

Emmanuel Community Church

By-laws

PREAMBLE

A New Testament church is an organized, ordered body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, consisting of both members and officers, who dedicate themselves to follow the guidelines set forth in Scripture regarding worship, obedience, and church government, whose first order of concern is with God's glory and God's kingdom.

We, Emmanuel Community Church, constitute and dedicate ourselves as a corporate body of believers to the Scriptural ideal that our membership to this body shall "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining the full measure of perfection found in Christ." (Eph. 4:12-13 NIV)

The purpose of these By-laws are to formulate in writing the structure and procedures for this local assembly of believers, so to organize ourselves in accord with our understanding of New Testament principles and patterns of church life and leadership. This document forms the Biblical basis for

- what we believe (doctrine),
- how we define who makes up this corporate body (membership),
- qualifications for membership and leadership (government), and
- the ultimate direction and goals of our united efforts in service to Christ (ministry).

We desire that these By-laws portray our intention to follow the Scriptural guidelines for the governing of our Lord's church. This document reflects our current comprehension of God's Word regarding doctrine, membership, government, and ministry. In order to more accurately represent biblical formation, function and direction for this community of believers, this document remains open to reflection, evaluation, alteration, or revision in order to provide the necessary freedom to minister more effectively.

ARTICLE I **NAME**

The name of this church and corporation shall be Emmanuel Community Church, ECC.

ARTICLE II **PURPOSE**

This church exists for the glory of God, demonstrated by worshipping Him in spirit and truth, equipping believers for life and ministry, proclaiming God's grace to unbelievers, and serving the needs of the community and the world.

The corporation is organized exclusively for religious and charitable purposes and has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

ARTICLE III **DOCTRINE**

Section 1. Primary Doctrines

Scripture

We believe the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God in its original documents. We believe it to be the final and infallible standard of faith and Christian living in Jesus Christ. We believe Scripture is properly interpreted when understood in its grammatical, historical, and literary context, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. (Mt. 5:18; Lk. 16:17; Jn. 10:34-35; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Isa. 55:11; Ps. 119; 2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11; Jn. 16:13-14; 1 Cor. 2:12-13)

God

We believe in one living and true God, the Creator of all, Who is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being and attributes, Who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that each person of the Godhead has the same nature, essence, attributes and perfections, each being equally worthy of human worship. (Isa. 40:28; Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 1:3; Jn. 8:58; Acts 5:3-4; Mt. 28:19)

General Revelation

We believe mankind is able to come to a knowledge of God only through God's gracious self-revelation, for God is transcendent and incomprehensible. God has revealed Himself to all humanity in general revelation through His created order, His providential care, and the individual conscience. We believe that God graciously receives those who believe this general revelation; however, they are only able to do so by means of the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. The universal response to God's self-revelation, apart from this work of the Holy Spirit, is willful rejection. (Isa. 40:18; 1 Tim. 6:16; Ps. 8:1; 19:1-6; Rom. 1:18-21; 2:14-15; Acts 14:17; 17:27; Jn. 6:37; Mk. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 2:14-16; Rom. 3:10-12)

Special Revelation

We believe that God has specially and particularly revealed Himself and His redemptive plan to mankind through the Bible, prophets, angels, theophanies, dreams, visions, and miracles, but most perfectly by means of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:19-21; 2 Chr. 24:19; Gen. 18:1; 22:1; Mt. 1:20; Heb. 1:1-3; Jn. 1:1, 14; Col. 2:9)

Mankind & Sin

We believe God specifically and purposefully created the first man out of inanimate matter, and the first woman from out of the man's body. They bore the image of God—as does every human being, each one a descendant of the first man and woman. We believe that as Adam rebelled against God, his innocent nature was transformed into a sin nature, with the result that all his descendants have been conceived with that same sin nature, bringing about separation from God and physical death. Because of their sin nature and the sins they've committed, men and women universally stand condemned before Holy God, and in need of salvation. (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7, 21-22; 3:20; 5:1-3; Rom. 3:22-23; Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 5:12-14; Jer. 17:9; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18-20; 8:7-8; Col. 1:21)

