

Harvest

Evangelical Free Church

Constitution and Bylaws



Effective: Dec. 5, 2012

Harvest Constitution

Preamble

We, the members of the Evangelical Free Church of Story City, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ to His Church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

Article 1 NAME

- 1.100 The name of this organization shall be the Evangelical Free Church of Story City. (Amended to *Harvest Evangelical Free Church*)

Article 2 CORPORATE EXISTENCE AND POWERS

- 2.100 The corporate existence of the church shall begin on the date the certificate of incorporation is issued by the Secretary of State of the State of Iowa and shall continue perpetually thereafter unless dissolved as provided by law.
- 2.200 The church is organized exclusively for the charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposed within the meaning of 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- 2.300 No part of the net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any director or officer of the church or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the church affecting one or more of its purposes).
- 2.400 No officer of the church, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any church assets on dissolution of the church. No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, except as otherwise may be permitted in 501(h) of the Internal Revenue Code. The church shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) a political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- 2.500 Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the church shall not conduct or carry on activities not permitted to be conducted or carried on by any organization exempt under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or by any organization, contributions of which are deductible under 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- 2.600 As a means of accomplishing the foregoing purposes, the church shall have all of the general powers set forth in Chapter 504A of the Code of Iowa, and as it may hereafter be amended. These general powers shall be exercised exclusively for the attainment of the charitable, education, religious, or scientific purposes of the church as set forth in this Article.

- 3.1.1 **Team Formation and Duration.** The Elder Board, Deacon Board or Pastors may create ministry teams as needed. Teams formed to accomplish a limited task—like recommending a pastoral candidate or revising a mission philosophy—will dissolve when they have completed the purpose for which they were created.
- 3.1.2 **Team Leaders.** The Elder Board shall confirm individuals recommended as ministry team leaders. Ministry team leaders must be members, but other team members need not be.
- 3.1.3 **Team Accountability.** Ministry leaders and their teams are accountable to the pastor or board under which they serve and ultimately to the Elder Board.

Article IV Meetings

- 4.0 **Agenda Items and Reports.** All business meetings shall be conducted by closed agenda. Any member wishing to submit a business item shall submit the item in writing to the Elder Board at least two weeks prior to the business meeting. The leadership shall provide reports to the membership at least two weeks prior to the business meeting. . The Moderator shall conduct all annual business meetings of Harvest.
- 4.1 **Annual Business Meeting.** The annual business meeting of the church shall be held on the first Wednesday of December. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to receive reports of the church officers, to elect or approve church officers, and to transact any other necessary business of Harvest.
- 4.2 **Annual Budget Meeting.** A business meeting shall be held the first Wednesday of May for the purpose of approving the budget. The fiscal year shall end May 31. The leadership shall provide the congregation with budget proposals at least two weeks prior to the business meeting.
- 4.3 **Special Meetings.** Special business meetings may be called by the Elder Board or the Deacon Board. The Moderator may also call a special business meeting at the request of a quorum of the church membership. The leadership shall publicize the date and time of such meetings at a regular Sunday service of the church at least three days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall include the purpose of the special business meeting. Those present shall confine their deliberations to the publicized purpose of the meeting.

Article V - Quorum

- 5.0 Transacting business at any official meeting requires a quorum of 25% of the eligible voting membership.

Article VI - Amendments

- 6.0 These Bylaws and any policy statements may be amended by a simple majority vote of a quorum present and voting at any annual or special business meeting of the church, providing notification of the proposed amendment has been made to the membership at least two weeks prior to such meeting. Such announcement shall be made by the Elder Board.

until the voting members can elect a member to complete the term at the next congregational business meeting.

2.2.6 **Ministry Planning and Budget.** The Elder Board and Deacon Board shall meet together as they deem necessary during each year to assess, plan, vision, and resource ministry, and to empower leaders. This process shall include collaborating with ministry team leaders and annual budget preparation.

2.3 **CORPORATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

2.3.1 **Composition.** As required by the church constitution, the Board of Directors shall consist of the elected Elder Board members, Deacon Board Chairman, and the Church Treasurer. The Elder Board chairman shall serve as the chairman of the Board of Directors.

2.4 **OTHER OFFICERS**

2.4.1 **Treasurer.** The Deacon Board shall annually submit a recommended candidate for Treasurer for approval at the annual congregational business meeting. The Treasurer is charged with managing Harvest's finances and reporting to the Deacon Board, to which he or she is accountable.

