

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The Evangelical Free Church of Vestal, New York

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Evangelical Free Church of Vestal, New York, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and By-Laws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization is incorporated and shall be known as The Evangelical Free Church of Vestal, New York.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of the Church shall be to praise and glorify God through worship and the giving of our tithes, time and talents (Matthew 4:10; John 4:24); to edify the saints through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 4:2); to win the unsaved to Jesus Christ both at home and on the mission field (Matthew 28:19-20); and to provide fellowship for its members and friends (Acts 2:42-47).

ARTICLE III - CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Confession of Faith of this Organization shall be the same as that of the Evangelical Free Church of America which reads as follows:

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. (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21)
2. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 18:30; Matthew 5:48; John 10:30; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 2:9,10.)
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 Scriptures. 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.(John 1:1,14; Matthew 1:18,25; Matthew 1:23; John 1:29; Romans 5:6-10; Matthew 20:28; Luke 24:2-6; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Romans 6:9; Hebrews 12:2; 4:14-16)
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, indwell, guide, instruct,

and empower the believer for godly living and service. (John 16:7-14; John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:22-25)

5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but fell into sin, and is therefore lost. Only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained. (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:7; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:1,2; Titus 3:5-7; Ephesians 4:24)
6. We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe. Only those who receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit, thereby becoming children of God. (1 Peter 1:18,19; Romans 5:8,9; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:1)
7. We believe that the Lord's Supper and water baptism are ordinances to be observed by the Church during this present age. They are not, however, to be regarded as means of salvation. (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Ephesians 2:8,9)
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 who are united together in the body of Christ of which He is the Head. (Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:23; 1 Corinthians 12:12,13)
9. We believe that only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. (Acts 1:15, 26; 2 Corinthians 6:17,18)
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. (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 4:15)
11. We believe in the personal premillennial and 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. (Hebrews 9:28; Acts 1:11; Revelation 22:20; Hebrews 10:37; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Timothy 6:14)
12. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead: the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy of the Lord, and the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment. (1 Corinthians 15:51-54; Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:12-15)

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the assurance of salvation, whose conduct is in accordance with his/her confession, who is willing to support the Church with faithful attendance, prayer and material means and who agrees to be governed by the Constitution and By-Laws of this Church may become a member of this Organization, hereafter referred to as the Church.

ARTICLE V - PROPERTY

1. This Church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of New York and as is deemed necessary for the business of the Church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of the Church. The Trustees shall have the power to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, lease, convey, mortgage, deed or otherwise transfer property of the Church, only after having been duly

authorized by the Church at a business meeting of the Church. All contracts, notes, mortgages, conveyances, assignments, leases, releases and other papers and documents in behalf of the Church shall be executed by the Trustees.

2. Division - In the event of division of the Church - may God graciously prevent - (i.e. where separate and distinct groups claim they are the properly constituted authority of the Church) the property of the Church shall belong to those who abide by this Constitution and By-Laws, as determined by the Eastern District Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America. Under no circumstances may either the real or personal property of the Church come into the possession of any individual person.

3. Dissolution - In case of the dissolution of the Church, the property shall be assigned to the Eastern District Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America. The Church shall be considered dissolved when the Church has not held an Annual Meeting for three years or when fewer than six members, excluding Associate Members, remain.

4. Any member who has withdrawn from or who has been excluded from the Church loses all rights of church membership.

5. The private property of the individual members of this Church shall be exempt from corporate debt.

ARTICLE VI - GOVERNMENT

Authority, Elders, Officers and Commissions - Ultimate authority in the Church shall reside in the membership of the congregation. They shall vote on the calling of the pastor and pastoral staff members and the annual budget of the Church, and elect Elders, Deacons, the Chairman of the Board of Elders, a Treasurer, a Financial Secretary, three members of the Nominating Committee, and members to chair the various Commissions. The Board of Elders shall select from its members the following officers: a Vice Chairman, who shall also be the Vice Chairman of the Church, a Secretary, who shall also be the Secretary of the Church, and a Vice-Secretary, who shall also be the Vice-Secretary of the Church. The Board of Elders shall oversee the routine operations and government of the Church.

ARTICLE VII - STANDING

1. This Church shall remain free and independent and shall not join itself to any denomination or synod. It shall remain its own highest authority and conduct its affairs through its own business sessions.