Jesus Christ

We believe that in order to redeem mankind, God the Son became a man without ceasing to be God. He who eternally existed with the Father, being one in nature and essence, but different in person, was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has two distinct natures, Godhood and manhood, perfectly and inseparably joined together. We believe that He provided the perfect grounds for mankind's salvation through His sinless life, His death on the cross, and His bodily resurrection from the dead. We believe that He has ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of the Father interceding for believers as their High Priest. (Jn. 1:1, 14; Col. 2:9; Jn. 8:58; 10:30; Phil. 2:5-8; Lk. 1:34-35; Gal. 4:4; Rom. 3:21-26; 1 Pet. 2:22; Acts 2:23; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; Acts 1:9; Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 Jn. 2:1-2)

Salvation

We believe that, in accordance with the Father's eternal plan, He chose for Himself a people of His own possession from every people, language, and nation, whom He would call, justify, sanctify, and glorify. Being spiritually dead in sins and trespasses, we believe that fallen man is unable to respond favorably to the call of God in the gospel until the Holy Spirit of God enables him to believe and repent, and thus be saved. (1 Pet. 2:9-10; Rev. 13:7; 14:6; Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 8:7-8; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 1:16-17; Jn. 6:37, 44; 10:25-28; 12:32)

We believe that salvation is the gift of God received by grace alone through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. We believe that the Father has permanently set His seal on every one who believes in Christ by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit, guaranteeing that those who have been justified will be glorified. We believe that genuine faith in Christ will produce the fruit of good works in the believer's life. (Eph. 2:8-9; Jn. 1:12-13; Rom. 6:23; 8:9-10; Eph. 1:13-14; Rom. 8:29-30; Jms. 2:18-26; Eph. 2:10; Tit. 2:11-14; 1 Jn. 2:5; 3:24)

Holy Spirit

We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ through regenerating, indwelling, instructing and empowering believers. (Tit. 3:5; Rom. 8:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14; Jn. 16:13-14; Acts 1:8)

The Church

We believe that the universal Church is made up of all those who have exercised saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Head of the body, Christ rules supremely as the authority and glory of His Church. (Mt. 16:18, 1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)

We believe that the local church is an organized assembly of immersed believers, existing for the purpose of bringing glory to God by means of careful attention to Scripture, loving fellowship, and faithful prayer. We believe that believers in a local church observe the two ordinances of water baptism and communion, actively seeking to make Christ known in the world by both word and deed. We believe that under the headship of Christ, the local church has the right and responsibility to decide and govern its own affairs. (1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35; Heb. 10:25; Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 4:2; Mt. 28:16-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 1:8; Jn. 13:35; 1 Cor. 6:1-5; Acts 6:1-6)

End Times

We believe that the day is coming when the Lord will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. We believe in the personal and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus for His redeemed ones. We believe that every person from every age will be bodily raised from the dead: the believer to everlasting joy in the presence of the Lord, the unbeliever to everlasting damnation, separated from the Lord. (2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 9:27; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Tit. 2:11-13; 1 Pet. 1:3-7; Rom. 13:11-12; Dan. 12:1-3; Mt. 25:46; Jn. 5:28-29; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)

Section 2. Clarifications and Contemporary Issues

Any clarifications of the above doctrines, including other important matters of faith, as well as the elders' views on contemporary moral and ethical issues as is deemed prudent or profitable shall be placed in the Elders' Handbook.

ARTICLE IV MINISTRY

Section 1. Philosophy of Ministry

We believe that each member of this church is a believer-priest having the privilege and responsibility of serving God's kingdom. It is the duty of the leadership to equip each member to effectively minister in the church and in the world according to the gifts God has given them by His Spirit. In this regard the ministries of this church shall be built around its members rather than a set structure of program; i.e. the structure of its ministries will be dynamic, growing out of identified needs in our community and in keeping with the spiritual gifts and talents of our members.

Section 2. Teaching and Leading Ministries

Even though the beliefs and practices of this church are open to evaluation and alteration, anyone leading or teaching in any capacity must not promote views which contradict Scripture, the By-laws, or Elders' Handbook. If a question arises concerning a particular belief or practice, the matter should be brought before the elders for its consideration in light of Scriptural teaching. In this way we hope to encourage openness to learning and new understanding of truth without confusion and division.

ARTICLE V GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Autonomy

This church shall be self-governing in all matters, and shall not be under the direction or control of any denomination or ecclesiastical convention. The members of ECC choose their ruling elders as their representatives. These, along with the pastor-teacher, shall equally serve as the church's leadership: independent and fully equipped with all that is required for the government of the church.

