

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church  
Seward, NE

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widowed  Remarried

Members of the immediate family: (relationship and age)


If a minor, do your parents know about, and consent to this application?  Yes  No

**A.** From your understanding of Christianity, simply describe what is necessary to become a Christian. Include Biblical references to support your answer.  
(Use another sheet if necessary)

**B.** As you think about your own life, would you say there has been a time when you have taken these steps?  Yes  No  I'm not sure

1. If "Yes", describe the process or events that God used to bring this about.  
(Use another sheet if necessary).

2. Upon what scripture do you base your assurance of salvation?

**C.** Have you been baptized?  Yes  No

If "Yes", when? \_\_\_\_\_

If "No", do you wish to be?  Yes  No

**D.** List churches in which you have held membership within the past ten years:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Which church do you presently hold membership? \_\_\_\_\_

**F.** Have you attended a Newcomer's Class provided by this church?  Yes  No

Would you be willing to do so?  Yes  No

G. Have you carefully read the Constitution of this church?  Yes  No

Are you in agreement with the beliefs, policies, and procedures of this church?  Yes  No

If "No", state specific areas of disagreement.

H. Will you seek to practice and encourage others to practice the aims of this church as set forth in the Constitution?  Yes  No

I. Have you ever given a public testimony of your faith in Jesus Christ?  Yes  No

You will be asked to share your testimony with the church leaders. You will be given the opportunity to share with the whole church should you choose to do so.

**MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- To live daily to please the Lord, through the power of the Holy Spirit and in accordance with the Scriptures. (Colossians 3:1-17)
- To study the Bible and pray faithfully and diligently. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
- To be supportive of the people and ministries of the church. (Romans 12:9-21)
- To be faithful, in so far as possible, in attending services, business meetings, and other ministries of the church, which will aid in spiritual growth. (Hebrews 10:25)
- To use the spiritual gifts and abilities God has given to serve others in the church. (Romans 12:1-8)
- To give regularly, proportionately, generously and cheerfully for the work of the Lord. (I Corinthians 16:2)
- To be accountable to the church for any sin which might need church discipline. (Galatians 6:1-2)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date of Application)



*Office Use Only*

Interview by Elder board	___/___/___
Voted into Membership	___/___/___

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Church Chairman)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
( Pastor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## **ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF HILLCREST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH**

**100.00 PREAMBLE:** We, the members of Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church of Seward, Nebraska, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church and to comply with the requirements for a non-profit corporation in the State of Nebraska, do ordain and establish the following Articles of Incorporation to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

### **101.00 ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church.

### **102.00 ARTICLE II - DURATION**

The period of the corporation's duration shall be perpetual, commencing with the date that the Certificate of Incorporation is issued by the Secretary of State.

### **103.00 ARTICLE III - AUTHORITY AND AFFILIATION**

**103.10 AUTHORITY:** The government of the Church shall be congregational, with authority vested in its members. The corporation affairs shall be managed by a Board of Directors (hereafter known as the General Board) between quarterly and annual business meetings of the membership of the congregation. The General Board shall be elected for each term and in such manner as provided for by the constitution's By-laws.

**103.20 AFFILIATION:** This church shall be affiliated with the Midwest District where it is located and, upon the recommendation of this district, this church shall also be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America. Such affiliation will continue as long as both the Midwest District and the Evangelical Free Church of America remain true to ARTICLE VII. The purpose of this affiliation is to support home and overseas missions and unite in mutual efforts to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ in the measure and to the extent this local membership may officially decide.

### **104.0 ARTICLE IV - RIGHTS AND POWERS**

The Corporation shall have all powers as provided in the Nebraska Non-Profit Corporation Act, which includes the power to purchase, take, own, hold, improve, use, and otherwise deal in and with real or personal property, or any interest therein, wherever situated; to sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, transfer, or otherwise dispose of all or any of its property and assets; to make contracts, and incur liabilities, borrow money, at such rate of interest as the corporation may determine, issue its notes, bonds, and other obligations, and secure any of its obligations by mortgage or pledge of any or all of its property and income. The above powers shall be exercised only as they pertain to ARTICLE V.

### **105.00 ARTICLE V - PURPOSE**

**105.10** This organization is incorporated for the purpose of glorifying God by:

- a. Promoting true Christian worship
- b. Bringing others to faith in Jesus Christ
- c. Working together for the edification and encouragement of the believers that they might grow in grace and holy conduct

d. Preaching, teaching and living the Word of God

**105.20** This organization is also incorporated for the purpose of providing for the transaction of business and temporal affairs of the congregation of Seward Evangelical Free Church.

#### **106.00 ARTICLE VI - EARNINGS, COMPENSATION, AND PERSONAL LIABILITY**

**106.10 EARNINGS AND COMPENSATION:** No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall be used to the benefit of or be distributable to its General Board members, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

**106.20 PERSONAL LIABILITY:** Members, pastors, officers, or adherents shall not be personally liable for any action, debt, or other financial obligation of the corporation, its boards, or its pastoral staff.

#### **107.00 ARTICLE VII - STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

##### **107.01 God**

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.

##### **107.02 The Bible**

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.

##### **107.03 The Human Condition**

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.

##### **107.04 Jesus Christ**

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.

##### **107.05 The Work of Christ**

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.

##### **107.06 The Holy Spirit**

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 Christ-like living and service.

#### **107.07 The Church**

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.

#### **107.08 Christian Living**

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.

#### **107.09 Christ's Return**

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.

#### **107.10 Response and Eternal Destiny**

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.

### **108.00 ARTICLE VIII - MEMBERSHIP**

This corporation shall receive and retain as members only those individuals who through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been born again and who manifest the fruit of a true Christian life (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 5:22-23). Members shall subscribe to the afore stated doctrinal statement, and will demonstrate loyalty by supporting the church through prayer, financial support and participation in ministry. Members shall submit themselves to the discipline of the church as described by these By-laws.

### **109.00 ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS**

**109.10** The General Board shall adopt a resolution setting forth the proposed amendment and direct that it be submitted in writing to a first reading at a meeting of members having voting rights, which may be either annual or quarterly. The proposed amendment shall then be presented to the membership for their vote at least one year from the date of its first reading. Written or printed notice shall be delivered to the membership not less than ten (10) days before the date of the meeting. The proposed amendment shall be adopted upon receiving the vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the members present. Any number of amendments may be submitted and voted upon at any one meeting.

**109.20** ARTICLES VII, VIII, AND X may not be amended. However, should the EFCA adopt a different Statement of Faith, this church may choose to adopt the EFCA's current Statement of Faith and amend article VII accordingly.

**110.00 ARTICLE X - DIVISION \ DISSOLUTION**

**110.10** In case of division of the Church (from which we pray by His mercy to preserve us), the property of the Church shall belong to the members who abide by its Articles of Incorporation and By-laws.

