

# **Holcomb Evangelical Free Church**



## **Constitution and Bylaws (2008 Revision)**

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
HOLCOMB EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH  
~ 2008 Revision ~**

**Article I – Name**

The name of this church shall be “The Holcomb Evangelical Free Church”. The address shall be “74059 L Road, Holdrege, Nebraska 68949-4046”.

**Article II – Confession of Faith**

This church acknowledges the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith, doctrine and conduct.

**Article III – Doctrinal Statement**

See Attachment A to this Constitution.

**Article IV – Purpose**

The purpose of this church shall be to work, pray, and worship together for the unity, instruction, discipline, and encouragement of believers that they might grow in grace and holy conduct, and to seek to win souls for Christ and to further His cause on the mission fields at home and abroad.

**Article V – Membership**

This church shall receive as members only those who by faith have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and who in their lives manifest the fruits of true faith in God and are willing, according to their ability, to support the church with their prayers and contributions. Persons who affiliate with the church and are not baptized are encouraged to take this step at the earliest opportunity.

**Article VI – Church Board**

The government of the church shall be of the congregational type with authority vested in its membership. The affairs of the church shall be managed by the Church Board which consist, of the Pastor, an Elder, Chairman, Chairman-elect, a Deaconess, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Christian Education Director, a Trustee, and a Mission Committee representative. (See Bylaws, Article II, Section 2).

**Article VII – Annual Session**

The annual session of the church shall be held in January, unless changed by the Church Board, at which time the election of officers shall take place, annual reports presented, and other business transacted in accordance with the by-laws.

## **Article VIII – Amendments**

Section 1: Amendment to this constitution shall be made at any business session and must obtain at least two-thirds of the votes cast. Any proposed amendment shall be presented to the membership for their vote no sooner than three months from the date of its first reading.

Section 2: Articles II, V, VIII-Section 2, CANNOT be repealed or amended.

Section 3: All previous ordinances and bylaws conflicting with this constitution are hereby annulled.

## **Article IX – Church Property**

Section 1: In case of a division of the church, from which may God in His mercy preserve us, the property of the church shall belong to those who abide by this constitution.

Section 2: In case of dissolution of the church the property shall be assigned to the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Section 3: The church shall be considered dissolved when only five or less than five members remain.

**ATTACHMENT A  
to the**

**Constitution Of The  
Holcomb Evangelical Free Church:  
Article III**

**~ 2008 Revision ~**

**Doctrinal Statement**

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 Christlike 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.

**BYLAWS OF THE  
HOLCOMB EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH  
~ 2008 Revision ~**

**Article I – Members**

Section 1: Holcomb Evangelical Free Church membership shall be open to anyone at least 18 years of age who has personally repented of his or her sins and has by faith accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; whose character, conduct, and reputation are in accord with his or her confession; who subscribes to the statement of faith of Holcomb Evangelical Free Church; who agrees to support and obey the Constitution and Bylaws of Holcomb Evangelical Free Church; and who is willing to support the church by his or her prayers, attendance, service, and contributions.

Section 2: Applicants may be granted membership at any regular business session of the church.

Section 3: Application for membership shall be made to the Pastor or to one of the members of the Elder Board, whose duty it shall be to inform themselves as to the spiritual condition of such persons and report to the Elder Board. If applicant is found eligible for membership, the Elder Board shall so recommend to the next regular business session of the church. The church shall then vote on the applicant and ninety percent of the votes cast entitles the applicant to membership.

Section 4: Those who have applied for membership shall be present at a regularly announced business session of the church and give their testimony concerning their acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and their desire to live a Christian life. Under unusual circumstances a prospective member can give his/her testimony to the Church Board or Elder Board instead of the whole church membership. Transfer of membership from another church shall not be allowed.

Section 5: New members shall be publicly received into the fellowship.

Section 6: Church discipline shall be carried out by the Elder Board in a charitable and Christian spirit according to Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5:11-13, and Galatians 6:1.

Section 7: Anyone who desires to have his or her name removed from membership is encouraged to contact the Pastor or Elder Board.

Section 8: Any member who has withdrawn or has been excluded from the church loses all rights of membership.

Section 9: Any member who ceases to attend services for a period of two years, other than for special purposes, as determined by the Elders, shall be placed on the associate membership list. Associate members shall not be counted on official membership lists. Any

associate member not responding to church communications or unable to be located, may be removed at the annual session by voting members present.