Section 2. Authority

Under the headship of Christ, the authority of this church shall reside in the congregation's eldership, elected by the membership of the church. These leaders shall be responsible and accountable to the church and shall be sensitive to its needs and expectations in carrying out

their ministry. Likewise, members of the congregation shall recognize and respect their leaders and be in submission to them (1 Cor. 16:15-18; Phil. 2:29; 1 Thess. 5:12-13) as those who are accountable to God for the spiritual well-being of the church (Heb. 13:17).

Section 3. Elders

The leaders of the church shall be biblically qualified elders (1 Tim. 3:1-7). The specific responsibilities of the elders, the method of their selection, their term in office, and frequency of meeting shall be in accord with the By-laws.

Section 4. Deacons

When deemed necessary by the elders, biblically qualified deacons (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:8-13) shall be selected to assist them in ministry. Their specific responsibilities, the method of their selection and term in office shall be in accord with the Elders' Handbook.

Section 5. Corporate Board

The board of elders shall serve as the corporate board of directors as outlined in the By-laws.

Section 6. Association

Emmanuel Community Church is a Baptist church in voluntary affiliation with the Conservative Baptist Association of America and its local regional organization (Northwest Conservative Baptist Association).

Section 7. Organization of the corporation

<i>Board of Directors:</i>	The Board of Elders
<i>President:</i>	The Chairman of the Board of Elders
<i>Vice-President:</i>	The Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders
<i>Secretary:</i>	Appointed by the elders
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Appointed by the elders

ARTICLE VI MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualification and Reception

- a. Membership will be extended to all those 18 years of age and older who have completed the ECC membership class designed and directed by the pastor and/or elders, elder interview, affirmation by the elders, and presentation to the church body.
- b. All persons who affirm their faith in Jesus Christ, have given public profession of that faith through believer's baptism, and submit themselves to the beliefs and practices set forth in the By-laws of this church shall be eligible for membership.
- c. If a prospective member previously held membership in another church, the elders of Emmanuel shall initiate contact with the leadership of the other church to confirm the prospective member was a member in good standing.

- d. Upon completion of the above steps, the elders shall interview each prospective member to discern the genuineness of their faith, to clarify reasons for leaving their former church, and to articulate member expectations. Collectively, the elders shall review each member applicant; if deemed to be healthy for both the individual and church body, they shall be received into the membership of ECC at a public meeting.
- e. Upon confirmation the Pastor-Teacher becomes a member of the church.

Section 2. Membership Classification

- a. Regular members (see Section 1).
- b. Student members — Those believers who are college/seminary students and wish to participate as members of ECC, yet also wish to retain ties to their “home church,” may become student members of ECC. They must meet all the qualifications outlined above in Section 1 and will have all the privileges of regular membership.
- c. Associate members — Those believers who are missionaries and wish to participate as members of ECC and are regularly in attendance, yet also wish to retain ties to their “home church,” may become associate members of ECC. They must meet all the qualifications outlined above in Section 1 and will have all the privileges of regular membership.

Section 3. Membership Responsibilities

- a. The members of ECC shall continuously seek to live a life worthy of and consistent with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. In their character, they shall continuously strive to be holy and humble, growing in knowledge and in joy of their salvation, submissive to Scriptures and the elders’ spiritual oversight, quick to seek justice, quick to forgive.
- b. In their conduct, they shall invest themselves in prayer for the leadership and ministries of ECC, and their resources cheerfully and regularly toward the support of the church’s ministry. They shall commit themselves to the spreading of the gospel to all nations. They shall maintain strong, biblically sound families. They shall actively use their gifts and talents to bring glory to God and further the ministry.
- c. The members shall affirm those elders presented to the church body.
- d. The members shall vote on issues presented at the annual or specially called business meetings.
- e. The members shall affirm the budget presented by the elders at the annual meeting, review and affirm expenditures outside of the annual budget exceeding \$5000.

Section 4. Member Privileges

- a. All formal leadership positions (elder, deacon, ministry team leader) in the government and ministry of this church shall be held by qualified members.
- b. Voting and office holding privileges shall be limited to members.

Section 5. Termination

- a. Any member may be dropped from the membership roll at his or her own request.
- b. Any member who becomes a regular member of another church will be removed from the membership roll.