**110.20** In case of dissolution of this Church organization, the property shall be transferred to the Midwest District of the Evangelical Free Church of America or its successor which must be a 501 (C) (3) IRS Code Religious Non-Profit Corporation. When all liabilities, obligations, and debts of the corporation have been paid, the remaining values thereof shall be used by the said District to renew the work or for further Gospel enterprise. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the organization, when the Church has not held an annual meeting for two consecutive years, or when less than eight active members remain.

**111.00 ARTICLE XI - GENERAL BOARD**

**111.10** The General Board of this corporation shall have all powers granted to Board Members by applicable Nebraska law. The names and residences of the persons who are to serve as General Board members until their successors are elected and qualified are as follows:

Name Address

**111.20** The number of General Board members of this corporation shall be as provided in the By-Laws, and may increase or decrease from time to time by amendment of the By-Laws.

**112.00 ARTICLE XII**

The term for which this corporation is to exist is perpetual.

**113.00 ARTICLE XIII - INCORPORATORS**

The names and residences of the incorporators are:

Name Address

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have hereunto subscribed our names this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_ )

) SS:

\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by \_\_\_\_\_ (Name listed above)

Notary Public

My appointment expires: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSTITUTION OF HILLCREST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH, SEWARD,  
NEBRASKA  
JANUARY 24, 2004**

**200.1 PREAMBLE**

Believing the kingdom of God can best be served by an organization known as a local church, and having faith that Jesus Christ guides the church as its Head, we hereby band ourselves together in order to carry out more effectively the commission given by our Lord Jesus Christ and do ordain and establish the following constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

**201.0 ARTICLE I – NAME**

**201.1** The name of this organization shall be Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church.

**202.0 ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

**202.1** The purpose of this local church shall be to work together for the unity, edification, discipleship, and encouragement of believers, that they might grow in grace and holy conduct, and seek to win souls for Christ and to further His cause on the mission field at home and abroad (Romans 12; Colossians 3:12-15; Mark 16:15; Acts 2: 42; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 10:25; Ephesians 4:11-16). It shall engage in such religious, educational, charitable and benevolent activities as the constitution and the by-laws of this local church allow. The local church will maintain such property and equipment as may be required to carry out the above stated purpose.

**203.0 ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**203.1** We believe 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 all Christian faith and life.

**203.2** We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**203.3** We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scripture. Further, He arose bodily from the dead and ascended into Heaven where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High; He now is our High Priest and Advocate.

**203.4** We believe 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,

in-dwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for Godly living and service.

**203.5** 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.

**203.6** We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only grounds 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.

**203.7** We believe 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 means of salvation.

**203.8** 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.

**203.9** We believe that only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.

**203.10** We believe 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.

**203.11** We believe in the personal and pre-millennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.

**203.12** We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy in the Lord, of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

#### **204.0 ARTICLE IV - AFFILIATION AND GOVERNMENT**

**204.1** This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America and with the Midwest District of that association. While cooperating with the Evangelical Free Church of America, this church shall remain its own highest authority under God and shall govern its affairs through its own business meetings. This church shall have a congregational form of government.

#### **205.0 ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP**

**205.1** Any person shall be eligible for membership in this church who has received Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, having been born again, whose life gives evidence of true faith in God. This person should be willing to support the church through prayer and contributions, as well as in ministry according to their abilities and giftedness. Persons who affiliate with the church and are not baptized are asked to take this step at the earliest opportunity.

#### **206.0 ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS**

**206.1** The church officers of this church shall consist of the chairman, secretary, treasurer and the Ministry Coordinators. The church officers shall sign all legal documents pertaining to the corporation. This responsibility shall not extend beyond that established by the church by-laws.

**206.2** Other officers may be elected to the governing board of this corporation as set forth in the by-laws.

## **207.0 ARTICLE VII - BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**207.1.** The fiscal year for this church shall be the calendar year. The annual business meeting of this church shall be held during January at a time and place determined by the General Board. At the annual business meeting, the election of officers and transaction of such business as concerns the work of the year shall take place. Additional regular and special business meetings may be held during the year as set forth in the by-laws of the church.

## **208.0 ARTICLE VIII - CHURCH PROPERTY**

**208.1** This church shall have the power to buy, own, and sell real and personal property in its own name.

**208.2** If a division occurs in the church, the name and all property shall be retained by those who submit to the authority of this constitution.

**208.3** All church property, real and personal, shall be held, and the debts of the corporation shall be contracted by the officers of the corporation in the name of the corporation with the approval of the membership. Private property, real and personal, of the church members and corporate officers shall not be subject to payment of the corporate debts.

**208.4** If the church ceases to function and its local church is dissolved, no member shall personally be entitled to any property of the church. All assets of the church shall automatically become the property of the Midwest District of the Evangelical Free Church of America. The church will be dissolved by a vote of the membership, providing three (3) month's notice is given to the members before the vote is taken.

## **209.0 ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS**

**209.1** The church may make any changes in the constitution, which may seem necessary, except Articles II and III (202 and 203). However, should the EFCA adopt a different Statement of Faith, this church may choose to adopt the EFCA's current Statement of Faith and amend Article III (203) accordingly. Such changes must be submitted to the membership in writing at least two weeks prior to a regular business meeting. A vote at this meeting will decide if the proposed amendment shall be presented for a final vote at the next regularly scheduled business meeting. Such changes may be fully adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership present.

## **210.0 ARTICLE X - BY-LAWS**

**210.1** The by-laws will be maintained as a working document for the purpose of clarifying policy and procedures. The by-laws will be modified and revised when necessary as the church grows and expands its ministry.

**210.2** The church by-laws may be revised at any Quarterly Business Meeting by a simple majority vote of the membership present, providing the proposed revisions have been presented to the membership in written form at least two weeks prior to the vote.

## **HILLCREST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH GUIDELINES (BY-LAWS)**

### **300.0 MEMBERSHIP**

**300.1** Membership in this church is the acceptance of responsibility. It is the members that give assent and encouragement to the disciple-making ministry of the congregation. Therefore, attendance at business meetings and faithful service to the Lord is expected.

### **301.0 CLASSIFICATION OF MEMBERS**

**301.1** The members of the church shall consist of active and inactive members. (These classifications are established to express the importance of having a group of members who are committed to praying with and for the pastoral staff and the ministry.)

**301.2** Active members shall be those who participate in the ministry of the church and are committed to attending congregational meetings for the purpose of praying for ministry.

**301.3** Inactive members are those who, because of health or other circumstances, cannot participate in the ministry of the church. Inactive members do not have voting privileges and are not counted in quorum requirements.

**301.4** Active member attendance will be taken at the quarterly and annual meetings for the purpose of maintaining the voting membership roll.

### **302.0 QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**302.1 Confession of faith.** Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ having been born again (Acts 4:12, John 3:3), who has the assurance of salvation (I Peter 3:15, I John 5:11-12), and whose character, conduct, and reputation are in accordance with his confession and the Word of God may apply for membership.

**302.2 Cooperation.** In addition, an applicant must subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained in the constitution, accept the constitution/by-laws of the Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church, and demonstrate loyalty by a willingness to support the church in attendance, prayers and Christian service.

