

**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
TRINITY EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH**

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CONSTITUTION OF THE TRINITY EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

PREAMBLE

The local church is the visible organized expression of the Body of Christ. Therefore, the people of God are to live and serve in obedience to the Word of God and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In order to assist us with these commissions the members of Trinity Evangelical Free Church adopt this constitution.

Article I – Name

The name of this church shall be the —Trinity Evangelical Free Church. This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America; but it shall remain autonomous and, under God, its own highest authority.

Article II – Purpose

The Purpose of this church shall be to glorify God by making disciples of Lord Jesus Christ as we trust in the Holy Spirit to enable us to encourage others to grow in their relationship to God, believers, and non-believers.

Article III – Ordinances

- A. Baptism – Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ shall be encouraged to be baptized.
- B. The Lord’s Supper (Communion) shall be administered regularly.

Article IV – Doctrinal Statement

This church believes:

- A. The Scriptures—both Old and New Testaments—to be the 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 Christian faith and life. (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:19-21)
- B. In One God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (John 17:3; Matthew 28:19; II Cor. 13:13)
- C. 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 God Almighty, He is our high priest and advocate. (John 1:1; Heb. 1:3 & 8; I Cor. 15:3-4)
- D. That the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service. (John 14:17; John 16:7-14)

E. That man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost and only through regeneration and salvation can spiritual life be obtained. (Gen. 1:26; Rom. 5:12; Titus 3:3-7)

F. 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 are born of the Holy Spirit and thus become children of God. (Acts 4:12; Col. 1:20; Titus 3:5-7)

G. That water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as a means of salvation. (Rom. 6:3-5; Acts 8:36-39; I Cor. 11:23-25)

H. 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. (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18)

I. That only those who are thus members of the true church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. (Acts 2)

J. That Jesus Christ is the Lord and head of the church and that every local church has the right under Christ to decide and govern its own affairs. (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18)

K. In the personal, premillennial, imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this —blessed hope has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer. (I Cor. 15:51-52; I Thess. 4:16-18; Titus 2:13-14)

L. 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 punishment. (I Cor. 15; John 5:28-29)

Article V – Membership

A. Reception of Members – This church shall receive as members those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and who give evidence by their confession and conduct that they have been born again by the Spirit of God and who are in agreement with the following;

1. Candidates for church membership will meet with the Pastor or Board member(s) to discuss

- a. the doctrinal statement of this church,
- b. the expectations of membership,
- c. the contents of this constitution.

2. Candidates for church membership shall give testimony to their faith in Jesus Christ before members of the board or others appointed by the Board.

3. The candidates shall be approved as members by the membership at a congregational meeting.

4. Accepted members agree to hold harmless other church members from damages arising out of the exercise of this constitution.

B. Expectations of Church Members

1. To build up the church by using the talents and gifts that God has given them. (I Cor. 12; Eph. 4; Rom. 12)

2. To regularly attend the services and congregational business meetings of the church. (Heb. 10:25)

3. To support the church financially according to Biblical guidelines. (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6-15)

4. To be a positive witness for Christ in the community by both word and deed. (Matt. 5:13-16; Acts 1:8)

5. To support and submit to the leadership of the church. (Heb. 13:17)

6. To promote the unity and growth of the church. (Eph. 4:1-3; Phil. 2:1-4; Col. 3:12-17)

C. Dismissal of Members

1. Members who are absent from the services of this church for a period of three months (apart from those who are shut-ins) shall be encouraged to return or may be removed from the membership of this church by the Board.

2. Members of this church who err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. The restoration of the erring members shall be the single purpose, and

love the sole motivation in these actions. (Matt. 18:15-18; I Cor. 5; II Thess. 3:14-15; I Tim. 5:19-21; and Gal. 6:1)

Article VI – Church Government

A. Authority of Jesus Christ

1. This local church recognizes Jesus Christ as its sole head.

B. Authority of the Believer

1. Under the headship of Jesus Christ the authority and government shall be vested in the membership of this church. Adult members (18 and over) shall have full membership privileges, including the right to vote at congregational meetings.

C. Authority of the Church Board – (—Board as used within the contents of this document refers to the Executive Board of the church.)