2. This Church hereby voluntarily affiliates itself with the Evangelical Free Church of America and its branches by sending delegates to conferences, by supporting home and overseas missions, and by uniting in mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel as the Church itself may officially decide.

VIII - AMENDMENTS

The Church may make any changes in the Constitution which it deems necessary. Such changes must initially be put in writing and mailed or otherwise presented to the voting members at least one week before a regular or special business meeting at which the changes will be considered for ultimate adoption. By a simple majority vote at that meeting, the finalized written proposal may be accepted for adoption without change at a subsequent regular or special business meeting provided that (1) such subsequent meeting is at least three months after the original meeting and (2) the proposed changes are mailed or otherwise presented to each voting member at least two weeks prior to this subsequent business meeting. Adoption of the proposed changes and their incorporation into the Constitution will require a 3/4 majority of all votes cast.

BY-LAWS

of

THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF VESTAL, NEW YORK

ARTICLE I - MEETINGS

1. Worship Services

Regular services of worship, preaching of the Gospel, Bible study, and prayer shall be conducted weekly. The Lord's Supper shall be observed on a regular monthly basis. Special services shall be approved by the Board of Elders.

2. Business Meetings

- **A. Regular Business Meetings**

1. The Annual Business Meeting shall be held during the first six weeks of the calendar year, on a date set by the Board of Elders. At this meeting written reports will be received from the Pastor(s), Church Chairman, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, the Chairmen of the Commissions of the Church and any others requested by the Board of Elders. The written reports presented at the annual meeting will be prepared by the outgoing officers. Other necessary business will also be transacted.
2. Annual Elections will be held during the month of December each year, at a regular business meeting, with the terms of office of those elected to begin on the first day of the new calendar year. At this meeting the congregation will vote on those individuals presented by the Nominating Committee for vacant offices in the Church. The Nominating process does not provide for nominations from the floor at this meeting. The failure to approve any nominee shall result in that office being vacant.

- **B. Special Business Meetings -** Whenever necessary for the transaction of any legitimate business, a special business meeting of the Church may be called by the Pastor, the Church Chairman, the Board of Elders, or by submission of a petition to the Church Chairman signed by 20% of the voting membership.

- C. Notice - Notice of any business meeting of the Church shall be given by announcement from the pulpit or in the bulletin on at least two preceding Sundays prior to the date of the meeting or by written notice mailed at least one week prior to the date of the meeting.
- D. Order - Robert's Rules of Order shall be the procedural guide for all business meetings of the Church.
- E. Quorum - For church business meetings twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present by one-half hour after the announced starting time of the meeting, the Chairman has the authority to cancel the meeting.
- F. Majority - A majority of votes cast (one more than half of total votes cast) shall be required to decide all business transactions and elections unless otherwise specified elsewhere in this Constitution and By-Laws.
- G. Uncontested elections - When any nominee for a position in the church is unopposed in an election, the ballot shall provide for a "yes" or "no" vote on that person. The nominee must receive a majority of "yes" votes in order to be elected.
- H. Voting Member - Every member of the congregation, other than an Associate Member (By-Laws Article II, Section 4), shall be privileged to vote at all elections, providing such member has reached the age of eighteen (18) years.
- I. Absentee Voting - Upon request, the Board of Elders will provide a voting member with an absentee ballot if it is requested at least five (5) days prior to the meeting at which a vote is expected. In special circumstances, and at their discretion, the Board of Elders will make an absentee ballot available with less than 5 days notice.

ARTICLE II - Membership

1 - Importance Any person who has accepted Christ as Savior and is in harmony with the constitution and fellowship of this Church is invited to join as an active member. Membership will stimulate one's personal spiritual growth, will encourage a more productive Christian outreach, will create a more meaningful fellowship with others of like faith, and will be a real encouragement to other members of the Body of Christ.

2 - Method of Admission to Membership:

- A. Anyone desiring membership shall indicate that desire to the Pastor or any member of the Board of Elders who in turn shall provide the applicant with a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church. An applicant will be expected to attend a Church Orientation course (if such a course is available) prior to being accepted for membership. The course attendance requirement may be waived by the Board of Elders.

B. Applicants shall meet with the Board of Elders to give a personal testimony of their salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and of their understanding of and agreement with the Constitution and By-Laws of this Church.