**302.3** No person shall be excluded from membership because of sex, race, national or ethnic origin or color. Rather, the Elders, along with the pastoral staff, shall examine all applicants for membership to determine if they are members of the Body of Christ, and to determine if they sincerely support the purpose of this local church as stated. If the Elders and pastoral staff determine that he or she is not a member of the Body of Christ and/or that he/she would not support the stated purpose of the church, then his/her application for membership shall not be forwarded to the congregation.

**302.4 Age.** An applicant for membership must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.

### **303.0 APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**303.1 Procedure.** Application for membership shall be made to any of the Elders or pastoral staff. An application for membership may be requested from the church office.

**303.2 Preparation.** Applicants shall be requested to read the constitution/by-laws and encouraged to attend information classes when offered.

## **304.0 APPROVAL PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**304.1 Interviews and Recommendation.** The Elders and the pastoral staff shall interview all membership candidates. Included in this interview shall be a personal testimony of faith in Jesus Christ. Upon the recommendation of the Elders and the pastoral staff, the name of the candidate shall be presented to the membership for their approval at a business meeting. Name(s) of membership candidate(s) to be recommended will be presented to the active membership at least two weeks prior to the business meeting.

**304.2 Objection.** If any member has a valid reason for objecting to the receiving of any applicant into the church, this member shall appear before the Elders and give scriptural reasons for denying membership. The Elders shall consider the validity of these objections. This shall be done prior to the business meeting at which the applicant shall be voted on.

**304.3 Recommendations and Vote.** At any duly called business meeting, applicants who have been recommended for membership shall be voted into the membership by receiving the affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the members present. The applicant shall not be present while the application is being considered. Voting privileges are granted to the new member after the application has been approved.

**304.4 Reception.** New members will be presented to those present at the congregational meeting following the completion of the vote to accept into membership. If appropriate, the pastoral staff will send notification of membership to the most recent church where the person was an active member.

## **305.0 LETTERS OF TRANSFER**

**305.1 Letter of Transfer.** Applicants seeking membership by letter from another church shall be accepted only after meeting the above requirements.

## **306.0 PASTORAL MEMBERSHIP**

**306.1** The pastoral staff and their spouses automatically become members with full voting privileges upon assuming the responsibilities as a pastor of this church. They shall cease membership with the termination of their ministry within this church.

**306.2** Membership may be maintained when not employed by the church by action of the church membership.

## **307.0 CONDUCT AND DUTY OF MEMBERS**

**307.1 Toward the church.** Regular attendance at the services of the church, daily private and family Scripture reading and prayer, personal and public testimony, and the winning of others to Christ, are urged upon each member (Hebrews 10:25; Joshua 1:8; Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 3:15). It shall be the sacred duty of parents to provide Christian instruction for their children (Deut. 6:6-25; Prov. 22:6). Each member shall consider it their responsibility and privilege to make full use of their giftedness in ministry. All members are encouraged to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness

and distress, to be courteous in speech, and slow to anger (I Peter 3:8-12; Ephesians 4:25-32).

**307.2 Admonition to Purity.** Each member is called upon to heed the admonition of the Lord: "Do not love the world, or the things of the world," and "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (I John 2:15-17; Romans 12:1, 2). All members should seek to be examples in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity (I Timothy 4:12). A member is expected to abstain from any act or practice, which may be harmful in its influence or a stumbling block to the weaker brother or sister (Romans 12:2; Romans 14:13).

**307.3 Attendance at congregational meetings.** Each member shares a vital part in the decision making process of this congregation. Therefore, attendance at congregational meetings is expected (see 300.1). Attendance at congregational meetings helps to ensure a group of people who are meeting, praying and interacting with the elected leadership of the church. If a member does not attend congregational business meetings on a regular basis, the Elders may place them on the inactive membership list and they will not have voting privileges (see 309.3).

## **308.0 BROTHERLY CARE, RESTORATION AND DISCIPLINE**

**308.1 Brotherly Care.** Throughout the Scriptures God's people are responsible for looking after one another's spiritual well being (Leviticus 19:17; Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 27:4,6,17; 28:13; Galatians 6:1,2; James 5:19,20). When a brother or sister sins, the offended brother/sister or the one who is aware of the sin is to privately speak with the offender about the matter. The goal is to encourage the offender to repentance, forgiveness and restoration if necessary (Matthew 18:15-20). If this first effort fails, a second effort is to be made by taking along one or two other spiritually minded brother/sister. Again, the goal is the same, seeking to protect the brother's/sister's reputation. (Prov. 11:13; 17:9; 26:20). When all private efforts to restore the offender to fellowship with Christ have failed, the matter is to be brought to the Elders. Their goal shall be the same as the above stated goal.

**308.2 Discipline.** If all previous efforts to restore the sinning brother/sister to fellowship with Christ and this church have failed, the matter shall be brought before the membership for final decision. The brother/sister in question shall have the right to appear before the membership to make a defense. (While a member is thus being dealt with, he/she shall be ineligible to vote or hold an office in the church.) If the brother/sister refuses to listen to the church, he/she is to be removed from membership and treated as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer (unfit to receive the blessing and ordinances of the church until he/she repents and is restored (Matthew 18:17-20; I Cor. 5:1-13)). A three-fourths vote of the membership present shall be required to remove someone from membership.

**308.3 Restoration.** If repentance occurs, steps shall be taken by the Elders and pastoral staff to further restore the brother/sister to fellowship with Christ and the local church (II Cor. 2:7-11).

**308.4 Re-joining.** After the membership has restored an individual may reapply for membership as outlined in Sections 303 and 304.

**308.5 Unbiblical Teaching or Attitude.** Any member or worker in the church who promotes any teaching or attitude contrary to the Word of God and the principles and practices of this church shall be dealt with by the Elders and pastoral staff (Acts 20:28-30; Rom. 16:17, 18; I Timothy 6:3-5; II Tim. 2:24-26). Their purpose should be to instruct in love, and if possible, to encourage restoration. However, if in the event restoration becomes impossible, the offending person shall be removed from membership and rejected from the fellowship of this church. A three fourth vote of the members present shall be required to remove someone from membership.

### **309.0 INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

**309.1 Non-attending.** It is expected that every member who is absent continuously will communicate with the Elders frequently concerning his/her spiritual life and interest in the Lord's work. After having been contacted by registered letter any person, absent for one year, from whom no communication or support has been received, shall be recommended to the congregation by the Elders to be dropped from the roll. The Elders shall notify a person dropped from the membership with a registered letter.

**309.2 Non-Resident.** A member who has moved away or for other reasons is unable to attend or participate in church activities shall by action of the Elders, be placed on an inactive roll retaining all church privileges except the right to vote. When the member is again able to participate, the Elders may place the member's name in active status, restoring their right to vote.

**309.3 Membership Records.** Membership records shall be reviewed at least semi-annually by the Elders and updated in accordance with 301 and 309.

### **310.0 WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBERSHIP**

**310.1 Written request.** Any member who wishes to withdraw from the church shall submit a request to the Elders in writing. The Elders may approve the request and drop the name from membership. This action will be reported at the next business meeting.

