

Bylaws
Church of the Canyons
Revised 3/10/2024

ARTICLE I – No bylaws required

ARTICLE II - No bylaws required

ARTICLE III – No bylaws required

ARTICLE IV – No bylaws required

ARTICLE V – Membership

A. Membership Process

1. Prospective members shall attend class sessions required to adequately understand the polity and doctrinal statement of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) and the constitution, bylaws, and ministry philosophy of Church of the Canyons (COC). Members may not vote until they have reached 18 years of age.
2. Prospective members shall complete the COC Membership Application, submit a written personal testimony, and share that testimony with a member(s) of the Board of Elders.
3. The names of prospective members shall be forwarded to the Board of Elders for approval. Upon approval, new members receive full membership privileges.
4. New members shall be presented to the church membership at a church service to announce and celebrate their membership status.

B. Membership Duties

1. It is expected that every member will participate in the pursuits stated in the Mission and Vision of the church.
2. It is expected that every member shall make regular financial contributions to this church as God has prospered each one.
3. It is expected that every member will endeavor to understand and function in their spiritual gifting and to serve in ministries appropriate to that gifting.

4. It is expected that every member will endeavor to become informed about matters of business brought before the membership at business meetings and to vote according to biblical principles.
5. All members of this church agree to resolve conflicts in the manner prescribed by 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 and Matthew 18:15-17. In all cases of disputes between fellow members, the individuals involved shall first seek to settle the matter themselves. If those efforts fail, they may request an arbitration meeting with the Board of Elders to settle the dispute.
6. All members of this church are expected to increasingly conduct their lives according to the principles of Scripture and to be consistent examples of authentic Christianity, emulating the character of Christ (Ephesians 4:24).

C. Membership Discipline and Restoration

1. Any member who continues in conduct that conflicts with biblical principles of holiness shall be pursued using the principles of Matthew 18:15-20 and Galatians 6:1 for the purpose of leading the erring individual to repentance and restoration. This includes four steps: 1) private confrontation, 2) going with other witnesses, 3) telling it to the church; and if he refuses to listen to the church 4) treating the individual as an unbeliever.
2. Should there be no evidence of repentance; the person shall be removed from the membership and fellowship of this church by the Board of Elders. Upon evidence of repentance, the disciplined person may be reinstated into membership and fellowship by the Board of Elders (1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:3-11).
3. In certain cases of divisive behavior connected to the teaching or promoting of unsound doctrine that threatens the unity or spiritual wellbeing of the church, the Board of Elders reserves the right to remove a factious individual from the church after having warned the individual a second time in accordance with Titus 3:9-11.

D. Membership Termination

1. A member in good standing may withdraw membership by request in writing to the Board of Elders.
2. Membership will be withdrawn in the case of church discipline.
3. Membership will normally be withdrawn when a member fails to regularly attend services as determined by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VI - Officers

Section A. No Bylaws

Section B. The Board of Elders

1. The Selection and Election of Elders

- a. Elders are elected leaders chosen from among the membership according to their Christian character and their demonstrated leadership and shepherding aptitude as per 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- b. Potential Elders are nominated by the membership for consideration, affirmed by the Elder Board, and approved for service by the membership.
- c. Lay elders will be elected and affirmed bi-annually (every two years) to two-year terms and can serve up to two consecutive terms, followed by a one-year break.
 - i. In the event of a pastor search, B.1.c. may be suspended for any serving lay elders who have met or will meet their term limit during the process. This suspension is not to exceed 6 months after the installation of the new Senior Pastor.
 - ii. With affirmation at a congregational meeting, the timetable of VI.B.1.c may be reset to align with an offset scale based on tenure
- d. The Senior Pastor will serve as a permanent member of the Elder Board.
- e. The Board of Elders should consist of a minimum of three Lay Elders plus the Senior Pastor. All Elders (staff and lay) are voting members of the Elder Board. At least 50% of Elders should be non-staff.
- f. Staff elders will serve as permanent members of the Elder Board once they have been nominated by the membership for consideration, affirmed by the Elder Board, and approved for service by the membership so long as they remain employees in good standing.
- g. Individual Elders shall derive their authority to act in church matters solely from the decisions of the Board of Elders or from authority expressly delegated by the Board. No Elder or officer of the Board of Elders shall have authority to act on his own in church matters apart from this delegated authority.

2. The Dismissal of Elders

- a. Elder withdraws from active membership
- b. Elder resigns voluntarily
- c. Elder dismissed by the full Board of Elders by a 75% majority or by the membership in a duly called meeting. (This is in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-20.) The accused member is not eligible to vote.

3. The Responsibilities of Elders

- a. The Board of Elders is responsible for the oversight of both spiritual and business affairs of the church. They will also establish procedures and practices consistent with Scripture and the Mission and Vision of the church.
- b. The Board of Elders oversees the hiring or firing of all staff. Elders may establish search committees to assist in the hiring process.
- c. The Board of Elders oversees the finances of the church and the recommendation of an annual budget for approval by the membership. In the absence of a newly approved budget, the previous budget shall continue until a new budget is approved.
- d. The Board of Elders shall approach decisions prayerfully. They shall endeavor to make all decisions by unanimous agreement. There may be decisions that, after further study and prayer, have not brought the Board to a unanimous agreement. In such cases, decisions will be made on the basis of a 75% majority vote according to the Board of Elders Decision Making Policy.
- e. At the first meeting of the fiscal year, the Board of Elders shall select a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. Whenever possible, Staff Elders will not serve in these positions.
- f. Elders will recuse themselves from any decisions/leadership when deemed appropriate due to a conflict of interest.

