

**Bylaws of the
Evangelical Free Church of Arthur
Ida County, State of Iowa**

Membership

1. Application for admission to the membership of this church shall be made to the Board of Elders. This board shall interview all applicants for membership and hear their personal testimony of faith in Christ. The elders will ensure that classes for prospective members are offered on a regular basis.
2. Before applicants are recommended for membership at a business meeting of the church, their names shall be announced to the congregation. If any member has a reason for objecting to receiving an applicant into the membership, he/she shall immediately express that objection in writing to the Board of Elders with scriptural reasons for the objection.
3. The names of all satisfactory applicants shall be recommended by the Board of Elders at any business meeting of the church. Applicants shall give their testimony orally in person, via a video recording, or in writing, at a regular service or business meeting of the church prior to said meeting but shall not be present when their applications are being voted on. A majority vote shall be required for admission into membership. Each new member shall be publicly welcomed at a subsequent regular worship service.
4. No applicant shall be granted membership who holds membership in any group or organization that includes beliefs or practices that conflict with Scripture.
5. All members are urged to regularly attend services of the church and to practice regular and systematic study of the Bible, public and family prayer, as well as maintaining a witness to Christ in word and deed before unbelievers.
6. As members, we are committed to the proportionate giving as commanded in Scripture, and we pledge ourselves to regular giving to the church and its missions (Mal. 3:8-10, 1 Cor. 16:1-2).
7. It is the desire of this church that every member experience the fullness of the life in Christ (Heb. 10:23-25, Eph. 4:1-3). However, if it is evident that a church member is not obeying God's commands as taught in Scripture, this person shall be counseled in a kind manner by church leadership. They shall go in the spirit of prayer and endeavor to restore this believer to fellowship (see Matt. 7:3-5, Gal. 6:1-3, Matt. 18:15-17). If said member refuses to heed the admonition of church leadership and repent, this person's membership will be removed by majority vote of the congregation upon recommendation of the Board of Elders. The membership of the church will be informed at the next regular business meeting or at a business meeting called specifically to inform the membership.
8. Restoration to church membership will be based upon that member expressing repentance evidenced by a changed life. Then the former member shall be recommended by the Board of Elders to the membership for reinstatement.

9. If any member is willingly absent from participation in church services and does not communicate a reasonable cause or explanation to the church for a period of one year, that member will be removed from active membership and placed upon the inactive membership list. An inactive member can be reinstated to active membership through participation in church services and a meeting with the elders. After five years of inactivity, that member will be automatically removed from the membership list. Members who have been absent for one year with reasonable cause (such as students, military personnel, missionaries, or those with ill health) will not be counted towards a quorum for business meeting purposes. The active and inactive membership lists will be kept as of the annual meeting of the given year.

Leadership

The head and ultimate authority of the Evangelical Free Church of Arthur is Jesus Christ, as revealed in Scripture (Eph. 1:22-23, 4:15, Col. 1:18). We recognize that He has delegated authority first to the membership of the local church and then to its elected leaders.

Decisions reserved for the congregation

The following actions require congregational action by vote at a duly called congregational meeting:

1. Approve the job description for the paid staff.
2. Call and dismiss the senior pastor.
3. Appoint and remove elected leaders.
4. Vote candidates into or out of membership.
5. Approve updates to the church's mission and vision statements.
6. Approve all budgets of the church.
7. Approve any purchase or sale of real estate.
8. Approve taking on any new debt.
9. Amend the Constitution and/or Bylaws.
10. Approve any change in cooperation with the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Officers

1. The officers of this church shall be: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Sunday School Superintendent, Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, four (4) elders, four (4) deacons/deaconesses, and three (3) trustees.
2. Officers must be persons of good reputation and of established Christian character, sound in faith and conduct, a regular attendee of the services of the church, and qualified to serve in their respective roles.
3. Officers shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting. A majority of votes cast shall be required for election. Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled at any regular or special

business meeting of the congregation. Temporary appointments may be made by the Board of Elders, if necessary.

4. Officers shall serve for a term of one year with the exception of elders, deacons/deaconesses, and trustees, who are elected for a term of three years. These latter shall be elected so that their terms expire progressively over the three-year period. To be eligible for an office, one must have been a member of the congregation for at least one year.

5. No officer shall serve more than six successive years in any one office. A temporary election or appointment shall not be considered in the above limitation. Except in the case of resignation, all officers are to serve until his/her successor's term begins.

Duties of Officers

ELDERS

1. The spiritual leadership of the church, under the headship of Christ, shall be provided by the Board of Elders, which shall consist of the Senior Pastor and 3-6 elected members of the church (including the chairman and vice-chairman). They, except for the pastors, shall be elected in alternate years for a term of two years, and may serve no more than six consecutive years on the Board of Elders. The church chairman shall serve as the chair of the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders may function with less than three (3) elected men only if approved at a congregational meeting. Such approval shall expire at the time of the next Annual Meeting.

2. Elders shall be men who are selected in accordance with the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4, as well as having servant-leadership gifts and being in agreement with the Statement of Faith and the vision of the Evangelical Free Church of Arthur.