### **311.0 LOSS OF RIGHTS OF MEMBERSHIP**

**311.1 Withdrawn or deprived.** Any member, who has withdrawn from or has been deprived of membership, loses all rights of membership in the church and any claim on property.

### **400.0 MEETINGS**

**400.1 Annual Meeting.** The annual business meeting shall be during the month of January at which time annual reports shall be received, and all officers shall be elected along with other necessary business unless otherwise agreed upon by this congregation. The fiscal year shall end December 31. Newly elected officers shall assume their duties immediately following the Annual Business Meeting.

**400.2 Semi-annual.** Semi-annual meeting will be held during the first month of the third quarter

**400.3 Informational.** The Church leadership may hold informational meetings as necessary. No business will be transacted and no quorum is required.

## **401.0 SPECIAL MEETINGS**

**401.1 Agenda.** The membership shall be notified of the agenda at least one week before the meeting is held. No other business matters will be added or discussed at the meeting.

**401.2** Special business meetings shall be called by the church chairman at the request of three elected leaders of the church.

**401.3** At the written request of a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the active membership, the church chairman will call for a special business meeting.

## **402.0 QUORUM**

**402.1 Requirements.** Forty percent (40%) of the active members shall constitute a quorum, except when voting to extend a call to a pastor (see 501.52)

## **403.0 PUBLICATION OF MEETINGS**

**403.1** An effort shall be made to notify every member of every regular or special meeting. Announcing a meeting from the pulpit during a worship service or listing the meeting in the weekly church bulletin, as well as email notification when possible, is considered an effort to notify every member.

**403.11 Regular meetings.** Notice shall be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting in the morning worship service, as well as email notification when possible.

**403.12 Special meetings.** Notice shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting.

**403.13 Informational meetings.** Notice shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting.

## **404.0 VOTES REQUIRED**

**404.1** A majority vote of those present will decide all issues not otherwise specified.

**404.2** A minimum of three-fourths (3/4) vote of those present will be necessary to call a pastor, to buy, sell or encumber real estate, make capital improvements to property, or to make constitutional amendments.

**404.3** Only active members have the right to vote. No absentee or proxy ballots will be accepted.

## **405.0 PARLIMENTARY PROCEDURE**

**405.1** The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority used for proper procedure in all business meetings of the church when not in conflict with the Church Constitution or By-laws.

## **500.0 TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE PATORAL STAFF**

**500.1 Qualifications.** The Teaching and Administrative pastors shall meet the scriptural qualifications for his calling as outlined in such passages as 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-4; II Timothy 2:24-26. He shall be a man abounding in the faith and in doctrine, and shall be qualified to teach and preach the whole counsel of God. He shall be a man of established Christian character, shall be a worthy example in his life and teaching, shall subscribe to the Statement of Faith, and shall agree to abide by this constitution and by-laws.

**500.2 Credentials.** The Teaching and Administrative pastors must be credentialed through the Evangelical Free Church of America. A pastor who does not currently hold credentials must be willing to obtain credentials as soon as is reasonably possible in accordance with the guidelines set by the EFCA and the Midwest District.

### **500.3 Duties.**

**500.31** In general, the work of the Teaching and Administrative pastors shall be to equip the saints for works of service and the attainment of the purpose of the church (Eph. 4:1-16). He should be a man of prayer, giving his time to teaching and preaching the Word of God, discipling believers, counseling, training ministry members in leadership and service. The Administrative Pastor shall represent the pastoral staff on the General Board and both the Teaching and Administrative Pastors shall serve as full voting members on the Elder Board for as long as they are on staff (not subject to term limits in section 1001).

**500.32** Duties are specified in the current job description. The job description shall be subject to annual review and revision by mutual agreement of the pastoral staff and the Elder Board.

### **500.4 Search process.**

**500.41** The Search Committee shall include the Church Chairman, The Elder Ministry Coordinator and two Elders. The Search Committee will select a chair from within the search committee. Names of all nominees shall be posted two weeks prior to the meeting when the voting members approve the Search Committee.

**500.42** The Search Committee is encouraged to work closely with the Superintendent of the Midwest District to avail itself of the guidelines for search committees available.

**500.43** The Search Committee must have three of the six members present to conduct business.

**500.44** The Search Committee will present only one candidate at a time for congregational consideration.

### **500.5 The Call Process.**

**500.51** A special meeting may be called to act upon a candidate. Action may also be taken at a regular meeting.

**500.52** The quorum required for the meeting to consider calling a pastor shall be a majority (51%) of the active voting members.

**500.53** Congregational consideration of one approved candidate must be completed before the congregation will give consideration to another candidate.

**500.54 Term of call.** The pastor's call shall be for an indefinite period of time.

**500.55 Vote required.** The pastor's call requires receiving at least three-fourths (3/4) of the votes cast by those active members present and voting. This vote shall be taken by ballot. Only active members may vote.

**500.56 Letter of call.** The letter of call extended to the potential Pastor must be considered a contract and it must at least contain a statement on the following items as provisions: the decision of the congregational business meeting, salary, job description, housing and utility allowance, special allowance, moving allowance, vacation time and extra time off for accepting ministry outside the community or education opportunities.

**500.57 Resignation.** The pastor shall have the privilege of termination of such services on thirty (30) days notice or at a period mutually agreed upon by the pastor and the General Board.

**500.6 Accusations against the Teaching or Administrative Pastor.**

**500.61 Accusations.** Accusations against the Teaching or Administrative Pastor must be in writing and supported by at least three active church members in order to be considered by the Elders. These accusations are to be handled in the same manner as those against members under the procedure described in 308.0. Unresolved issues may be referred to the Midwest District Board of Ministerial Standing for counsel and advice. If the matter is unresolved, the Elder Board may relieve the individual from duties, with pay, until the congregation meets to act on a recommendation.

**500.7 Vote required for termination.** The voting membership may terminate the Teaching or Administrative Pastor by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the active members present and voting if they find this person unworthy of his calling or ineffective in his ministry of this church. A salaried pastor found unworthy of his calling shall be dismissed immediately with one (1) month's severance pay.

## **501.0 ASSOCIATE PASTORAL STAFF.**

**501.1 Qualifications.** An associate pastor shall meet the scriptural qualifications for his calling as outlined in such passages as 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-4; II Timothy 2:24-26. He shall be a man abounding in the faith and in doctrine, and shall be qualified to teach and preach the whole counsel of God. He shall be a man of established Christian character, shall be a worthy example in his life and teaching, shall subscribe to the Statement of Faith, and shall agree to abide by this constitution and by-laws.

**501.2 Credentials.** An associate pastor must be credentialed through the Evangelical Free Church of America. A pastor who does not currently hold credentials must be willing to obtain credentials as soon as is reasonably possible in accordance with the guidelines set by the EFCA and the Midwest District.