- c. When a member of the church dies, he or she will be removed from the membership roll.
- d. If a member ceases to attend any of the regular meetings of the church and fails to show personal interest in the ministry of the church, and the elders have unsuccessfully attempted to restore the individual's fellowship, that person's membership shall be terminated.
- e. The elders may remove (or restore) a person from (or to) membership under the conditions outlined in Article VII, Section 2. This step shall be made known to the church body as part of the disciplinary process.

ARTICLE VII PRESERVING UNITY AND PURITY

Section 1. Resolution of Disagreements

In the event of serious disagreement with a decision made by one of the leaders of ECC, the one holding the disagreement shall go to the leader(s) in question (Mt. 5:23-24; 18:15; Lk. 17:3) and deal with the situation in a spirit of humility, gentleness, forgiveness, and understanding (Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:13). If the individual still thinks he or she has not been heard by the church leader in question, that person should request a meeting with all the elders at which time the situation is heard. After hearing and praying through the situation, the elders shall make their decision on the matter before the Lord, and the individual shall submit to the leading of the Lord through the elders (Heb. 13:17).

Section 2. Discipline

- a. The privilege of discipline shall be the responsibility of every member for the purpose of the continual healing, helping, and restoring of one another to live under the lordship of Christ.
- b. When one of the people in our fellowship falls into sin, the individual learning of this incident shall personally approach the one in sin in the attitude (Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:13) and action (Mt. 18:15-17; Lk. 17:3; 2 Thess. 3:14-15) prescribed by Scripture. The goal in this process is repentance and restoration. If that goal is not initially attained, the individual learning of the incident shall take another brother or sister in Christ with him/her to confirm the facts of the incident and insure that the Scriptural process is being carried out (Mt. 18:16). If that endeavor proves unsuccessful to bring about repentance and restoration, the situation shall be brought to the attention of the elders, who will themselves be responsible to approach the one in sin. If the member still does not repent, he or she is to be presented to the church body as one being excommunicated from the fellowship of the church. If the person under discipline demonstrates genuine repentance, he or she may be reinstated to membership by the actions of the elders.

ARTICLE VIII ELDERS

Section 1. Purpose

- a. The purpose of the spiritual leadership of a church is to give spiritual oversight and to equip the membership for maturity and ministry as the body of Christ. (1 Pet. 5:2; Eph. 4:11-13)

- b. The elders are ultimately responsible to Christ, not to the congregation (Heb. 13:17), though the congregation empowers each man to serve in that capacity.

Section 2. Qualifications

- a. All candidates for eldership shall be men who are active members of the church, and who meet the qualifications set forth in Scripture. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9)
- b. The elders shall at the beginning of each term of service sign the doctrinal statement of the church and affirm their full agreement with the By-laws of the church.

Section 3. Elder Responsibilities

- a. Scripture gives the following responsibilities and authority to the elders in their ministry of accomplishing this task.
 - 1) Supervise by giving direction to the entire ministry of the church under the authority of Christ. (Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 5:17)
 - 2) Lead by being examples of servanthood. (1 Pet. 5:2-3)
 - 3) Shepherd God's church. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2)
 - 4) Teach and exhort. (1 Tim. 3:2)
 - 5) Refute false teachers; exhort/convict those who contradict the truth of Scripture. (Acts 20:27-30; Tit. 1:9)
 - 6) Study God's Word and pray. (Acts 6:4)
 - 7) Pray for the sick. (Jms. 5:13-15)
- b. The elders shall supervise the administration of the ordinances.
- c. The elders are responsible for making decisions after prayer, Bible study and fasting that they might discern the mind of Christ (cf 1 Cor. 2:16). Decisions of the elders, then, shall be made by unanimity.
- d. The Elders shall create and maintain an Elders' Handbook, containing additional clarifications related to the doctrines and practices of the church. This handbook will also contain policy statements related to the operation of the church and various ministries, details of church organization, and the elders' views on contemporary moral and ethical issues as is deemed prudent or profitable.
- e. This board shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any board member, as long as appropriate time and notice is given to each member. Before final decisions can be made and action taken, attempts must be made to notify absent members of discussions to solicit their input.
- f. The elders shall appoint committees/boards/ministry teams to conduct the ministry of the church. They shall oversee the appointment and removal of all volunteer ministry personnel.
- g. The elders shall prepare and present an annual budget.
- h. The pastor-teacher selected by the church shall serve as facilitator and moderator of the elder board. He shall establish the agenda for board meetings, having solicited input and suggestions for their meetings from other members, and shall preside over the meetings of

the elders. Each year, a chairman, vice-chairman, and board secretary shall be selected from among the elders. The duties of the vice-chairman and secretary may be combined in one person, if necessary. In the absence of a pastor-teacher, the chairman shall assume the responsibility of facilitator and moderator of the board. The secretary of the board shall keep records of the board's business.