3. To ensure that this church is congregationally-governed rather than elder-governed, any decision of the Board of Elders shall be subject to congregational approval or disapproval. While the congregation may not exercise this right for all decisions, it shall have the right to do so when desired. Approval or disapproval shall be by majority vote at a congregational meeting. All Board of Elders' decisions affecting church policy or direction shall be minuted and made available to the members of the congregation. Sensitive discussions within the Board of Elders shall not be minuted. However, any action taken from such discussions shall be subject to congregational approval or disapproval if a majority of the church members so desire.

4. The elders shall collectively be responsible for:

a. The shepherding of the flock through prayer, personal encouragement, admonition, and by modeling a life of Christian discipleship and service.

b. The spiritual leadership of the church, protecting against false teaching and ensuring that the body is healthy and growing through sound biblical teaching and effective ministry practices.

c. The organizational governance of the church, establishing vision, goals, and priorities which shall be submitted to the congregation for approval.

d. Monitoring mission effectiveness and ministry alignment with the vision, goals, and priorities of the church.

e. Establishing the job description and overseeing the ministry of the Senior Pastor.

5. Accusations against any pastor or elder shall not be considered unless supported by at least two witnesses as outlined in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. If erring in doctrine or conduct, the individual shall be charitably admonished by the Elder Board. If that individual persists in sin or if the Elder Board deems that the sin badly endangers the reputation of Christ, the individual may be removed from his office by a majority vote of the congregation at the request of the elders. If it involves the Senior Pastor, the District Superintendent of the district in which the church resides shall be asked to help resolve the problem and/or to give his recommendation to the elders, or to the church, for action. Pastors and elders so disciplined shall be rebuked publically as an example to the body so that all may stand in fear (1 Timothy 5:20).

6. It shall be the practice within the Board of Elders to seek unity in all matters of church life through discussion, prayer, and, if necessary, fasting. However, it is recognized that differences of opinion and position can be held without the breaking of fellowship. At such times, any member of the Board of Elders may call for a vote of the board to resolve such issues. Then Robert's Rules of Order will be followed.

SENIOR PASTOR

1. The church shall call as Senior Pastor a man who is known to the church or by recommendation through proper channels to be of established and true character, sound in doctrine and faith, qualified to preach and teach the Word of God, and knowledgeable in church administration. See Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 4:12-16, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Titus 1:5-9, Titus 2:1, 1 Peter 5:1-4. He shall hold to the EFCA Statement of Faith without reservation, and shall be credentialed or actively pursuing credentials with the Evangelical Free Church of America. An announcement of a meeting to call a pastor shall be made at two church services on two different days prior to the meeting.

2. The pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a closed ballot with a seventy-five per cent (75%) majority vote with a quorum of 60% of the active membership required. Both the pastor and the church shall have the right to terminate such service on three months' notice, but may change this provision by mutual agreement. The pastor shall devote full time to the work of the church unless otherwise arranged with the Board of Elders.

3. The duties of the pastor shall include preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, teaching the Scriptures, counseling the people of God and those who know not Christ, visiting the sick, the afflicted, and newcomers to the community, guiding and advising the other officers of the church, and representing the church in this community as well as in the regional and national affairs of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

4. The pastor shall give a report of the condition and work of the church at the annual meeting of the congregation and at such other times as shall be proper.
5. In the event of the pastor's resignation, the chairman of the church shall call a special business meeting of the congregation. This meeting shall be called as soon as it is appropriate to do so, for the following purposes:
 - a. To take appropriate action on the resignation.
 - b. To elect a search committee.
6. The pastor is an ex-officio member of all boards, committees, and organizations of the church.
7. The Senior Pastor and his wife shall become members of the church upon assuming pastoral duties.

ASSOCIATE PASTORS AND OTHER PAID STAFF

All Associate Pastors shall be men who are known to the church or by recommendation through proper channels as men of established and true character, sound in doctrine and faith, qualified to preach and teach the Word of God, and knowledgeable in church administration. See Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 4:12-16, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Titus 1:5-9, Titus 2:1, 1 Peter 5:1-4. They shall hold to the EFCA Statement of Faith without reservation and shall be credentialed or actively pursuing credentials with the Evangelical Free Church of America. Associate Pastors are not members of the Board of Elders, but may be encouraged to sit in on the Board of Elders' meetings.

All job descriptions for Associate Pastors and other paid staff shall be approved by the congregation. The job descriptions shall include the terms of calling and terminating the position. All associate and paid staff are directly accountable to the Senior Pastor unless otherwise specified by the job description. Associate Pastors and their wives shall become members of the church upon assuming their positions on staff.

DEACONS AND DEACONESSES

The Board of Deacons and Deaconesses shall be composed of 4-6 members – a combination of men and women (1 Timothy 3:8-13, Romans 16:1) of spiritual maturity and Christian conduct to help promote the spiritual welfare of the church body. They shall be selected in accordance with the qualifications applicable to each as described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

They shall visit the sick, foremost those of the church, prepare the elements for the communion service, and other duties assigned to them from time to time by the Board of Elders. They will serve by having day to day involvement in the life and needs of the church body through overseeing a cluster of individuals and families within the church. They will serve the members of their family cluster and the church by regularly keeping contact with and praying for these members. They shall regularly communicate with the Board of Elders concerning their

activities. They shall be elected progressively at the annual meeting for a term of three years and shall choose a chairperson among themselves.