2.4.2 **Church Clerk.** The Deacon Board shall annually submit a recommended candidate for Church Clerk for approval at the annual congregational business meeting. The Church Clerk is responsible for keeping records of Harvest, minutes of the congregational meetings, membership rolls, and other legal matters. The Church Clerk is accountable to the Deacon Board.

2.4.3 **Moderator.** The Deacon Board shall annually submit a recommended candidate for Moderator to be approved at the annual congregational business meeting. The Moderator is responsible for conducting congregational business meetings and seeing that reports, nominations and other items of business are prepared and made available to the congregation in a timely manner as required by other articles of these bylaws, or Harvest policy statements. The Moderator is accountable to the Deacon Board.

2.4.4 **Administrative Roles.** The Elder and Deacon Boards may create other administrative offices as needed.

Article III - Other Staff Positions and Ministry Teams

3.0 **OTHER STAFF POSITIONS**

3.0.1 **Paid Staff.** Other paid staff positions will be filled at the discretion of the Elder Board. The Deacon Board and Elder board shall collaborate to determine compensation and responsibilities for such positions.

3.0.2 **Paid Staff Resignation.** Should any person holding a paid position feel the need to resign, he/she shall give timely notice in writing to the Elder Board.

3.0.3 **Paid Staff Termination.** The Elder Board shall prayerfully and lovingly apply the principles of Galatians 6:1-2 in dealing with the correction, discipline, or termination of paid staff.

3.1 **MINISTRY TEAMS**

Article 3 AUTHORITY AND AFFILIATION

3.100 Authority: The congregation, at its annual and special business meetings, is the legislative and governing body of this organization.

3.200 Affiliation: This Church shall be affiliated with The Evangelical Free Church of America and its Central District Conference, and shall send delegates to their conferences, support their missions and unite in all mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ in the measure that the church itself may officially decide.

Article 4 PURPOSE

4.100 Sharing the Bible as God's truth.

Article 5 STATEMENT OF FAITH

5.100 The Statement of Faith of this organization shall be the same as the Statement of Faith of the Central District Conference and The Evangelical Free Church of America, which reads as follows:

5.101 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.

5.102 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.

5.103 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.

5.104 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 .

5.105 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.

- 5.106 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.
- 5.107 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.
- 5.108 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.
- 5.109 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.
- 5.110 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.

Article 6 MEMBERSHIP

- 6.100 Membership of this church shall be composed of those individuals who, through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been born again, who manifest the fruit of a true Christian life, who subscribe to the aforementioned Statement of Faith, and who are willing to support the church by their prayer, contributions and attendance.

revocation from the Elders may appeal for a vote of the congregation if they wish. A two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting is required to sustain Elder action.

- 1.2.5 **Member Rights.** Upon revocation or resignation, members immediately forfeit all membership rights.

Article II - Church Officers and Structure

- 2.0 All officers shall be members of Harvest.
- 2.1 **PASTORAL STAFF**
- 2.1.1 **Selection.** Harvest may issue a call to a pastoral staff candidate if the motion for such a call is approved by an eighty-five (85%) majority vote at any regular or special business meeting.
- 2.1.2 **Call and status.** Pastoral staff members shall be called for an indefinite period of time. Upon acceptance of his staff role, a pastor (and his wife) shall be added to the active membership of Harvest.
- 2.1.3 **Voluntary resignation.** Should a pastor choose to leave Harvest, he shall give the Elder Board thirty days' notice in writing.
- 2.1.4 **Correction or dismissal.** Should issues arise requiring discipline or termination, the Elder Board shall prayerfully and lovingly exercise the principles of 1 Timothy 5:19-20.
- 2.1.5 **Role.** The pastoral staff shall strive to equip the Christ-followers for the work of ministry. Pastoral staff members are expected to use their gifts as a team to further the mission and vision of Harvest (Ephesians 4:12).
- 2.2 **ELDER AND DEACON BOARDS**
- 2.2.1 The **Elder Board** shall consist of at least four spiritually active qualified male members and at least one member of the pastoral staff, as determined by the elected Elders. The selection of Elders shall follow the procedure outlined in the election policy statement. The Elders shall be responsible for leading the church body to pursue the great commandment and the great commission (Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 28:18-20).
- 2.2.2 **The Deacon Board** shall consist of at least five spiritually qualified active male members. The election of Deacons shall follow the procedure described in the election policy statement. The Deacons shall promote the spiritual growth of Harvest, through prayer, ministry and service, including aligning resources for effective ministry.
- 2.2.3 **Terms.** The terms of office for Elders and Deacons shall be for three years, their terms of office being so arranged, where possible, that one-third of their terms shall expire each year. An Elder or Deacon who has served two consecutive terms is not eligible for re-election to the same office for a period of one year.
- 2.2.4 **Board Chairman.** The Elder and Deacon boards shall nominate annually their respective chairman for approval by the congregation at the annual business meeting. The nominees shall be from those currently serving whose term will continue throughout the next year.
- 2.2.5 **Board Vacancy.** If a vacancy occurs on the Elder Board or the Deacon Board, the Elder Board shall appoint a qualified replacement

