Colossians 3:14-15; John 3:5; I Corinthians 11:2; I Timothy 3:1-15;
Colossians 1:18; Titus 1:5-9; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:7-8; Matthew 28:19-20

9) We believe that every human being can have direct fellowship with God through Jesus Christ and is responsible alone to God in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that, therefore, Church and State must be kept separate.

Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:6; Hebrews 4:14-16; I Timothy 2:5; Acts 4: 19-20; Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-17; Matthew 22:20-21.

10) We believe in the imminent, pre-millennial, personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His Kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the believer, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the wicked.

Acts 1:9-11; Acts 15:14-17; Luke 12:35-40; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-4; I Corinthians

15:51-58; Isaiah 13:9-11; Malachi 4:1-3; II Thessalonians 2:1-12; Daniel 12:1-3; Matthew 24:29-30; Jude 14-15; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 20:12-15

STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

11) We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as a male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God and, as such, one's biological sex is not to be rejected. (Gen 1:26-27).

12) We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in a single, exclusive, lifelong union that is generative in nature, as delineated by Scripture. (Gen. 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. (1Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4).

13) We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is contrary to Biblical teaching. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

14) We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who seek His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

15) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 122:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of (Faith Evangelical Free Church).

16) We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of (Faith Evangelical Free Church) as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the (Faith Evangelical Free Church) members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by or who represents (Faith Evangelical Free Church) in any capacity, agree and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

17) We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image (Gen 1&2). Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception to natural death (Ps. 139). We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

18) We believe God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant between a biological man, a biological woman, and Himself. (Faith Evangelical Free Church) will only recognize marriages between one man and one woman. Further, the pastors and staff, whether paid or unpaid, of (Faith Evangelical Free Church) shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of (Faith Evangelical Free Church) shall only be used to host weddings between one man and one woman.

The Affirmation 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 (Faith Evangelical Free Church)'s faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is our final

interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - REQUIREMENTS:

Membership in this church shall consist of persons 16 years of age or older who have met the requirements for members.

The requirements are:

- A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation
- Completion of the membership class
- To give personal testimony of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to the Elders during membership class to be presented to the full Elder board.
- Other satisfactory evidence of eligibility for membership when necessary
- A commitment to the "Basic Responsibilities for Christians" covenant reaffirmed annually.

Section 2 - RECEPTION OF MEMBERS:

Anyone desiring to unite with this congregation may make application to a Pastor or a member of the Elder Board. A copy of the Constitution, By-Laws and Basic Responsibilities for Christians shall be given to the applicant.

An Elder Board's affirmation concerning the candidate(s) will be presented to the membership in written form two weeks prior to a candidates reception as a member. If anyone objects to the membership of a candidate, they will bring Scriptural reasons to the Elder Board within the time frame identified in the affirmation announcement. The Elder Board will fully investigate the objection including meeting with the candidate if necessary prior to their reception as a member.

A failure to bring forth any biblical concerns regarding membership candidates will be considered an affirmative vote for that candidate.

All new members will be recognized at a Sunday morning service.

All Pastoral staff, and their respective spouses shall become members of the church upon completion of their testimony of faith in Jesus Christ before the Elder Board.

ARTICLE V: DISCIPLINE

If any member conducts him or herself in a manner that is not in harmony with "Basic Responsibilities for Christians" they shall be counseled by the Pastor and/or Board of Elders according to the Word of God.

Matthew 18:15-17, II Corinthians 2:5-11; Galatians 6:1-2

If, however, the member should choose to continue in his unrepentant condition, he shall be deprived of his/her membership. This can be done only by the church members upon recommendation from the Board of Elders, and by two-thirds majority vote, voting at any regular business meeting of the church.

If the Board of Elders decides that any officer or leader at any time, in any way is detrimental to the ministry and testimony of this church, it may remove this person from office.

ARTICLE VI: GOVERNMENT

The Church governance information is detailed in the By-Laws which follow this constitution.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 1—PUBLIC MEETINGS

- A. Services of worship shall be conducted in the morning on the Lord's day and at other times as determined by the Elders.
- B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed once a month if at all possible.

Section 2—CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- A. The Annual Meeting of the congregation shall be held in April, or at a time determined by the Elders. (The fiscal year shall run from April 1-March 31) At this session, annual reports may be presented, the election of officers will take place, and goals and initiatives by the Elders and Ministry Teams can be shared.
- B. All matters shall be determined by majority vote of those present and voting except where otherwise specified in this constitution.
 - a. A two-thirds(66%) vote of members present and voting is required for the calling or dismissal of the Sr. Pastor, the removal of member(s), or adopting amendments to the by-laws.
 - b. A three-quarters (75%) vote of members present is required to amend the Constitution
 - c. Ninety percent (90%) vote of members present is required to change church affiliation.
- C. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Sr. Pastor, the Elder Board, or the Elder Chair. Notice of any special meeting shall be given either by announcement at the regular Sunday services of the Church at least three days previous to the date of the meeting, or by written notice mailed in time to reach all resident members at least three days prior to the date of the meeting.
- D. The rules of order contained in Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall govern this organization when it is not inconsistent with the Church's Constitution and By-Laws.
- E. Quorum: Thirty percent (30%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS:

The constitution may be amended by a three-fourths (75%) vote by those present and voting at a regular or special congregational meeting. The proposed changes shall be voted upon three months prior to time of the final vote.

ARTICLE VIII: CALLING OF THE SR. PASTOR

1. The Pastoral Search Team shall, after a careful search and interviewing process in cooperation with the Forest Lakes District of the Evangelical Free Church, propose a pastoral candidate to the Elders and then to the congregation.
2. The Senior Pastor shall be called into ministry at FEFC by at least a two-thirds vote of members voting at a regular or special congregational session.

The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time, and 60 days notice shall be given by the Pastor or by the Church for the conclusion of his ministry. (If the Pastor is terminated by the congregation, special considerations apply as spelled out elsewhere in the By-Laws.)

ARTICLE IX: STANDING

This church shall remain free and independent and shall not subject itself to any denomination or synod. It shall remain its own highest authority under Christ and conduct its business through its own congregational sessions. The church shall affiliate with the Evangelical Free Church of America and its ministries and with the Forest Lakes District Conference. It shall encourage delegates to attend conferences, support home and foreign missions, and unite in any mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel as the church itself may officially decide.

This ARTICLE cannot be changed unless there is a 90 percent approval of voting membership present.

ARTICLE X: PROPERTY RIGHTS

In case of a division of the church (from which we pray God by His mercy to preserve us), the property of the church shall belong to those who abide by this Constitution.

In case of dissolution of the church organization, the property shall revert to the Forest Lakes District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America, and the proceeds be used either for missionary enterprise or to renew the work.

Revised and approved by the membership January 29, 2005.

Updated for congregational approval October 14, 2010.

Updated for congregational approval April 7, 2013.