

Constitution and Bylaws of Antigo Community Church

Ratified April 10, 2016

I. Name

The name of this organization shall be Antigo Community Church, herein also referred to as “the church.”

II. Statement of Faith

The Statement of faith of this church shall be the same as that of the Evangelical Free Church of America, herein also referred to as “EFCA,” and its Forest Lakes District.

EFCA Statement of Faith Adopted by the Conference on June 26, 2008:

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

God

1. 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.

The Bible

2. 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.

The Human Condition

3. 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.

Jesus Christ

4. 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.

The Work of Christ

5. 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.

The Holy Spirit

6. 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.

The Church

7. 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.

Christian Living

8. 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.

Christ's Return

9. 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.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. 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.

III. Standing

Antigo Community Church shall maintain membership with The Evangelical Free Church of America and its branches and with the Forest Lakes District of the Evangelical Free Church.

IV. Purpose

The purpose of Antigo Community Church shall be to glorify God by spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every way prescribed or approved by the Holy Scriptures through equipping a community of Christ followers to engage in such religious, educational, charitable, and benevolent work as the Constitution and Bylaws of this organization may determine.

V. Membership

Antigo Community Church shall receive as Members those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, give evidence by both confession and conduct that they are living in real fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and are in agreement with the Statement of Faith, Constitution and Bylaws of this church.

VI. Property Rights

Antigo Community 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 Wisconsin 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.

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

If the Members of the congregation vote to dissolve and cease to function as a church of like faith and practice, or if the membership should dwindle below 20 persons, or if no services are held for nine consecutive months, the property rights shall be assigned to the Forest Lakes District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America to enable said district to renew the work or use the values thereof for further Gospel enterprises.

VII. Government

Ultimate authority lies in Christ as the head of the church and in the Scripture as the basis for all faith and practice. This church shall remain free and self-governing. The government is vested in its membership and administered by its officers. In function, final authority shall reside in the membership, who shall approve and/or affirm Biblically qualified leadership to carry out Christ's purposes.

VIII. Officers

The officers of this church shall be the Church Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Clerk of the Congregation.

IX. Indemnification

This corporation shall indemnify any and all persons who may serve or who have served at any time as a Pastor, Associate Pastor or in another executive level staff position in the church, as a church officer or member of a church board or committee, as a youth leader for a church youth organization, or as a teacher or counselor of the church elected or appointed by the church or any board or committee of the church, against any and all expenses, including amounts paid upon judgments, counsel fees, and amounts paid in settlement (before or after suit is commenced) actually and necessarily incurred by such persons in connection with the defense or settlement of any claim, action, suit, or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties, or a party or which may be asserted against any of them or any of them, by reason of being or having been in one or more of the aforesaid positions, except in relation to matters as to which any such person shall be adjudged in any negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her duties. Such indemnification shall be in addition to any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any law, bylaw, agreement, or otherwise.

X. Constitutional Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution (other than the bylaws) must be submitted to the members at least three months prior to being voted upon at a congregational meeting where they shall be adopted if approved by a three-quarters majority vote of the Members voting.

XI. Bylaws of Antigo Community Church

1. Membership

A. Qualifications

- i. Antigo Community Church shall receive as Members those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, give evidence by their conduct that they are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and are in agreement with the Statement of Faith, Constitution and Bylaws of this church.
- ii. Members must have reached the age of 14 years old.

B. Admission

- i. People desiring membership should notify the Senior Pastor and/or an elder of their desire and share their testimony of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ii. Candidates must attend a membership class or its equivalent.
- iii. The Elder Board will determine whether to recommend candidates for membership. Recommended candidates shall be posted at least two weeks prior to voting. Any current Member with a valid reason for objecting to the acceptance of any candidate into the church shall immediately give the Senior Pastor and/or Elder Board scriptural reasons for their objections.
- iv. Acceptance shall be by a three-fourths majority at any special or annual meeting of the church.

C. Absence

Members absent from the church for a period of one year shall have their situation reviewed by the Elder Board and may be dropped from the membership list. Members may request to remain on the membership list by presenting the request and reason for absence to the Senior Pastor or Elder Board.