Harvest Bylaws

Article I - Membership

1.0 MEMBER CLASSIFICATIONS

- 1.0.1 **Member.** Members have full participation in the Harvest Evangelical Free Church (Harvest), including voting and holding elected office.
- 1.0.2 **Associate member.** Associate members have full participation in the church with the exception of voting privileges and holding elected office. They are not included in determining quorum.

1.1 MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

- 1.1.1 The applicant submits a completed membership application to the Elder Board.
- 1.1.2 At least two Elders interview the applicant about conversion, doctrine, and harmony with vision and mission of Harvest (See John 1:12-13; John 14:23-24).
- 1.1.3 The interviewing elders present a recommendation to Elder Board. The Elder Board may request additional meetings with the applicant if they wish.
- 1.1.4 The Elder Board votes to accept or reject the membership request. Acceptance into membership requires a unanimous vote.
- 1.1.5 Applicants who are at least eighteen years of age become voting members upon approval by the Elder Board. Approved applicants under the age of eighteen are classified as associate members until their eighteenth birthday.

1.2 CHANGE OF MEMBER STATUS

- 1.2.1 **Member to Associate Member.** The Elder Board may transfer members who have been inactive for more than six months to associate-member status. This requires unanimous agreement by the Elder Board and formal notice to the member. Any member who will be inactive at Harvest for six months or more is encouraged to submit a written request to the Elder Board to change his/her status to associate member.
- 1.2.3 **Associate Member to Member.** To reestablish full membership, an associate member shall submit a written request to the Elder Board for its approval. If the request is granted, the status change is effective immediately.
- 1.2.3 **Resignation of Membership.** Any member who wishes to resign his or her membership shall notify the Elder Board in writing. Resignations are effective once they have been acknowledged by the Elder Board. All resignations shall be reported at the following annual business meeting.
- 1.2.4 **Revoking Membership.** If any member shall conduct themselves in a manner which defies scriptural principles, morals, or character, the Elder Board shall call for a meeting with that member for the purpose of confrontation, repentance, and restoration (See Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1). If the member refuses to respond or conform to biblical standards, the elders may vote to revoke membership. A vote for revocation must be unanimous. A member who receives a vote of

Article 7

7.100

OFFICERS

The corporation affairs shall be managed by a Board of Directors. The membership of this Board, their election and their term of office is defined in the Bylaws of this church.

Article 8

8.100

PROPERTY

This church shall have the power to receive, whether by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Iowa 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 purchases of real estate or major construction and building renovations or additions must be approved by seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote of a quorum present at an annual, quarterly or special business meeting of the church.

8.200

All debts for the corporation shall be held in the name of the corporation. The personal and private property of the officers or members of the corporation shall not be used in the payment of the corporate debt.

8.300

In case of a division of the church (from which we pray God by His mercy will preserve us), the property of the church shall belong to those who abide by its Constitution and Bylaws.

8.400

In case of dissolution of the church organization, the property shall be assigned to the Central District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America, to enable said conference to renew the work or use the values thereof for further Gospel enterprises. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the organization, or when the church has not held an annual meeting for three years or when less than six (six) members remain.

Article 9

9.100

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution must be submitted to the members in writing and adopted as a preliminary step at a regular business meeting of the church at least three months prior to the annual meeting. They must be acted upon as previously adopted and without further amendment. At the succeeding annual meeting they can be acted upon for final adoption, but must receive the affirmative vote of two-thirds per cent (66 2/3%) of the membership present and voting.