**501.3 Duties.**

**501.31** In general, the work of an associate pastor shall be to equip the saints for works of service and the attainment of the purpose of the church (Eph. 4:1-16). He should be a man of prayer, giving his time to teaching the Word of God, discipling believers, counseling, training ministry members in leadership and service.

**501.32** Duties are specified in the current job description. The job description shall be subject to annual review and revision by mutual agreement of the pastoral staff and the Elder Board and in consultation with the Administrative Pastor and associated Ministry Coordinator.

#### **501.4 Search process.**

**501.41** The Search Committee shall include the Administrative Pastor and two Elders. The Search Committee will be initiated upon the approval of a position and job description by the membership.

**501.42** The Search Committee will present only one candidate at a time for congregational consideration.

#### **501.5 The Call Process.**

**501.51** A special meeting may be called to act upon a candidate. Action may also be taken at a regular meeting.

**501.52** The quorum required for the meeting to consider calling a pastor shall be a majority (51%) of the active voting members.

**501.53** Congregational consideration of one approved candidate must be completed before the congregation will give consideration to another candidate.

**501.54 Term of call.** The pastor's call shall be for an indefinite period of time.

**501.55 Vote required.** The pastor's call requires receiving at least three-fourths (3/4) of the votes cast by those active members present and voting. This vote shall be taken by ballot. Only active members may vote.

**501.56 Letter of call.** The letter of call extended to the potential Pastor must be considered a contract and it must at least contain a statement on the following items as provisions: the decision of the congregational business meeting, salary, job description, housing and utility allowance, special allowance, moving allowance, vacation time and extra time off for accepting ministry outside the community or education opportunities.

**501.57 Resignation.** The pastor shall have the privilege of termination of such services on thirty (30) days notice or at a period mutually agreed upon by the pastor and the Elder Board.

#### **501.6 Accusations against an associate pastor.**

**501.61 Accusations.** Accusations against an associate pastor must be in writing and supported by at least three active church members in order to be considered by the Elders. These accusations are to be handled in the same manner as those against members under the procedure described in 308.0. Unresolved issues may be referred to the Midwest District Board of Ministerial Standing for counsel and advice. If the matter is unresolved, the Elder Board may relieve the individual from duties, with pay, until the congregation meets to act on a recommendation.

**501.7 Vote required for termination.** A joint session of the General and Elder Boards, in consultation with the Administrative Pastor may terminate an associate pastor or ask for his resignation by a three-fourths (3/4) vote if they find this person unworthy of his calling or ineffective in his ministry of this church. A salaried pastor found unworthy of his calling shall be dismissed immediately with one (1) month's severance pay. The General and Elder Boards may not dismiss an associate pastor for reasons other than those contained here unless the membership votes to eliminate an associate pastor salaried role from the budget.

#### **502.0 MINISTRY STAFF.**

**502.1 Hiring Staff.** The securing of additional personnel on a part-time or full-time basis shall be done by recommendation of the Administrative Pastor and the Elder Board to the church membership at a congregational business meeting. To do so, the membership must approve a written job description and approve the budget for financial compensation.

**502.2 Termination of Staff.** The termination of any ministry staff shall be done by a joint session of the General and Elder Boards in consultation with the Administrative Pastor.

### **503.0 ACCOUNTABILITY.**

**503.1 Senior Pastor.** The Senior Pastor shall be accountable to the Elders, and ultimately, the congregation.

**503.2 Pastoral and Ministry Staff.** All other pastoral and ministry staff are accountable to the Senior Pastor. In the event that an issue cannot be resolved within the staff structure, the staff member involved may notify the Church Chairman that a request for a hearing concerning the unresolved issue will be made to the General Board.

### **600.0 OFFICERS**

#### **601.0 CORPORATE OFFICERS.**

**601.1** The corporate officers are the chairman, secretary and treasurer.

**601.2 Qualifications.** Corporate officers must be active members of the church.

**601. 3 Election.** Election of corporate officers will take place at the annual meeting as outlined in section 1000.

**601.4 Term.** Each corporate officer is elected to a three-year term. The terms will be arranged so that two ministry coordinators are elected each year. A person may simultaneously hold more than office in the church. The number of terms an officer may hold is limited as noted in section 1001.0.

**601.41** At the initial election, the term served by the Corporate Officers will be staggered to create a balance in the ministry and election process. The Christian Education Coordinator, the Missions and Evangelism Coordinator, and the Secretary will be initially elected to a one-year term. The Fellowship and Outreach Coordinator, the Worship Coordinator, and Treasurer will be initially elected to a two-year term. The Elder Ministry Coordinator, the Service Ministry Coordinator, and the Church Chairman will be initially elected to a three-year term.

**601.5 Authority and positions.** The corporate officers are members of the General Board and act only on the direction of the General Board and/or church membership.

**601.6 Vacancies.** A vacancy may be filled by appointment of the General Board and the office will be held until the next election.

#### **602 CHAIRMAN.**

**602.1** The chairman shall preside at all church business meetings and General Board meetings. He is to be informed on current projects in order to work with the pastor in drawing up the agenda for the General Board and church business meetings. Further duties of the chairman are to be included in a job description which is subject to annual review and revision.

#### **603 SECRETARY**

**603.1** The secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and decisions at all regular General Board and business meetings, and at such other times as may be required

by the church. These records are to be approved at the next business meeting. The secretary shall see that all records are preserved in a safe place, issue legal notice of all meetings when such notice is required, and at the annual meeting submit a current membership report listing additions and withdrawals during the past year. Further duties of the secretary are to be included in a job description which is subject to annual review and revision.

#### **604 TREASURER.**

**604.1** The treasurer shall oversee the financial matters of the church. He shall report the financial standing of the church at all regular General Board and business meetings, and at such other times as may be required by the church. Financial records shall be submitted for audit annually as directed by the General Board. Further duties of the treasurer are to be included in a job description, which is subject to annual review and revision.

#### **605 OTHER OFFICERS.**

**605.1 Vice-Chairman.** The vice-chairman will execute the duties of the chairman in his absence. The vice-chairman shall be appointed from among the Ministry Coordinators. His term will be a one-year term.

#### **700.0 MINISTRY COORDINATORS**

##### **701.0 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COORDINATOR**

**701.1 Term.** The Christian Education Coordinator shall be elected for a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0.

**701.2 Duties.** It shall be the Christian Education Coordinator's duty to provide unity and coordination for the total program of Christian Education in the church. The coordinator shall provide oversight of the various Christian Education ministries, including Sunday School, children's and youth ministries, and Bible studies. These ministries are to be in harmony with the mission and vision of the church. The Christian Education Coordinator will serve on the General Board, attending each meeting if possible. Further duties of the Christian Education Coordinator are outlined in the job description, which is subject to annual review and revision.

**701.3 Christian Education Committee.** The Christian Education coordinator will be responsible for selecting a Christian Education Committee. The committee shall consist of, but not be limited to, the representatives of the different Christian Education ministries of the church. This committee will assist the Coordinator in coordinating the various Christian Education ministries of the church. Any believer in agreement with section 203 of the church constitution and 203.1 of the church by-laws may serve on the Christian Education Committee. Appointment to the committee will be reviewed by the General Board for approval.