D. Withdrawal

When a Member joins another church, their membership automatically terminates. Any Member desiring to withdraw their membership should notify the Senior Pastor or Elder Board of their intentions. A letter of acknowledgment may be requested from the Clerk of the Congregation. An elder or staff member may request an exit interview from individuals withdrawing membership.

E. Discipline

- i. If a Member conducts himself or herself in a manner which, in the studied opinion of the Senior Pastor and Elder Board, is not in harmony with Scriptural principles and for which the Member does not show evidence of repentance, he or she shall be interviewed and counseled by the Senior Pastor and the Elder Board after the manner clearly indicated in the Word of God (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1). The restoration of the erring Member shall be the single purpose, and love the sole motivating force in these interviews.
- ii. If, however, the Member should choose to continue in his or her unrepentant conditions, he or she shall be excluded from membership. This can only be done by the church, upon a recommendation from the Elder Board and by a three-fourths majority vote of the Members at a special meeting or the annual meeting of the church.

F. Voting Rights

All Members in good standing 18 years or older have the right to vote in all matters coming before the annual and special meetings of the church.

2. Government

- A. Congregation: the ultimate ruling authority of the church shall be the voting membership of the congregation. The decisions reached at any annual or special meeting of the church shall be binding on all Members of the church. Congregational approval is required for: determination of membership, selection of Elders, calling the Senior Pastor, changing the Constitution and Bylaws, approving the annual budget, incurring long-term debt, making major purchases such as real estate, or dissolution.

3. Organization

A. Staff

- i. General: The staff shall consist of men and women who are called of God to vocational ministry. They shall give servant leadership to the area of ministry where they have been called to serve, directed by the Senior Pastor under the overall leadership of the Elder Board.
- ii. Senior Pastor: The Elder Board shall establish and maintain a written job description for the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall be supervised and evaluated by the collective authority of the lay members of the Elder Board.
- iii. The Senior Pastor shall be called by the church upon recommendation of the Elder Board and a 75% affirmative written ballot of those Members present at a properly noticed business meeting. The lay members of the Elder Board, acting in unanimity, shall have the authority to terminate the call of the Senior Pastor. In the instance of termination, the Senior Pastor shall be allowed to appeal the action to the congregation. A three-fourths written ballot vote of those Members present at a properly noticed business meeting is required to reverse the action of the Elder Board. Upon termination of a call, ninety day notice or ninety days severance pay are recommended, with exact terms negotiated by the Elder Board.
- iv. Other Staff Positions: Based on the annual budget approved by the church, the Senior Pastor and/or his designee shall have the authority to hire employees of the church as deemed necessary to assist the pastoral staff to accomplish the mission of the church. The Senior Pastor and/or his designee shall establish and maintain written job descriptions and direct the supervision and evaluation for all staff positions. The Senior Pastor shall have the authority to terminate the employment of staff if needed.

B. Boards

- i. General: one board, the Elder Board, shall provide leadership, oversight and service to Antigo Community Church, and shall be charged with managing its affairs between congregational meetings.
- ii. Elder Board: The Elder Board is a leadership board whose mission is to give leadership and oversight to the ministries and Members of Antigo Community Church. It is to guard the Biblical, spiritual, and ethical integrity of the church. The Elder Board shall work to ensure that the mission of the church is being accomplished, that the values of the church are being promoted, and that obedience to Christ as the Head of the Church is the norm. The Elder Board shall serve the church by overseeing the finances, facilities, and properties of the church, as well as such personnel matters as salaries and benefits. It shall be responsible to perform such other duties as are prescribed by the state of Wisconsin governing religious corporations. The Elder Board shall consist of five to nine laymen and the Senior Pastor. The congregation shall elect the lay members of the Elder Board for two-year terms until six consecutive years have been served. Elders shall be men who meet the qualifications for elders described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. If necessary, an erring Elder may be removed by unanimous vote of the other Elders.
- iii. Elder Nominating Committee: an Elder Nominating Committee shall determine a list of candidates for Elders to be presented to the Elder Board for their approval, and then to the congregation for final approval. Approval shall be by majority vote of those present at the annual congregational meeting, or special congregational meeting if needed to fill a vacancy. The nominating committee shall consist of the Senior Pastor, one lay Elder, and at least three Members who are currently not elders and shall be appointed by the Elder Board.
- iv. Financial Review Committee: the Elder Board shall regularly oversee a committee review of the financial records and processes. The Financial Review Committee will be comprised of two Elders and at least two other people versed in accounting procedures.