## **Article II – Qualification and Duties of Officers**

### **Section 1: Pastor**

a. The pastor shall be a man of established and true Christian character, sound in faith and doctrine and qualified to preach and teach the Word of God.

b. He shall be a voting member of the Elder Board and an ex-officio member of all committees and teams. He must have the ability to perform duties as specified in the current job description. Such job description shall be found in the Policy Manual, and shall be subject to annual review and revision.

c. Accusation against the Pastor shall be brought in writing to the Elder Board and shall not be considered unless supported by two or three witnesses and only after attempts to charitably admonish and reconcile have been made by the offended person(s) and acceptable clarification or repentance not made (I Timothy 5:19-20). Should it prove that he has erred in doctrine or conduct, he shall be charitably admonished by the Elder Board. If this does not bring the desired results, the matter shall be laid before the Church Board. In case difficulties arise between the Church Board and the Pastor which they alone cannot settle, the matter shall be referred to the District Superintendent of the Midwest District Conference. If this does not bring the desired results, the matter shall be laid before the church, and should he be found unworthy of his calling, he shall be dismissed immediately.

### **Section 2: Church Officers**

All officers of the church shall be members in good standing, of good reputation and established Christian character, well qualified for their respective duties.

### **Section 3: Elder Board**

This board shall consist of the Pastor, Chairman, Chairman-elect, and the four Elders. The duties are to shepherd the flock (1 Peter 5:1-3), lead through example (1 Peter 5:3), teach and encourage (Titus 1:9), refute those who contradict truth (Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9), pray for the sick (James 5:14), and discipline members in accordance with Article I, Section 6 of the Bylaws. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall assist the Pastor in the spiritual ministrations of the church and in the Pastor's absence assure that necessary duties are fulfilled.

### **Section 4: Chairman**

The Chairman shall preside at all business sessions of the church and of the Church Board. He shall have the authority to call meetings of said Board; also to call special business sessions of the church after having consulted members of said Board. He shall have all business sessions properly announced. In the absence of the Chairman, the Chairman-elect shall perform his duties. The Chairman-elect shall serve two years in said position after which he shall serve a two year term as Chairman.

### **Section 5: Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the procedure and decisions of all business sessions, and attend to the correspondence of the church then required.

#### Section 6: Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall receive all funds given to and through the church, depositing the same in such a bank as the church designates; and turn over such finances to the Church Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall also keep an accurate record of all finances, being prepared to present a report of same at any regular business session with a written report for every annual session. The Financial Secretary shall further furnish a receipt to donors on an annual basis.

#### Section 7: Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive all money from the Financial Secretary and shall make disbursements in accordance with the decision of the church. The Treasurer shall keep all itemized accounts and, when called for, render statements of same at any regular business session of the church. The books of account shall be closed as of December 31 and a final accounting given to the church.

#### Section 8: Deaconesses

The Deaconesses (three) shall assist the Elders in the caring for the church body with special interest for the discouraged, the poor, and the sick. They shall be ever alert to render spiritual assistance to such as are seeking salvation. The Deaconesses shall prepare the Communion. They shall appoint from among themselves their Church Board representative.

#### Section 9: Trustees

The Trustees are responsible to see that the premises are kept in good condition with authority to spend up to \$5,000 per occurrence. They shall report to each regular session of the church money expended and work done. They shall have the keeping of the deeds and other papers of value. The Trustees have no right to mortgage or sell any property belonging to the church except on the order of the church. They shall appoint from among themselves their Church Board representative.

#### Section 10: Christian Education Director

The Christian Education Director shall supervise the Christian Education Department in cooperation with the Christian Education Board and the Pastor including the appointment of new teachers. The Christian Education Director shall give a report at each regular session on the work of the Sunday School. In the absence of the Superintendent, the Vice-Superintendent shall perform his duties.

#### Section 11: Mission Committee

The Mission Committee (three) shall promote, inform, equip, and send our church body into missions. They shall emphasize missionaries in each of our ministries throughout the year. They shall appoint from among themselves their Church Board representative.

### **Article III – Election**

Section 1: The Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period of time by a two-thirds majority of votes cast. The Pastor and his wife become members automatically when the Pastor

assumes his duties. Three months notice shall be given by the Pastor or congregation in the event of resignation, except in case of dismissal according to the Bylaws, Article II, Section 1c.

Section 2: All officers of the Church, except the Elders, Deaconesses, and Trustees shall be elected for a term of two years. The Elders shall be elected for a term of four years, one elected each year. The Deaconesses shall be elected for a term of three years, one elected each year. The Trustees shall be elected for a term of three years, one elected each year. The Mission Committee members shall be elected for a term of three years, one elected each year.

Section 3: Election of officers shall be made by ballot. A majority of all votes cast shall be required to decide all elections.

Section 4: The retiring officers shall vacate and the newly elected officers shall take office immediately at the close of the annual session.

Section 5: Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled at any regular or special business session of the church to fill the unexpired term.

Section 6: The period of service for any officer, except the Christian Education Director and Associate Christian Director, shall not exceed one term of the same office without at least an interval of one year. The Christian Education Director and Associate Christian Education director may serve two consecutive terms of two years each and are elected at the annual session.