Section 4. Selection and Tenure

- a. An elder shall be called for a two-year term and shall be eligible for reappointment to successive two-year terms upon recommendation of the elders and affirmation of the congregation.
- b. The elders shall recommend a man to the congregation for the office of elder for a 90% vote of affirmation by a quorum of 75% of the membership present at a meeting called for that purpose. The vote of affirmation shall be by secret ballot.
- c. The elders shall present the man they recommend at least four weeks prior to the vote of the affirmation, so that prayerful consideration may be made by the congregation of the man's qualifications to hold the office of elder.
- d. There shall be no set number of men who can hold this office.
- e. The man/men called to serve as pastor-teacher of this church shall automatically become a perpetual member of the board of elders until his association with the church ceases.

Section 5. Pastor-Teacher

- a. The pastor-teacher shall be responsible for the preaching of the Word, equipping members of the body for works of service, serving as lead shepherd of the church.
- b. Upon recommendation of the Search Committee a man may be called to this position with a 90% majority vote of a quorum of 75% of the membership present at a meeting called for that purpose. Voting will be by secret ballot, and the candidate shall not be present when the vote is cast. Upon being called, and the candidate's acceptance of that call, he shall automatically become a member of the church and a member of the board of elders.
- c. He shall hold this position as long as it is apparent to him and the elders that he is displaying the biblical qualifications of an elder, properly carrying out the responsibilities of his position and called by God to serve the church in this capacity. His ministry will be reviewed annually along with the rest of the elders as defined below.
- d. If not in the budget, his wage, allowances, vacation and other pertinent items shall be determined by the elders and approved by the church prior to his call. These shall be reviewed at least annually by the elders in preparation of the budget. Changes in remuneration may be made at any special business meeting of the church.

Section 6. Resignation

- a. Resignations of elders shall be made in writing to the chairman of the elders.
- b. The resignation shall be effective on the date specified in the letter. The membership of the church shall be notified of the resignation.

Section 7. Removal

- a. On completion of the dispute-resolution procedure as defined in the By-laws (Article VII), 51% of the membership may by means of signed petitions call for a vote of reaffirmation of an elder(s).
- b. The elders may remove another elder for not adhering to the By-laws.

Section 8. Roles of Authority

- a. Plurality of leadership — Each elder shall have an equal voice on the board; collectively they have authority over the congregation, and that authority is conferred to them by Christ and the Holy Spirit. (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17)
- b. Defined Roles — The pastor-teacher is one of equal stature among the other elders. He has the distinct role of being engaged in the full-time work of “preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17), deriving income from that work (1 Tim. 5:18). He will be given considerable authority to make decisions and provide leadership in many areas of responsibility which is delegated to him by the elder board. The pastor-teacher will have a strong leadership roll in the church, while having equal governing authority with the other elders, yet will be subject to the authority of the elder board as a whole.

Section 9. Review

- a. Board Review — The entire board of elders shall no less than annually review each other’s ministry and qualifications. The purpose of the review is to acknowledge strengths, identify and implement plans for improvement, growth, and/or take corrective actions. The review actions may include: compensation adjustment, suggestions for improvement, guided supervision, leave of absence, suspension, or dismissal.
- b. Congregational Review – At the conclusion of a two-year term each elder must be reaffirmed by the membership to serve another term by a 90% vote by a quorum of 75% of the membership present at the annual meeting.

Section 10. Limitation of Authority

- a. Though having considerable authority over the church, the elders do not have unlimited authority. Though names of new leaders come from the board, they must be elected/affirmed by the church membership.
- b. Specific areas requiring congregational input:
 - 1) calling a new pastor-teacher.
 - 2) church discipline.
 - 3) major new directions in the ministry of the church.
 - 4) large financial decisions or purchases. Expenditures outside of the annually approved budget in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) in any one fiscal year must receive the approval of 75% of the membership present at a special meeting called for that purpose.