C. All satisfactory candidates shall be recommended by the Board of Elders for approval by the congregation. They shall be elected to membership by a 3/4 majority of votes cast

at any regular or special business meeting of the Church. An applicant shall not be present in the meeting when his/her application is being considered. Should a church member object to an applicant for membership either privately to the Board of Elders or publicly in a meeting, said member shall state in writing the reason to the Board of Elders which body shall investigate the objection, and only if the objection is valid in the eyes of said body will the applicant be rejected for membership.

D. The accepted applicants shall be publicly welcomed into membership at some subsequent regular worship service of the Church.

E. All pastors and associate pastors and their spouses, upon accepting a call and beginning their ministry to this Church, shall automatically be considered members thereof for the duration of their ministry, and have all the privileges pertaining thereto.

3 - Christian Conduct

- A. Regular attendance at services in God's house, daily reading of the Bible, private and family prayer, personal and public testimony, and the winning of others to Christ are urged upon each member. It shall be the sacred duty of parents to provide Christian instruction for their children. Each member shall consider it his sacred duty and privilege to make full use of his talent for the Lord's service.

B. All members are encouraged to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; and to be courteous in speech and slow to anger.

C. Each member is urged to pledge himself to a systematic contribution of a portion of his income for the support of the Church according to the principles laid down in I Corinthians 16:2.

- D. Each member is called upon to heed the admonitions of the Lord: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," and "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye might prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." He should be "an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." (I John 2:15; Romans 12:2; I Timothy 4:12) He is expected to conduct his life "after the Spiritual man" as set forth in Galatians 5:18-26; Ephesians 4; Romans 14:12-21 and other passages dealing with the new life in Christ.

4 - Associate Membership - An Associate Member is an individual who otherwise meets the requirements for membership but is no longer taking an active part in the ministry of the church through regular attendance, service and support. An Associate Member shall have no vote. A member may become an Associate Member:

- - by voluntarily requesting or accepting that status due to a change of residence or any other circumstance which prohibits active involvement in the church.

- by decision of the Board of Elders following a period of inactivity.

- by decision of the Board of Elders as part of the process of Church discipline.

Any involuntary imposition of Associate Membership by the Board of Elders shall be communicated in writing to the member. This action may be appealed to the Board of Elders and, if still unresolved, appealed to the Church.

5 - Dismissal and Withdrawal from Membership

• A. Dismissal from membership other than for disciplinary reasons shall be left to the discretion of the Board of Elders and shall be based upon the following:

- - This shall be done only after a prolonged (one year) inactivity of such a member.

- This shall be done only after such a member has been contacted by the Board of Elders.

- Considerations shall be given for sickness and out-of-town members (students, etc.).

- Such dismissal shall be allowed only after such a member has been notified by mail and given two months to reply.

B. Withdrawal from Membership - Any member who wishes to withdraw from the Church shall receive a letter of dismissal from the Secretary, with the approval of the Board of Elders, providing such withdrawal is requested in writing. All letters of dismissal shall be reported to the Church at the next regular business meeting.

6 - Discipline of Members

- A. Should a member become an offense to the Church and its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by deviation from the commitment made when he/she became a member, the Church may terminate his membership after faithful efforts have been made by the Board of Elders to bring such a person to repentance, in accordance with Christ's command in Matthew 18:15-17 and the apostolic exhortation in I Corinthians 5:13, and only after written notice has been sent to the member in question by the Board of Elders offering him the opportunity for a hearing before the Church. The Church shall take proper action on the recommendation of the Board of Elders. The restoration of the erring member shall be the single purpose of any action taken by the Church, and love and the desire to adhere to the commands of God the sole motivating force in these matters.

B. Should a complaint arise, detrimental to the Christian character of any member or applicant for membership, it must be made in writing and submitted first to the Board of Elders, whose duty it shall be to appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person in question thereof, furnishing him with a copy of the charges. The

Board of Elders shall, in Christian spirit, endeavor to remove the offense and if such effort fails, shall report the case to the Congregation for proper action.

C. Right of Appeal - Anyone against whom charges have been made and in whose case the Board of Elders has recommended termination of membership, or other discipline, may appeal to the Church for a hearing of the case before the whole Church. The Church shall then decide by secret ballot whether to hear the case or whether it will act upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders without such a hearing.

D. Anyone whose membership has been terminated through the process of church discipline may be readmitted, if the congregation so decides, when evidence is shown that he or she has been restored and is living in fellowship with God.

E. Further details of the Church's policy in this area may be found in the Elders' Policy Manual (By-Laws Article IV, last section).