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees shall consist of 3-6 men or women. They shall choose a chairperson among themselves. The duties of the trustees shall be as follows:

1. To hold in trust the church property and to be responsible for its care and maintenance.
2. To oversee the treasurer in the disbursing of church funds.
3. To decide on the use of the church building by private individuals or families from within the church or by outside groups, and to decide on the use of church property when such use would involve removal of the property from the premises of the church.
4. To work together with the Board of Elders in the creation of any church budgets.
5. To count the offerings with the treasurer, ensuing that there are two people handling cash.
6. To regularly communicate with the Board of Elders concerning any decision they make.

SECRETARY

The duties of the secretary shall be:

1. To keep the records of all the proceedings of the regular as well as the extra business meetings of the church.
2. To keep an up-to-date record of the membership of the church. Also to keep records of all marriages, child dedications, baptisms, and deaths related to the church. Paid church staff may assist with these records.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The duties of the Assistant Secretary shall be to serve as Secretary in the absence of the secretary, and to deliver to the secretary all such records.

TREASURER

The duties of the treasurer shall be:

1. To keep an accurate record of all income and disbursements of the church.
2. To deposit all monies and be responsible for the disbursement of the funds received for the operating and maintaining of the church and its outreach.

3. To present a financial report to each quarterly and annual business meeting of the church.

Auditors shall be appointed by the church chairman before the annual meeting, and they shall bring their report to the annual meeting.

ASSISTANT TREASURER

The duties of the Assistant Treasurer shall be to assist the treasurer in handling all monies in the absence of the treasurer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The duties of the Sunday School Superintendent shall be:

1. To oversee and supervise all activities of the Sunday School.
2. To enlist and approve all teachers in the Sunday School program.
3. To serve as chairperson of the Christian Education Committee.

ASSISTANT SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The duties of the Assistant Sunday School Superintendent shall be to assist the Sunday School Superintendent in the handling of Christian Education responsibilities in the absence of the superintendent, and to order and distribute Sunday School class materials.

Committees

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The duties of this committee shall be:

1. To assist the Sunday School Superintendent in enlisting and approving Sunday School teachers.
2. To oversee and supervise other church educational and outreach programs such as AWANA, youth groups, Vacation Bible School, and any other such activities.

This committee shall consist of the Sunday School Superintendent, the Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, a member of the Board of Elders selected by the Board of Elders, and two other persons elected by the congregation. A Sunday School secretary will be selected from within the committee.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

This committee shall consist of the pastor, chairman of the church, and two members elected by the congregation. The committee, with the aid of suggestions from the congregation, shall enlist candidates for the elected positions of the church, verifying the qualifications of each and their willingness to serve, after which their names will be placed on the ballot. The ballot shall be posted three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. Nominations for positions may also be made from the floor during the Annual Meeting, but prior determination of their proper qualifications and willingness to serve must be obtained for such floor nominations. Elections shall take place at the Annual Meeting.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

This committee shall be formed before the calling of any pastoral staff. It shall consist of five members of the church elected by the congregation. The committee shall have a mix of both men and women. It will elect its own chairperson. The search committee will begin by contacting the Central District of the EFCA in order to utilize the current resources that the district has available. The committee will evaluate potential pastoral candidates and make recommendations to the congregation for the church's decision.

OTHER COMMITTEES AND POSITIONS

All officers of the church shall gather in January to appoint other yearly committees and positions as necessary. Examples would be in the area of evangelism, missions, music, worship, ushers, nursery, decorations, hospitality, refreshments, and greeters.

Business Meetings

Quarterly business meetings of the church shall be held in March, June, September, and December. The annual business meeting shall be held in March of each calendar year. Twenty-five (25) percent of the active membership of the church shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and a simple majority vote (that is, one more than half of the votes cast), shall be effective and decisive in all business matters and elections. When the board candidate is unopposed, a 2/3 majority vote is necessary.

Extra business meetings may be called by the chairman or pastor of the church as needed. Two public announcements shall be made prior to such meetings unless urgency demands otherwise, in which case if three-fourths of the Board of Elders approve the calling of a special meeting, it may be called without public announcement by the chairman or pastor. However, in such a case, every effort must be made to notify all members who are active.

Quarterly reports will be made available for members.

Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail in conducting all business meetings of the church.

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall run from March 1 to February 28 (or 29 during a leap year). Those who are elected at the annual meeting will begin their duties on April 1.

Amendments

Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church by a 2/3 majority vote. Any such proposed change shall be presented at any business meeting of the church at least three months prior to adoption.

Any previous set of bylaws of this church automatically becomes void with the adoption of these bylaws.

Approved at Annual Congregational Business Meeting
December 14, 2025