**701.4 Accountability.** The Christian Education Coordinator will approve all expenditures with authorization from the General Board.

## **702 ELDER CHAIRMAN**

**702.1 Term.** The Elder Chairman is one of the Elder Board elected for a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms on the Elder Board as noted in section 1001.0. Any member of the Elder Board may be elected by the Elder Board to serve a one year term as Elder Chairman and represent the board of Elders on the General Board. An Elder may serve as Elder Chairman so long as he is a current member of the Elder Board (see section 708).

## **703 FELLOWSHIP AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR**

**703.1 Term.** The Fellowship and Outreach Ministry Coordinator shall be elected to a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0.

**703.2 Duties.** It shall be the Fellowship and Outreach Ministry Coordinator's duty to oversee the fellowship and outreach ministries of the church. These ministries include social events and activities for the church, as well as providing hospitality to visitors and other guests to our church. These ministries are to be in harmony with the mission and vision of the church. The Coordinator will serve on the General Board, and will attend each meeting if possible. These duties are outlined more fully in the job description, which is subject to annual review and revision.

**703.3 Fellowship and Outreach Committee.** The Fellowship and Outreach Ministry Coordinator will be responsible for selecting a Fellowship and Outreach Committee. The committee will consist of, but not be limited to, the representatives from the various fellowship and outreach ministries of the church. This committee will plan and coordinate the fellowship and outreach ministries of the church. Any believer who is in agreement with section 203 of the church constitution and 302.1 of the church by-laws may serve on the Fellowship and Outreach Committee. Appointment to the committee will be reviewed by the General Board for approval.

**703.4 Accountability.** The Fellowship and Outreach Ministry Coordinator will approve all expenditures with authorization from the General Board, and will report directly to the General Board.

## **704 MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM COORDINATOR**

**704.1 Term.** The Missions and Evangelism Ministry Coordinator will be elected for a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0.

**704.2 Duties.** It will be the Mission and Evangelism Ministry Coordinator's duty to oversee the evangelism ministries as well as the mission efforts sponsored through the church. This committee will be responsible for coordinating evangelism and mission's opportunities for the church. These ministries are to be in harmony with the mission and a vision of the church. The Missions and Evangelism Ministry Coordinator will serve on the General Board, attending each meeting if possible. Further duties of the Evangelism Coordinator are to be included in a job description, which is subject to annual review and revision.

**704 .3 Missions and Evangelism Committee.** The Missions and Evangelism Ministry Coordinator will be responsible for selecting a Missions and Evangelism Committee. The committee will consist of, but not be limited to, the representatives from the various missions and evangelism ministries of the church. This committee will plan and

coordinate the evangelism efforts and missions ministries of the church. Any believer who is in agreement with section 203 of the church constitution and 302.1 of the church by-laws may serve on the Missions and Evangelism Committee. Appointment to the committee will be reviewed by the General Board for approval.

**704.4 Accountability.** The Missions and Evangelism Ministry Coordinator will approve all expenditures with authorization from the General Board, and will report directly to the General Board.

## **705 WORSHIP MINISTRY COORDINATOR**

**705.1 Term.** The Worship Ministry Coordinator shall be elected for a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0.

**705.2 Duties.** The Worship Ministry Coordinator's duty is to oversee the worship ministries of the church. He is responsible for the worship and music needs of the congregation, as well as the development of the worship and music program of the church. These ministries are to be in harmony with the mission and vision of the church. The Worship Ministry Coordinator will serve on the General Board, attending each meeting if possible. Further duties of the Worship Coordinator are to be included in a job description, which is subject to annual review and revision.

**705.3 Worship Ministry Committee.** The Worship Ministry Coordinator will be responsible for selecting a Worship Ministry Committee. The committee will consist of, but not be limited to, the representatives of the various worship ministries of the church. This committee will be responsible for planning and coordinating the worship and music ministries, providing assistance to the pastoral staff in the preparation of various worship services such as communion, baptismal, and funeral services. Any believer who is in agreement with Section 203 of the church constitution and 302.1 of the church by-laws may serve on the Worship Ministry Committee. Appointment to the committee will be reviewed by the General Board for approval.

**705.4 Accountability.** The Worship Ministry Coordinator will approve all expenditures with authorization from the General Board, and will report directly to the General Board.

## **706 SERVICE MINISTRY COORDINATOR**

**706.1 Term.** The Service Ministry Coordinator shall be elected for a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0.

**706.2 Duties.** The Service Ministry Coordinator's duty is to provide leadership to the oversight of the buildings and property, custodial service, and other service ministries of the church. These ministries are to be in harmony with the mission and vision of the church. The Service Ministry Coordinator will serve on the General Board, attending each meeting if possible. Further duties of the Service Ministries Coordinator are to be included in a job description, which is subject to annual review and revision.

**706.3 Service Ministry Committee.** The Service Ministry Coordinator shall be responsible for selecting a Service Ministry Committee. The committee will consist of, but not be limited to, the representatives of the various service ministries of the church. This committee will be responsible for planning and coordinating the service ministries to meet the ongoing needs of the church. Any believer who is in agreement with Section 203 of the church constitution and 302.1 of the church by-laws may serve on the Service

Ministry Committee. Appointment to the committee will be reviewed by the General Board for approval.

**706.4 Accountability.** The Service Ministry Coordinator will approve all expenditures with authorization from the General Board, and will report directly to the General Board.

## **707 BOARD OF ELDERS**

**707.1. Term.** Elders will be elected for a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0. There will be at least 5 active lay Elders serving on the committee and no more than 9 lay Elders, with no more than 3 (full 3 year) Elder terms up for election in a given year - however, the Elder board may appoint any eligible member to finish any remaining years of an existing term vacated by an elected Elder.

**707.2 Qualifications.** Elders will be chosen, not on the basis of natural or spiritual gifts, but on the basis of character quality. These are described in the following passages: Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3:8-10, 12, 13; Galatians 5:22-23.

**707.3 Duties.** It will be the Elder Board's duty to oversee the spiritual health of the church. They shall be responsible for attending meetings of the Elder Board and reporting to the General Board and to the congregation at the annual church meeting. They will also give oversight and direction to the Deaconesses (see 708.3). The Elder Board shall assist the pastoral staff with the supervision of the spiritual health of the church. This shall include interviewing candidates for membership and recommending them for membership to the congregation, consulting with the Administrative Pastor on hiring and coordination of associate staff, conducting the annual review for the Teaching and Administrative Pastors, and attempting to restore any difficulties or issues.

## **708 Deaconesses**

**708.1 Term.** Deaconesses will be elected to a three-year term and may serve only 2 consecutive terms as noted in section 1001.0. There will be at least 5 active deaconesses.

**708.2 Qualifications.** Deaconesses must match the character qualities found in I Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5.

**708.3 Duties.** The Deaconesses shall assist the Elder Ministry by serving the needs of women in our church, preparing for communion services as directed by the Elder Ministry, assisting with the baptismal services, and providing flowers, memorials, and gifts at appropriate times.