#### **Article IV – Meetings**

Section 1: Regular quarterly business sessions shall be held in April, July, and October unless changed by the Church Board. (For annual sessions, see Article VII of the Constitution.)

Section 2: Notice of all business sessions, regular and special, must be made publicly at one preceding Sunday service of the church (c.f., Bylaws, Article II, Section 4).

Section 3: A Communion Service shall be held at least once each quarter.

Section 4: All business sessions shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. The order of business at regular business sessions shall be as follows:

- a. Devotionals
- b. Reading of the minutes
- c. Reports
- d. Unfinished business
- e. New business
- f. Adjournment and closing prayer

## **Article V – Quorum**

Section 1: The presence of at least one-third of the active membership of the church shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at the annual business session (c.f., Bylaws, Article 1, Section 9).

Section 2: At any regular business session of the church, twenty percent of the active membership shall be necessary to constitute a quorum.

Section 3: When the election of a pastor takes place, it is necessary that at least one-half of the active membership of the congregation be present (c.f., Bylaws, Article III, Section 1).

## **Article VI – Church Board**

Section 1: The Church Board shall consist of the Pastor, an Elder, a Deaconess, Chairman, Chairman-elect, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, a Trustee, Christian Education Director, and a Mission Committee representative.

Section 2: The members shall entrust the overall administration of the church to the Church Board. It shall have the right to suggest new matters of business and make recommendations to the church.

## **Article VII – Committees and other Elected Offices**

### **Section 1: The Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members: four to be elected at the annual business session and the Pastor. The committee chairperson shall be appointed by the church chairman. This committee shall present a slate of candidates for election to office at the next annual session. This committee shall select delegates for the church to the National Conference, the Midwest District Conference, and Timberlake Ranch Camp Annual Meeting.

### **Section 2: Ushers**

There shall be six ushers and their term of serving shall be two years. Three ushers shall be elected each year at the annual business session. They shall serve at all regular services of the church. The usher chairperson shall be appointed by the church chairman.

### **Section 3: Auditors**

The auditors shall comprise of two members appointed by the church chairman to examine the accounts of the church for the ensuing year.

### **Section 4: The Music Ministry Council**

The Music Ministry Council shall comprise of the Music Ministry Coordinator (acting as chairman) and three members elected at the annual business session. The Music Ministry Council shall assist the Music Ministry Coordinator in various aspects of the music ministry. They shall also work with the Pastor in coordinating the music ministry. The Elder Board shall oversee the Music Ministry Council.

Section 5: The Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee shall comprise of two members, elected for two year terms, one elected from the nomination ballot at each annual session. The Hospitality Committee shall be responsible for making arrangements for lodging and meals for guests.

Section 6: Search Committees

Search committees shall be elected as necessary at any regular or special business session by simple majority of active members present.

**Article VIII – Staff**

Section 1: Candidates for additional pastor positions shall be elected for an indefinite period of time by a two-thirds majority of votes cast by active members present.

Section 2: Candidates for the Music Ministry Coordinator position shall be elected for an indefinite period of time by a two-thirds majority vote of active members present.

Section 3: The Church Board shall oversee the search process for support staff. The Board shall recommend a given candidate to the congregation for hire by simple majority vote of active members present.

Section 4: In terms of accountability, all personnel shall report directly to the Senior Pastor and assist him and the church in serving the Lord.

Section 5: Accusation against any staff person shall follow the pattern of Bylaws, Article II, Section 1c.

Section 6: Recommendations for the dismissal of a staff person shall first be presented to the Church Board in writing. The Church Board shall determine whether to bring a recommendation to the congregation at a business session or merely have the request placed on the agenda of a business session. Such matters shall be handled according to the Scriptures and in a charitable manner and passed upon a majority of votes cast at any business session.

**Article IX – Fundamental Principles**

The fundamental principles of the Holcomb Evangelical Free Church are based on the Word of God. Therefore every member of this church is expected to live in accordance with the revealed teachings as well as in the right spirit of the Bible; to avoid and refrain from that which is in disharmony with the Word of God, destructive to the Christian life, harmful to the church, or dishonorable to God.

Every member is earnestly admonished to refrain from slander and evil speaking of one another, to pray constantly for the church, its members and ministry; to attend the services of the church as much as possible and to live a holy and godly life. Philippians 2:15

## **Article X – Amendments**

Section 1: Amendment to these bylaws shall be made at any business session and must obtain at least two-thirds of the votes cast. Any proposed amendment shall be presented to the membership for their vote no sooner than three months from the date of its first reading.

Section 2: A move to change the decisions made at any business session, may be taken up for discussion at a regular announced meeting, but cannot be annulled before the following business session, and then only by a two-thirds majority.