1. The membership of this church delegates authority to the Board members elected by the membership for the ministry of this church.
2. The Board shall coordinate and oversee all ministries of this church.
3. The Board may appoint members of this church to fill vacancies until the following annual meeting.
4. The Board shall elect a chairman from the members of the Board.
5. The Board shall appoint a secretary to record the minutes at Board meetings.
6. Board members shall be elected by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members voting.
7. The Board members of this church shall consist of Pastor(s), Elder(s), and Deacons(s).

a. Pastor and Associate Pastor(s)

1. The Pastor shall shepherd the flock of God through teaching, preaching, counseling, praying, and visiting for the purpose of equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry.

2. The Pastor shall be a man full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. He shall also meet the qualifications listed in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

3. The Pastor shall be elected or terminated by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the membership. He shall be called for an indefinite period of time. Thirty days notice must be given by the Pastor or church upon termination of his ministry.

4. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the board and committees of the church.

b. Elder – (one or more)

1. The elder(s) shall assist the Pastor in the spiritual care of the church and shall be responsible for the ministries of the church in the Pastor's absence.

2. An elder shall be a man filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom. He shall also meet the qualifications listed in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

3. Elders shall be elected by the membership for two year terms. A maximum term of office shall be six consecutive years, unless a request for extension is recommended by the Board to the membership, or they may be re-elected after a one year absence.

c. Deacon (one or more)

1. The Deacons(s) shall serve the body of Christ according to their gifts by implementing the various ministries needed to fulfill the purpose of the church.

2. A Deacon shall be a man full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. He shall also meet the qualifications listed in I Tim. 3:8-12.

3. Deacons shall be elected to two year terms. A maximum term of office shall be six consecutive years, unless a request for extension is recommended by the Board to the membership, or they may be re-elected after a one year absence.

4. Areas of responsibility for Deacons may include Christian education, finances, properties, music/worship, church life, missions and outreach, etc.

D. Authority of Officers

1. The officers shall cooperate with and report to the Board.

2. The officers of this church shall consist of Deaconess(s), Christian education chairperson, treasurer, and financial secretary.

a. Deaconess (one or more)

1. The Deaconesses shall seek to promote a spirit of compassion throughout the church, organizing and encouraging the church to meet the needs of the sick and bereaved or other needs as they are led by the Holy Spirit.

2. A Deaconess shall be a woman full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. She shall also meet the qualifications listed in I Tim. 3:11.

3. The Deaconess shall be appointed to two year terms by the Board.

b. Christian Education Chairperson

1. The chairperson shall supervise and promote Christian education.
2. The chairperson shall be a man or woman whose life is characterized by the fruit of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
3. The chairperson shall be appointed to two year terms by the Board.

c. Treasurer

1. The treasurer shall pay all the bills, keep an accurate record of accounts, and keep the church informed about the finances of the church.
2. The treasurer shall be a man or woman full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
3. The treasurer shall be appointed by the Board annually.

d. Financial Secretary

1. The financial secretary shall deposit the weekly offerings in the church bank account, keep a record of the income of the church and furnish written statements of contributions to those who have given financially to this church.
2. The financial secretary shall be a man or woman full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
3. The financial secretary shall be appointed by the Board annually.

Article VII - Administration

A. Paid staff positions other than the pastor(s) shall be established or eliminated by the Board and approved by the membership.

B. Meetings and Quorum

1. The annual congregational business meeting will be held within 15 days at the ending of the fiscal year. The church fiscal shall be from April 1 to March 31.
2. The Board shall appoint a minimum of four people from the membership to serve on the nominating committee – at least one of whom shall be a Board member.
3. Nominations for Board members must be given to the nominating committee at least one month before the annual meeting. Nominees from the membership and the meeting committees will be contacted regarding their qualifications and availability to serve on the Board.

a. Ballots of the nominations shall be available to members at least two weeks before the annual meeting.

b. There shall be no nominations made from the floor.

4. One-Third of the voting members of this church shall constitute a quorum at any congregational meeting and no business can be transacted without a quorum.

5. A majority vote of the quorum is sufficient to conduct business.

6. Absentee balloting is permitted.

7. Congregational business meetings may be called by the Pastor or Board as deemed necessary.

8. Notice of congregational meetings shall be put in the bulletin for two weeks prior to such meetings.

Article VIII – Property Rights

If this church ceases to function and the organization is dissolved, all property which belongs to this church shall revert to the Evangelical Free Church of America, after the payment of all legal obligations.

Article IX – Proposed Amendments

A. Amendments to this constitution must be submitted to the Board in writing at least one month prior to a congregational meeting.

B. Amendments to this constitution must be made public two weeks in advance of a congregational meeting and may be adopted by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members voting.