**708.4 Vacancies.** A vacancy shall be filled according to the by-laws (601.6).

## **800.00 GOVERNMENT**

### **801.00 STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT**

**801.10** Ultimate authority in the church will reside in members of the congregation. The members, at a duty called congregational business meeting, shall have the sole authority to: (a) adopt and amend the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and the Bylaws of the Church; (b) call and dismiss Pastoral Staff; (c) elect church officers and ministry coordinators; (d) adopt and amend an annual budget; (e) adopt position statements; (f) purchase and sell real property; (g) incur debt.

**801.20** For all practical purposes, the church will be governed by a group of godly persons called the General Board. The General Board will have the authority to change the annual budget, as needs may arise, by no more than 10 percent. Otherwise, expenditures may not exceed the budget except as approved by majority vote of those present at a congregational meeting. Changing the constitution and by-laws, approving the annual budget, calling pastoral staff, and adding to the facility are areas that must be brought to the membership for action.

**801.30** All items not referred to in the preceding section, as being under the sole authority of the members shall be entrusted to the General Board.

**801.40** The ministries of all pastoral staff and the church-related ministries of Ministry Coordinators are subject to the General Board.

## **802.00 GENERAL BOARD**

**802.10 Qualifications.** General Board members will be mature, godly persons whose character reflects Christ-likeness (Romans 8:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 5:22-26). All will be active members of Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church.

**802.20 Selection.** The General Board will consist of the church officers: chairman, secretary, and treasurer, the Ministry Coordinators, and the pastoral staff. Additional members may be added when approved and elected by the church membership.

**802.3 Duties.** The General Board will be responsible for the keeping of deeds and other church papers of value.

**802.31** The General Board has no right to mortgage or sell any property belonging to the church except upon order of the membership. They are jointly and severally responsible to the church for all its property and finances, and shall approve all expenditures of the church treasurer.

**802.32** The General Board shall expend all designated memorial gifts given to the church and shall recommend for approval to the membership of the church how undesignated memorial gifts shall be expended.

**802.40 Function.** The General Board will have a three-fold function. First, they will build and develop their own families (I Tim. 3:4-5). Second, they shall feed the flock of God (John. 21:15-32). This involves positive impartation of truth, refutation of error, and oversight of discipline. Third, they will oversee the entire ministry (Acts 20:28). This involves planning, implementing, and evaluating ministries in light of the mission and vision of the church (see Section 1200).

**802.50 Decision Making Process.** The General Board will approach decisions in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit. A quorum will constitute one half (1/2) of the voting membership. They will make decisions based on the majority or a majority of the total General Board. Pastoral staff will have input and discussion on matters, but will not vote on decisions of the General Board. Any vote may be taken by either or open or closed ballot by the discretion of the chairman.

**802.60 Meetings.** The General Board will meet as often as is necessary to adequately govern the church. They will meet with the church body as often as necessary to communicate and interact with the body. This shall be done at least once a year at the Annual Meeting in January. Minutes of all General Board meetings where the business or programs of the church are discussed will be taken by the secretary and will be available to the church membership.

**802.70 Accountability.** The General Board is directly accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ for all its actions (Heb. 13:17). The General Board is also accountable to the congregation.

## **900.0 COMMITTEES**

**900.1** All committees will be governed by the following guidelines unless specific details are given under the committee heading. A fuller description of each committee may be found in the job description booklet.

**900.2 Appointment.** The General Board may appoint a committee to work in an area of ministry as needed. Other committees not listed here may be found in the job description booklet.

**900.3 Membership.** There must be at least two people appointed to form a committee. A person elected to the General Board may be appointed to serve on a committee.

**900.4 Term of service.** Appointments are for one year and a person may serve an unlimited number of terms.

**900.5 Accountability.** Each appointed committee shall be placed under the oversight of a selected Ministry Coordinator. The Ministry Coordinator charged with the oversight will present matters to the General Board for their consideration. However, the entire committee may be asked to meet with the General Board for discussion. Committees may also be asked to provide reports at business meetings of the church.

**900.6** Membership is not required to serve on an appointed committee.

**900.7** Committee chairs must be an active member of Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church

## **901.0 FINANCIAL SECRETARY.**

**901.1** The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for depositing and recording all contributions received by the church and shall be responsible to the General Board. A report of all receipts of the church shall be provided at all regular General Board and congregational business meetings and at such times as requested by the General Board. Records shall be submitted for audit as directed by the General Board. The Financial Secretary shall report directly to the treasurer and may be requested to attend General Board meetings to assist in the reporting process.

## **902.0 BUDGET COMMITTEE.**

**902.1** The Ministry Coordinators are responsible for their budgets. These budgets will be presented to the General Board at the December General Board Meeting. The General Board will present the total budget at the annual congregational business meeting in January.

## **903.0 NOMINATING COMMITTEE.** See Elections (1000.0)

**904.0 AUDIT COMMITTEE.** This committee shall audit all financial records of the church and its committees and shall report the findings to the General Board. This committee must be appointed at least three months prior to the Annual Business Meeting and must report its findings to the church by the First Regular Business Meeting following the Annual Meeting.

## **1000.0 ELECTIONS**

**1000.1** Positions elected are the chairman, secretary, treasurer, the Ministry Coordinators, elder and deaconess.

**1001.0 Term Limits.** All elected positions are for one three-year term. Terms shall be staggered so a limited and equal (if possible) number of positions are elected each year. The term begins at the end of the meeting in which the election takes place. After 2 consecutive 3 year terms in any elected position(s), a holder of an office must step aside for a minimum of 1 year before being eligible for nomination for a full term in any elected office. In order to allow for experience and continuity in the Church Officer roles, any Elder or Ministry Coordinator, having served one 3 year term in that role, is eligible for election to 2 subsequent and consecutive terms as Church Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer before term limits would require stepping aside for a minimum of 1 year.

## **1002.0 NOMINATING COMMITTEE.**

**1002.1 Composition.** The committee shall consist of the church chairman, the Deacon Ministry Coordinator, two other Ministry Coordinators appointed by the General Board, and two members of the congregation appointed by the General Board. The Senior Pastor is an ex-officio member of the committee. Such individuals shall exhibit spiritual maturity and discernment. The nominating committee shall recommend qualified individuals from the membership to be candidates for elected positions.

**1002.2 Term.** The Nominating Committee will serve until the election has taken place (approximately three months).

**1002.3 Organization.** The committee will appoint the chairman for the nominating committee from its members at the first meeting. The committee will select a secretary from its members at the first meeting.