ARTICLE III - PASTORAL STAFF

1 - Senior Pastor

- A. Qualifications - The Senior Pastor must be a man who has experienced the saving grace of God, and be of established and irreproachable Christian character. He must meet the qualifications established for Elders in the Church (By-Laws Article IV). He must be biblically qualified, have the ability to proclaim and expound the Word of God, and execute the duties of a pastor in every way as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7; 4:12-15; II Timothy 2:15; and Titus 1:5-9.

B. Election and Call - The election and calling of a Pastor may take place at a regular or special meeting of the Church. Voting must be by secret ballot and a candidate must have a 3/4 majority vote to be eligible for a call.

C. Term of Office - The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite term. His ministry to the Church may be terminated by a 3/4 majority vote of the voting members of the Church. Voting must be by secret ballot. In case of resignation or dismissal, he shall give or be given three months notice. This time period may be modified by mutual consent of the pastor and the Board of Elders.

- D. Duties - The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, lead the public services of the Church, watch over the spiritual welfare of the Church, administer the Lord's Supper and Water Baptism to believers and lead the members into a practical Christian life. He shall be a voting member of the Board of Elders and the Nominating Committee and an ex-officio member (without obligation to attend) of all commissions of the Church. He shall direct and supervise other members of the pastoral staff, delegating responsibility and authority where appropriate, establishing priorities in the ministries, and promoting the effective functioning of the total staff. He shall give a written report of his activities at each annual meeting.

E. Terms of Employment - The Pastor's terms of employment shall be given to him in writing at the time of the pastoral call and shall be reviewed at least annually by the Board of Elders.

2 - Additional Church Staff Based on the needs and demands of the congregation, the Church may call and support Associate Pastors and staff members. The Associate Pastors and staff members shall work in conjunction with and be responsible to the Senior Pastor, and in his absence to the Board of Elders. They shall be biblically qualified for their offices, and give evidence of academic and/or experiential preparation for their positions. Associate Pastors of the Church shall be men. Staff members (e.g. a Director of Christian Education) need not be men. They shall be in agreement with the Confession of Faith and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church.

The decision to create a position and call additional Church staff shall be the responsibility of the congregation upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders.

Their job description, method of selection, initial terms of employment and the termination of their ministry shall be the responsibility of the congregation upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders.

Their terms of employment shall be given to them in writing at the time of their employment and shall be reviewed at least annually by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF ELDERS

- Qualifications - The qualifications for pastors are noted elsewhere. The elders shall be male members of this Church who are mature and godly, who fully support the Bible and the Confession of Faith of the Church and its Constitution, By-Laws and policies and who manifest the qualifications stipulated by the Scriptures (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). In case of question from any member as to whether any man meets these requirements, the Board of Elders may rule, subject to review by the congregation.

Size of the Board - The Board of Elders will consist of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors and a number of elders relative to the membership of the Church. Providing that there are enough qualified men, there shall be at least four (4) and no more than nine (9) elders.

- Selection - It is the Holy Spirit who must select men for leadership. Only He knows the hearts and motives of men. His choices, however, must be expressed through human agency (Acts 6).

1. -- Selection will be made on the basis of spiritual qualifications, Biblical standards, leadership qualifications and commitment to this Church.
2. -- The Board of Elders shall provide the Nominating Committee (see By-Laws Article VII) with the names of men whom they consider qualified to serve as elders.

Term of Office - An Elder's term of office shall be three years. As much as is possible, terms shall be staggered so that 1/3 of the Elders on the Board of Elders are re-elected or newly elected each year.

Evaluation, Discipline, and Accountability - The Board of Elders [including the pastor(s)] shall evaluate itself and its members. It shall be a self-disciplining board according to Matthew 18:15-20; II Thessalonians 3:14-15; I Timothy 5:19-20. The members of the Board shall periodically (at least once every three years) evaluate themselves in order to improve their service to the Church for whom they are accountable to God (Hebrews 13:17). The Senior Pastor and other Pastors shall periodically (at least once every three years) initiate and submit to an evaluation of their ministries for the sake of improving their service to God and His Church. A review of the terms of employment for the pastor(s) will be made separately in accordance with these By-Laws (see Article III) or in accordance with the conditions established as the time of a pastor's call.