C. Officers

- i. Church Chairman: the Church Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the church and the Elder Board. Along with the Senior Pastor he shall provide leadership to the Elder Board. He shall be chosen from the lay members of the Elder Board, by the Elder Board at their first meeting following the annual meeting.
- ii. Vice Chairman: the Vice Chairman shall provide leadership along with the Senior Pastor to the Elder Board or congregational meetings in the absence of the Church Chairman. He shall be chosen from the lay

members of the Elder Board, by the Elder Board at their first meeting following the annual meeting.

- iii. Treasurer: the Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all moneys deposited in banking or investment institutions, and pay by documented means all approved obligations incurred by the church. Any non-budget expenditure in excess of one half of one percent of the annual budget must be approved by the Elder Board. The Treasurer shall make regular reports to the church at its business meetings, and monthly reports to the Elder Board, and sit in consultation with the Elder Board at its invitation. The Treasurer shall be chosen annually by the Elder Board at their first meeting following the annual business meeting, need not be an Elder, but must be a Member of the congregation in good standing.
- iv. Financial Secretary: the Financial Secretary shall keep a record of individual financial contributions to the work of the church, deposit all funds in designated accounts, send financial statements of gifts made during the calendar year to each contributor of record, and sit in consultation with the Elder Board at its invitation. The Financial Secretary shall be chosen annually by the Elder Board at their first meeting following the annual business meeting, need not be an Elder, but must be a Member of the congregation in good standing. One person cannot simultaneously serve as Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
- v. Clerk of the Congregation: The Clerk of the Congregation shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings and decisions at all business meetings of the church and the Elder Board and take care of all correspondence in the name of the church as assigned. The Clerk of the Congregation shall keep a correct listing of the membership, showing date and manner of their dismissal, and shall preserve in a safe place all the church records. The Clerk of the Congregation shall be chosen annually by the Elder Board at their first meeting following the annual business meeting, need not be an Elder, but must be a Member of the congregation in good standing.
- vi. If necessary, an erring officer may be removed by unanimous vote of the Elder Board.

4. Meetings

A. Congregational Business Meetings

- i. Annual Meeting: The annual meeting of the church shall be held before the end of the fiscal year at such time as may be decided by the Elder Board. The purpose of the meeting shall be to elect Elders, to receive written reports, to adopt a budget for the upcoming year, and to conduct any other necessary ongoing business.

The Church Chairman may conduct all meetings in the following order:

- 1) The reading of God's Word and prayer
- 2) Minutes of the previous meeting distributed and approved
- 3) Reception of new Members
- 4) Reports from the various officers
- 5) Reports from ministries or committees on their activities
- 6) Undecided, unfinished or tabled business
- 7) Elders elected if their terms expire or vacancies occur
- 8) New business
- 9) Closing prayer

ii. Special Meetings: A special meeting may be called by the Elder Board, or by the Elder Board in response to a petition by Members of the Congregation. If the meeting is called by petition, it shall deal only with the business for which the meeting was petitioned. Notice of special meetings, including the time, place, and purpose of the meeting shall be given by announcement at the Sunday services of the church at least one week prior to the date of the meeting/or written notice mailed in time to reach all resident Members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting.

B. Rules of Order: Robert's Rules of Order (revised) shall be a guide to governing meetings of this organization when it is not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

C. Quorum: All members in good standing 18 years or older present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business, subject to a minimum of at least 15 voting Members.

D. Voting: all matters shall be determined by vote as specified by these Bylaws, or by a majority vote (one more than half of all votes cast), or by a standard determined by the Elder Board prior to the meeting.

5. Operations Manual: the Elder Board may draft, approve, revise and/or remove position papers, policies and official documents which become the official positions, policies, and documents of the church provided that they do not conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of the Church. The Clerk of the Congregation shall maintain an updated Operations Manual containing the Constitution and Bylaws, and all current policies, position papers, and documents. The Elder Board shall regularly review the Operations Manual.

6. Bylaw Amendments: Amendments to the Bylaws may be made at any business meeting when said proposed Amendments have been presented to the congregation in writing and posted for at least two weeks prior to the business meeting. A two-thirds majority is required for passage.