4. The Responsibilities of Board Officers

- a. Chairman
 - i. To call and preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders at least monthly in accordance with good rules of order. These rules are selected or written by the Board of Elders.
 - ii. To prepare with the Senior Pastor an agenda for each meeting.

iii. To preside at member meetings or delegate this responsibility.

b. Vice Chairman

i. To perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence.

ii. To assist the chairman in carrying out the business of the church.

c. Secretary

i. To keep accurate minutes and records of all business brought before the church and Board of Elders.

ii. To carry out correspondence as directed by the Board of Elders.

iii. To keep the membership roll current.

iv. To transfer minutes, correspondence, and other church records to his successor at the expiration of his term.

d. Treasurer

i. To oversee the financial affairs of the church as the financial officer of the corporation and to make quarterly finance reports available to the Board of Elders.

ii. To chair or delegate a chairman of the finance ministry team, which shall include the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Accountant, and others as needed.

iii. To proactively address financial needs and opportunities of the church and to present major policy changes to the Board of Elders for approval.

iv. To oversee the preparation and the presentations of the annual church budget for approval first by the Board of Elders and then the membership.

v. To create, maintain, and update financial policies for the church and submit them to the Board of Elders for approval.

vi. To insure that all substantial and material decisions are approved by the Finance Ministry Team and the Board of Elders.

vii. To be responsible to the Board of Elders

Section C. Pastors and Ministry Directors

1. The Selection and Election of Pastors and Ministry Directors

- a. Pastors are elder qualified and licensed or ordained (by an approved entity) elected leaders who are chosen according to their Christian character and their demonstrated leadership and shepherding aptitude as per 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- b. Full-time Pastors will be nominated and affirmed by the Board of Elders and approved by the membership in a duly called meeting.
- c. Directors are non-ordained leaders of shepherding ministries of the church and are chosen according to the biblical requirement in Scripture for Elder.
- d. Directors and Part-Time Pastors will be nominated and affirmed by the Board of Elders.
- e. Pastors and Directors serve under the authority of the Board of Elders and the Senior Pastor.
- f. Specific job descriptions will be addressed in the staff handbook and policy manual as approved by the Board of Elders.

2. The Dismissal of Pastors and Directors.

- a. Full-time Pastors may be dismissed by the full Board of Elders by a 75% majority or by the membership in a duly called meeting.
- b. Directors and Part-Time Pastors may be dismissed by the full Board of Elders by a 75% majority or by the membership in a duly called meeting.

Section D. Deacons and Deaconesses

1. The Selection, Election and Dismissal of Deacons and Deaconesses

- a. Deacons and Deaconesses are elected leaders chosen for ministries according to the biblical requirements laid out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:2-3.
- b. Deacons and Deaconesses are nominated by the membership for consideration, affirmed by the Elder Board, and approved for service by the membership.
- c. Deacons and Deaconesses may be dismissed by the Board of Elders or by the membership in a duly called meeting.

2. The responsibilities of Deacons and Deaconesses
 - a. Deacons and Deaconesses serve under the authority of the Elder Board.
 - b. Deacons and Deaconesses serve as leadership of “support” ministries. Each will be in charge of a support ministry or a portion of a support ministry.
3. Specific job descriptions will be addressed in the policy manual.

Article VII Governance

Section A. Congregational Meetings

1. An annual business meeting of the members shall be held during the months of May or June, with the time and place to be determined by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall provide proper notification (proper notification is written notification, electronic or printed) to each member at least 14 days prior to the meeting stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the annual business meeting shall include, but not be limited to, the review and approval of the annual budget and the approval of candidates for leadership.
2. The Board of Elders shall call special meetings of the members in the same manner as section A. 1. Special meetings shall also be held within 90 days when the Board of Elders is petitioned in writing by three (3) Elders or by 20% of the members.
3. All voting shall be by secret ballot unless unanimously agreed upon. No voting by proxy shall be permitted. The Board of Elders shall have the option to accept signed absentee votes from active members unable to attend a meeting. Such votes will not be counted as attendance for the purpose of determining a quorum.

Section B. Quorums

1. A quorum for conducting all annual or special meetings of the members shall be at least 30% of the members.
2. A quorum for conducting all board and ministry team meetings shall be 50% of the established members.

ARTICLE VIII - Amendments

Section A. Proposals

1. Members of the congregation may propose amendments to the Constitution. The amendment shall be submitted to the Board of Elders in writing, signed by 20 percent of the membership and must be received by the board at least 60 days prior to the congregational meeting.

Section B. Procedure

1. The Board of Elders shall provide proper notification (proper notification is written notification, electronic or printed) to the membership at least 30 days before the congregational meeting. A meeting explaining the proposed amendment shall be scheduled at least 14 days prior to the congregational meeting.

ARTICLE IX No By-laws

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