Function - The elders have a three-fold function:

- (1) To build and develop their own families in the Lord (I Timothy 3:4-5);
- (2) To feed and shepherd the flock of God (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:17-32)
 - - this involves the positive impartation of truth, refutation of error and administration of discipline; and
- (3) To oversee and manage the entire ministry of the Church. (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2-3).- This may include but is not limited to:
 - Assessing the needs of the entire body ((members and non-members),
 - Orienting, interviewing and approving applicants for church membership,
 - Approving members and non-members recruited for the Commissions of the Church,
 - Approving the policies and procedures of the Commissions of the Church,
 - Approving any guest speakers in the Church,
 - Preparing and presenting the annual budget to the Church at the Annual Business Meeting,
 - Administering the stewardship program of the Church,
 - Leading services in the pastor's absence,
 - Assisting (with the Deacons) in serving communion,

- Planning, evaluating and coordinating the various commissions and ministries of the Church,
- Advising the Pastor(s),
- - - Leading in or approving the development of new ministries and/or commissions of the Church, and
 - Guarding the spiritual welfare of the Church members and attenders.

Basis of Authority - The basis of authority for all the deliberations and activities of the Board of Elders shall be the Bible.

Decision Making Process - The Board of Elders shall approach decisions in prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit. They shall earnestly seek to reach a unanimous decision without coercion.

Quorum for Board of Elders Meeting - A quorum for a Board of Elders meeting shall be a simple majority of the members of that board.

Assignment to Commissions - The Board of Elders shall annually determine which of their members will sit on the various commissions of the Church (with at least one elder or pastor on each commission) in order to provide for support of those commissions and coordination of the overall ministries of the Church.

Elders' Policy Manual - The Board of Elders shall maintain a current manual which shall include job descriptions, policies and procedures (including the policies and procedures of the Commissions of the Church), the Financial Operating Procedures and all pertinent information and instructions for efficiency in the day-to-day operation of the Church. The information contained in this manual may be amended or changed by the Board of Elders as needed. This manual shall be available to the congregation for inspection upon request.

ARTICLE V - THE COMMISSIONS OF THE CHURCH

The Commissions of the Church are accountable to the Board of Elders and are established in order to assure that the basic ministries of the Church are carried out efficiently and effectively. Each commission shall consist of a chairman (a man or a woman), an elder or a pastor, and individuals recruited from the members and non-members of the Church except for the Finance and Deacon Commissions, whose members must be voting members of the church. The Deacons Commission Chairman shall be elected to a one-year term, and all other commission chairmen shall be elected to two-year terms by the voting members of the Church. The Board of Elders shall assign one of their members to each commission each year. Recruitment of individuals to serve on each commission is subject to the approval of the Board of Elders. The recruitment of commission members may take place at any time during the year. There is no fixed size for any commission. Commissions should be large enough to be effective and small

enough to be efficient. Each Commission shall establish its own policies and procedures subject to the approval of the Board of Elders. These policies and procedures shall be kept as a part of the Elders' Policy Manual. The Chairman of each commission shall report its activities in a written report to the Church at the Annual Meeting.

The Christian Education Commission - The Christian Education Commission shall unify, supervise, and promote all educational interests of the Church. These may include but are not limited to: Sunday School, Children's Church, Vacation Bible School, Teacher Training Classes, Boys and Girls Clubs, Youth Groups, and all other groups operating in the field of education. It shall establish and maintain a library.

The Deacons Commission - The Deacons are responsible for the "caring" ministries of the Church. Upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the congregation shall elect Deacons to three-year terms. As much as is possible, terms shall be staggered so that 1/3 of the Deacons are re-elected or newly elected each year. The Deacons of the Church must be active voting members of the Church. They shall be selected to provide care for all individuals in the Church. It is desirable, therefore, that the members of this commission be spiritually mature believers. This commission's responsibilities may include but are not limited to:

- Growth Groups, Men's Ministries, Women's Ministries

Body Life Activities (Dinners, Picnics, etc.)

Visitation, the Greeting Program of the Church, Ushering

Hospitality (meals and lodging) for visiting speakers and groups

Administration of the Benevolence Fund of the Church

The Deacons shall strive to assure that each person in the Church loves God, loves his/her neighbor, and experiences the Body of Christ as a caring community of love for one another.