### **1002.4 Duties of Nominating Committee.**

**1002.41** Inform the congregation of positions to be filled.

**1002.42** Receive names for consideration from the congregation.

**1002.43** Prepare a list of potential nominees from the membership of the church.

**1002.44** Provide job descriptions to potential nominees.

**1002.45** Interview prospective nominees to ascertain their willingness and giftedness to serve.

**1002.46** Nominations shall be submitted by the nominating committee to the General Board for their review at least 20 days before the annual congregational business meeting. The General Board is responsible to verify that each candidate meets the membership and Scriptural qualifications. A ballot shall be submitted in writing to the congregation at least 2 weeks before the annual congregational business meeting

**1002.47** The list of nominees shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the church or printed in the church bulletin or newsletter at least three (3) weeks prior to the election. More than one (1) candidate may be nominated for each office.

**1002.48** Prepare a ballot for use at the election.

**1002.49** Provide for the destruction of the ballots as moved by the membership following the election.

**1002.50** Update the permanent file of those elected and the terms served. This file should be housed in the church office.

### **1003.0 NOMINATIONS OF OFFICERS.**

**1003.1** The nominations for officers may come to the membership from two sources: the Nominating Committee or nominations presented from the floor of the meeting. Nominations from the floor may be received if the party nominated has read the job description and has given prior consent to the nomination.

### **1004.0 FILLING POSITIONS.**

**1004.1** If no qualified person is found to stand for election for a certain position, the position may be left vacant or the General Board may fill the position by an appointment for one year. The position will then be placed before the membership at the next election, and if someone is elected they will fill out the remainder of the term.

### **1005.0 DETERMINATION OF ELECTION.**

**1005.1** When two or more are voted on for one office, the person getting the highest number of votes is elected.

**1005.2** When only one candidate for an office is standing for election, he/she must receive an affirmative vote from at least 75% of the voting membership present at the meeting.

### **1100.0 ADMINISTRATIVE AND MINISTRY POLICY**

**1100.1** These administrative and ministry policies are established with the full realization that some Christians and other churches may have different views. We have stated these policies so that unnecessary tensions can be avoided. It is also recognized that members of this church may have personal views that are different than those stated in the policy. We have voluntarily committed ourselves to these policies for the sake of unity and direction of the ministry.

**1100.2** If someone should find that these policies cause them great distress and, therefore, they become inhibited in their ability to serve the Lord in our congregation, we would accept in Christian love their decision to find a fellowship that more closely shares their convictions.

### **1101.0 RECORD KEEPING.**

**1101.1** Every ministry and committee shall keep minutes of meetings. Copies of the minutes should be given to the General Board secretary.

**1101.2** Minutes of the General Board shall be posted for the congregation.

### **1102.0 CHURCH DISCIPLINE.**

**1102.1** While the Elders may be called upon to seek healing and reconciliation of broken relationships and to correct errant members of the body of Christ, it is the desire of the

church to see brothers and sisters in Christ practice the principles of Matthew 18. We must be willing to go with one who is distressed over the behavior of another so as to end the chain of hurt that can be passed along through unaccountable discussions.

### **1103.0 REVIEWS.**

**1103.1** Pastoral staff job descriptions should be reviewed on a yearly basis by the General Board.

**1103.2** Job descriptions for church officers should be reviewed before each election.

**1103.3** The function of committees should be reviewed each year by the General Board.

### **1104.0 ROLE OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY.**

**1104.1** This church has taken the position that women may use their spiritual gifts in a wide range of ministry settings. We have also agreed that women will not serve as pastoral staff, corporate officers, Ministry Coordinator, or Elder.

### **1105.0 QUALIFICATION OF LEADERSHIP.**

**1105.1** There are many passages of scripture, which describe the character of a godly person. (Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 4:20-32; Colossians 3:1-17) This church does not hold that any one set of verses prescribes a checklist of gifts or character traits, which must be met to qualify for leadership. We hold that a leader must have a godly character and that current behavior is to be carefully examined. We accept that some passages list areas for careful consideration; but that past history does not necessarily disqualify a person from leadership. In looking for spiritual leaders, we will seek those with a godly life committed to the work of reconciliation through the grace of God.

**1105.2 Divorces and Remarriage.** We hold that the passages that speak of "husband of one wife" mean that a person is committed to one spouse. (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6) The Bible teaches much about divorce and remarriage. (Matthew 19:1-12; I Corinthians 7:10-15) If divorce and remarriage are part of a person's past, their attitudes concerning these areas will be carefully explored if public leadership in the congregation is suggested. Divorce and remarriage does not automatically disqualify a person from leadership. In matters where unresolved issues are raised concerning an individual, the leadership of the Midwest District of the EFCA will be consulted.

### **1106.0 ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH.**

**1106.1 Baptism.** As held in our Doctrinal Statement, we baptize believers as an expression of their faith in Christ. (Acts 8:36-38; 16:30-34) We practice immersion, but other modes may be used at the discretion of the pastoral staff. We see baptism as a personal act of obedience and, therefore, will baptize children only when the pastoral staff and the parents are in agreement that the child has an understanding of their salvation and the significance of the act of baptism.

**1106.2 Communion/Lord's Table.** We remember the sacrifice of our Lord through communion. (Luke 22:14-22) Communion services will be planned throughout the year by the pastoral staff and the Elders. Our communion table is open to all who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 11:23-32) We believe parents are

responsible to determine the age when their child understands the purpose and meaning of communion and therefore partake.

#### **1107.0 MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**1107.1** It is permitted for a person to hold an appointed position and an elected position in the church at the same time.

#### **1108.0 BOARD APPOINTMENTS.**

**1108.1** The General Board may appoint individuals to provide leadership in ministry areas not covered in these by-laws. Appointments will be reported to the next business meeting of the church.

#### **1109.0 TERM LIMITS.**

**1109.1** An individual appointed or elected to fill out a term that has been vacated may serve additional full terms if elected.

#### **1110.0 NON-MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN MINISTRY.**

**1110.1** Non-members will be encouraged to participate at any level of ministry except elected positions. Non-members will not vote at business meetings of the church. This reflects the desire to encourage ministry by those who are actively seeking to serve the Lord.

#### **1200 MISSION STATEMENT**

**1200.1** The mission of Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church is to impact the people of Seward County and surrounding area by provided ministries that demonstrate God's love, uphold the family and encourage personal spiritual development, and faithfully use our resources to release people into ministry.

#### **1210 VISION STATEMENT**

**1210.1** Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church will have a Christ Centered Ministry of reaching the lost for Christ, discipling believers to live for Christ, and training believers to minister with the love of Christ. We will measure out health by our sending capacity as we turn members into ministers and missionaries.

#### **1220 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

##### **1220.1 Discipleship**

Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church exists to equip God's people to grow in spiritual maturity, reproducing Christ likeness in others by teaching the Word of God.

**1220.2 Fellowship**

Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church exists to proclaim Christ to people, uniting them in expressing love to God, and cultivating caring relationships to demonstrate Christ compassion to others.

**1220.3 Worship**

Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church exists to unite people in joyful expression for the love of God as revealed in His Holy Word.

**1220.4 Evangelism**

Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church exists to proclaim Christ to people, inviting them into an eternal relationship with God through the finished work of Christ on the cross.

**1220.5 Service**

Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church exists to equip every believer to demonstrate Christ's compassion by using their gifts in meeting the needs of others.