ARTICLE IX **SUPPORT STAFF**

On behalf of the church, the elders may, at their discretion, gainfully employ personnel (e.g., custodian, church secretary) to carry out certain tasks in the operation and maintenance of the church. The stipulations of the job description/contract shall be determined and reviewed annually by the elders. All support staff are under the supervision of one of the elders to be designated by the collective board.

ARTICLE X **MINISTRY TEAMS**

Section 1. Formation

- a. The formation of ministry teams for the work of the church's ministry is at the discretion of the elders and the ministry leaders who assist them.
- b. Appointments to a ministry team are made by the elder or ministry leaders who oversee that aspect of ministry. If any member wishes to serve on a particular ministry team, he or she may contact the leader of that ministry.

Section 2. Pastoral Search Team

- a. Upon a vacancy in a pastoral staff position (such as a pastor-teacher, or associate pastor), the elders will appoint a search team consisting of members of the congregation with no more than half of the team members being elders. All those on the pastoral search team shall be pledged not to reveal any details of their deliberations until the team is ready to unanimously recommend to the elders their choice in writing. They are encouraged, however, to use judgment in keeping the church informed of their progress.
- b. If there is a vacancy in the pastor-teacher position, the elders will secure the services of an interim pastor-teacher with the approval of the church.
- c. The pastoral search team shall thoroughly investigate each prospective candidate with regard to his or her spiritual, educational, theological, moral, and practical qualifications for serving the needs of the congregation. The search team shall only present one candidate to the elders at a time and only such as they have unanimously agreed upon.
- d. Upon their approval, the elders will present the candidate to the church body, and may call upon the search team members to give their knowledge of the individual. The candidating process shall be arranged by the elders and the prospective ministry leader in order to give the church body as wide an exposure to the strengths and abilities of the candidate as possible. The elders shall call the candidate if the congregation casts a 90% affirmative vote.
- e. Following the candidate's election by the church, the elders shall send a letter to the candidate setting forth the conditions of the call. The letter shall have places available for the signature of the chairman of the elders and for the candidate to indicate that he accepts the call. The call is considered accepted when the signed letter is received back from the candidate.

- f. Upon receipt of the letter of acceptance from the candidate, the minutes and correspondence of the search team shall be destroyed (except correspondence submitted to the team by the person called) and the search team shall be disbanded.

ARTICLE XI **MEETINGS**

Section 1. Worship

Regular Sunday services (and at other times/days as determined by the church leadership) shall be held for public worship.

Section 2. Small Groups

Small group meetings for the purpose of accountability, fellowship, prayer, and study may be held as often as deemed appropriate.

Section 3. Special Purpose

Special meetings for the purpose of baptism, prayer, evangelism, Bible study, missionary work, et. al., may be held throughout the year.

Section 4. Business

- a. The Annual Business meeting of the church shall take place in September, prior to the beginning of the fiscal year on October 1. Along with other pertinent business, at this meeting church members shall approve the annual budget and affirm leadership personnel for the upcoming year of ministry beginning in October. This meeting shall be publicized at least four weeks in advance.
- b. Special meetings for the transactions of business (including the affirmation of additional leadership) may be called by the elders provided that a previous notice is given at a regular meeting of the church at least two weeks in advance. No business shall be transacted at these meetings without a quorum of 75% of the membership present.

ARTICLE XII **FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of this church shall close with the last day in September, and full financial reports shall be made as soon thereafter as possible.

ARTICLE XIII **BUDGET**

In conjunction with input from ministry leaders, ministry teams, and the congregation, the elders shall prepare a budget for each fiscal year. They shall distribute copies of the proposed budget to the membership at least four weeks prior to the annual business meeting. The budget shall be considered approved with a 75% affirmative vote of the members present at that meeting.

ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS

Upon recommendation of the elders, these By-laws may be repealed, amended, or added to by a 75% majority vote of the qualified voters present at any business meeting of the church. The proposed changes and notice of the meeting must be submitted to the church at least four weeks prior to the meeting, in writing.

ARTICLE XV DISSOLUTION

No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever benefit any donor, member, or officer of the corporation, nor shall any private individual be entitled to share in the distribution of any corporate assets. Upon dissolution of the corporation, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the corporation, the remaining assets of the corporation must be distributed to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one organized exclusively for religious purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. The elders shall decide the plan of distribution according to the above provisions.

September 26, 2004

These by-laws were officially adopted by the membership of ECC by ballot at our annual meeting on this date. These by-laws supercede all other previous by-laws and constitution of this local church body.