The Finances Commission - The Finances Commission shall consist of at least the chairman, Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, and a member of the Board of Elders. They shall elect their own Chairman. Anyone recruited to this commission must be a member of the Church. This commission is responsible for maintaining oversight of the financial affairs of the Church. Their duties may include but are not limited to:

- - Overseeing the financial affairs of the Church in accordance with the Financial Operating Procedures of the Church as presently written or subsequently revised by the Board of Elders.

- Advising the various commissions of the Church concerning the availability of funds designated in the budget for their ministries.

The Missions Commission - The Missions Commission shall promote, unify and supervise the mission program of the Church. Their areas of responsibility may include but are not limited to: home missions, overseas missions, Christian schools, literature programs, radio programs, mission films and speakers, Missions Conferences, correspondence with missionaries (home and abroad), missionary prayer requests, mission displays and posters in the Church, keeping up-to-date information available on mission projects, and promoting our Christian schools of higher learning among the constituency. It shall select (subject to the approval of the Board of Elders) the missions and groups that will have the opportunity to present their work in our Church.

The Outreach Commission - The Outreach Commission shall promote, unify, and supervise the evangelism and community service ministries of the Church. Its areas of responsibility may include but are not limited to:

- - ministry in nursing homes, jails and hospitals
- - being aware of and keeping the Church informed concerning the condition of the schools in our ministering area.
- - financial and material support for community ministries
- - publicity for the Church through local media
- - training in and promotion of evangelism
- - cooperation with community-wide evangelistic efforts
- - visitation evangelism in the community
- - maintaining the Church's supply of tracts and evangelistic literature

The Properties Commission - The Properties Commission shall be entrusted with the care of the Church properties which they shall keep in good order and repair. It shall be responsible for the janitorial work of the Church properties.

The Worship Commission - The Worship Commission shall be responsible for the music and worship ministries of the Church. They shall promote worship and praise in the congregation in order to bring glory to God. Their areas of responsibility may include but are not limited to:

- - the leadership and coordination of the choir(s) of the Church.
- the training and scheduling of worship leaders.
- the coordination of special music for Sunday services.
- the planning and conducting of Praise Services.
- the selection of hymnals and chorus books for the Church when necessary.

New Commissions - New Commissions may be established by the Board of Elders. The chairman of any new commission shall be appointed by the Board of Elders until the next Annual Elections.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

- Qualifications - All Officers, Elders and Commission Chairmen shall be members of this Church, of established Christian character and reputation, and well qualified for their respective official duties.

The Chairman of the Church is the Chairman of the Board of Elders. He shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the congregation each year. He shall preside at all business meetings of the Church and of the Board of Elders. He shall report the activities of the Board of Elders to the Church at its business meetings and shall give a written report at the Annual Meeting.

The Vice-Chairman, selected by and from within the Board of Elders each year, shall preside at the business meetings of the Church and of the Board of Elders in the absence of the Chairman.

- The Secretary, selected by and from within the Board of Elders each year, shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and decisions of all business meetings of the Church and of the Board of Elders, with such records to be approved at the next following business meeting. He shall preserve in a safe place all letters, reports, and other Church documents pertaining to his office, and shall keep a correct register of the Members and Associate Members showing date and manner of their admission and dismissal. He shall give legal notice of all meetings when such notice is necessary. He shall issue credentials to all members duly chosen to represent the Church at the meetings in which the Church shall decide to be represented. He shall deliver immediately to his successor all books, files, records, and other documents in his possession upon termination of his tenure of office.

The Vice-Secretary, selected by and from within the Board of Elders each year, shall perform all the duties of the Secretary in his absence.

The Financial Secretary, elected by the Church to a two-year term, shall receive and account for all monies of the Church. He shall transfer these funds to the Treasurer as directed by the Financial Operating Procedures of the Church. He shall present his books to be audited at the close of the fiscal year, or more often if so requested by the Church. He shall deliver immediately to his successor all books and records pertaining to his office.

The Treasurer, elected by the Church to a two-year term, shall keep the accounts of the congregation, receive contributions for paying the expenses of the congregation, and disburse all monies in accordance with the Financial Operating Procedures of the Church and the resolutions of the congregation. He shall present his books to be audited at the close of the fiscal year, or more often if so requested by the Church. He shall deliver immediately to his successor all books and records pertaining to his office.

The Trustees of the Church are the Chairman of the Properties Commission, the Treasurer and the Chairman of the Board of Elders. Their duties and responsibilities are stated in Article V of the Constitution of the Church.

ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES

- The Nominating Committee shall serve for one year and shall consist of the Senior Pastor, two Elders (selected by and from within the Board of Elders), one Deacon (selected by and from within the Deacons Commission) and three others elected each year from the active voting membership of the Church. They shall elect their own chairman. They shall establish and maintain a written procedures manual which shall be kept with the Elders' Policy Manual (By-Laws Article IV) and be available to the congregation for inspection upon request. They shall solicit names from the congregation for all offices being filled in the coming election. They shall establish a procedure for prayerfully evaluating the qualifications of every person whose name is submitted to them for each office. When considering any one position or individual, they shall give due consideration to the overall functioning of the Church. They shall post their recommended ballot in the church and/or mail a copy of it to each voting member at least two weeks prior to the Annual Elections. They shall present to the congregation the names of those individuals whom they consider to be best qualified for each office. They shall nominate individuals for the following positions when needed: Church Chairman, Elders, Deacons, Commission Chairmen, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and three at-large members of the Nominating Committee.

The Pulpit Committee will be formed when needed for the purpose of finding, calling and installing a Senior Pastor. The Board of Elders, having solicited names from the congregation, shall recommend qualified persons to the congregation for election to a pulpit committee. The Pulpit Committee shall consist of at least 5 and at most 7 members.

The committee shall contact possible candidates for the pastorate of the Church. Candidates shall be presented to the congregation one at a time and shall be members of or willing and qualified to become members as soon as possible of the Ministerial Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America. After careful investigation the Pulpit Committee shall invite the most likely candidates to visit the Church, meet with the Board of Elders, become acquainted with the congregation and minister the Word at one or more of its services.

Once the Pulpit Committee in consultation with the Board of Elders determines it has a man to recommend as a candidate for a call, the congregation shall be convened for a special business meeting. The recommendation shall be presented with all the reasons for suggesting him as a candidate. The congregation shall then vote as to whether or not it desires to extend a call to the candidate. If he receives the required three-fourths (3/4) majority vote (see Article III), the call shall be extended. If not, the matter goes back to the Pulpit Committee for the presentation of new recommendations. No candidate may be presented to the congregation for a vote the second time until at least two other candidates have been voted on.

The Board of Elders shall notify the pastor-elect of the action of the Church immediately and upon his affirmative reply make arrangements for his moving and installation.

The Pulpit Committee shall be responsible for acquainting the congregation with the pastor-elect and his family prior to their arrival through the sharing of non-confidential information (e.g. sermon tapes, photographs, etc.).

The term of office of all its members shall expire when a new pastor is installed.

The Auditing Committee shall be two auditors appointed by the Board of Elders to serve as Church auditors for the year. Their duty shall be to audit all Church organizational treasurer's records, and give a written report to the Church each year. The Board of Elders may, at its discretion, employ an outside auditor, or auditors, to audit any records at any time.

ARTICLE VIII - GENERAL

- Property - The use of the Church properties or buildings or any part thereof for any functions not included in the regular scheduled Church activities must be approved in advance by the Board of Elders.
- Tenure - All Elders, Officers, Commission Chairmen, Deacons, and Nominating Committee members shall serve no more than six consecutive years in any one position. Anyone having served six years in any of these positions is ineligible for one year to serve in that position.

Vacancies - Except for those offices where replacements are already available (i.e. Church Chairman and Secretary) vacancies occurring during the year among the Officers of the Church, the Elders, Deacons, Commission Chairmen, or Nominating Committee members may be filled by appointment by the Board of Elders for the remainder of the year.

The Church Fiscal Year - The Church fiscal year shall be the calendar year - January 1 to December 31.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

The Church may make any changes in the By-Laws which it deems necessary. Such changes must initially be put in writing and mailed or otherwise presented to the voting members at least one week before a regular or special business meeting at which the changes will be considered for ultimate adoption. By a simple majority vote at that meeting, the finalized written proposal may be accepted for adoption without change at a subsequent regular or special business meeting provided that (1) such subsequent meeting is at least three months after the original meeting and (2) the proposed changes are mailed or otherwise presented to each voting member at least two weeks prior to this subsequent business meeting. Adoption of the proposed changes and their incorporation into the By-Laws will require a 3/4 majority of all votes cast.

Vote for adoption held September 29, 1991 at EFC of Vestal, NY

Adopted by unanimous vote to be effective January 1, 1992.

Amended 7 May 2000 and 9 December 2001.