

# Constitution of the Evangelical Free

## **Christ Community Church of Laguna Hills**

### Article I. Name

We, the members of the Evangelical Free **Christ Community** Church of Laguna Hills, in order to set forth our stand on the Word of God and to facilitate the orderly transaction of business, do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

### Article II. Statement of Faith

- ~~We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament, to be the verbally 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.~~
- ~~We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.~~
- ~~We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit 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, ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Advocate.~~
- ~~We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age, to convict men of sin, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.~~
- ~~We believe that man was created in the image of god, but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit, can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.~~
- ~~We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ by faith are born of the Holy Spirit and thus become children of God.~~
- ~~We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. These are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.~~

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- ~~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 are united together in the body of Christ, of which He is the head.~~
- ~~We believe that only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.~~
- ~~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.~~
- ~~We believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.~~
- ~~We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.~~

**Christ Community Church of Laguna Hills** holds to the March 2007 Revised and published Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America (see Appendix A). It shall use this Statement of Faith for its publications and for Elder and membership qualifications. If this Statement of Faith is further revised or rejected by the Evangelical Free Church of America, these changes shall be published and considered by the Elders with recommendations to the congregation through the process prescribed in this Constitution.

### Article III. Purpose

The purpose of this church is to make the pursuit of God and the advancement of His Kingdom the central priority of our lives by being and making disciples of Jesus Christ. to glorify God and to make and equip disciples to serve and to advance His Kingdom.

### Article IV. Affiliation

This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) and with the Southwest West District Conference of said denomination. While so affiliated, this church shall remain independent, self-governing and its own highest authority under God.

**Comment [A1]:** Clarification of Entities

### Article V. Membership

#### A. Qualifications for Membership

Any person shall be eligible for membership in this church who has accepted professes faith in Jesus Christ, has been baptized, as his personal

~~Lord and Savior, who is at least 18 years of age, and has acknowledged agreement with the statement~~ **Statement of Faith** and this ~~constitution~~ **Constitution shall be eligible for membership in this church.** The spirit of ~~membership and this church constitution shall be,~~ “In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ.”

## B. Admission to Membership

1. Application for membership shall be made to the Deacon Board.
2. The Deacon Board shall hear the ~~personal testimony~~ **profession of faith** of the candidate and consider the faith and life of the applicant. ~~They shall make recommendations to a following business meeting.~~ **Christian experience, assurance of salvation, subscribing to this Constitution and the Statement of Faith contained therein shall be considered.**
3. Recommendation for admission to membership shall be a unanimous vote of the ~~Board of Deacons~~ **Board**.
  - a. Any member of the Deacon Board objecting to the admission of an applicant for scriptural and/or constitutional reasons shall state the reason to that Board. The vote for membership by this Board shall be unanimous. Any vote for exclusion shall be cause to refer this matter to the ~~Elder~~ **Board of Elders** who will ultimately decide whether to recommend the party in question as a member at the next congregational meeting.
  - b. Any applicant not recommended for membership shall be advised by two **(2)** or more members of the Board of Elders of the reason and shall be given the opportunity to appear before that board to clarify ~~his/her~~ **their** position.
4. ~~The~~ **Upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders, the names of the individuals recommended for membership candidates shall be announced to the congregation in writing at least one week ten (10) days prior to the meeting in which they are to be voted upon.** ~~affirmed.~~ Any member of the congregation objecting to the admission of an individual for scriptural and/or constitutional reasons is encouraged to present the evidence to the Board of Elders **prior to the congregational meeting.**
5. Upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders, admission to membership shall be **affirmed** by a ~~two thirds majority vote of the members present at any regularly scheduled or specially called congregational meeting.~~
6. New members shall be ~~officially welcomed into~~ **announced to** the church fellowship at a regularly scheduled worship service. ~~subsequent to their admission.~~

**Comment [A2]:** Removed this duplicate wording... clarified below in section 4.

**Comment [A3]:** Several changes to clarify the sequence of events.

### C. Privileges and Responsibilities

It is the ~~concern~~ **intention** of the church in its ministry, teaching and fellowship groups to help every member, by God's grace, **to grow in Christ and the knowledge of His Word.** ~~to enjoy his Christian privileges and to share in the responsibilities of the church body. We encourage members, therefore, to have regular personal devotions, family devotions, and to share their faith as they have opportunity. We encourage~~ **expect** members ~~also~~ to participate in the activity of the church, to be **in** regular ~~in~~ attendance at church services, including the Lord's Supper, **to exercise their privilege of voting at congregational meetings and, and to make regular financial contributions and be joyful givers** as God has prospered them. **We urge our members to find a place to serve others in the church and to consider practical expressions of love in their community and the world.** (Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:23–25, I Corinthians 16:2).

### D. Termination of Membership

~~1.~~ Any member who ~~absents himself~~ **is absent** from all church services for **over one (1) year** ~~or more~~, except for illness, essential occupation or temporary absence from the community, and expresses no interest in ~~the attending church as a result of personal contact,~~ shall automatically cease to be a member of the ~~Evangelical Free~~ **Christ Community** Church of Laguna Hills and shall be advised in writing of the termination of his/her membership.

~~2.1.~~ Any member desiring to withdraw from membership in order to become a member of another congregation shall receive upon written request, a letter stating his/her status as a member of this congregation.

~~3.1.~~ A member may be removed from membership upon recommendation of the Board of Elders by a majority vote of the members present at any regular or specially called congregational meeting.

### E. Discipline, Dismissal and Restoration of Members

1. If any member **or regular attendee of the church** is guilty of gross misconduct or of espousing unsound doctrine contrary to the teachings of the Bible, he is to be dealt with according to the pattern of discipline set forth in Matthew 18:15–17. The restoration of the erring ~~member~~ **person** shall be the single purpose and love the motivating force in these interviews. **The following steps will be taken:**

~~2.1.~~ If the erring member should choose to continue in his/her unrepentant condition, one shall be deprived of membership.

a. **The erring person shall be confronted privately in a loving manner with the intent of clarification and, if warranted, repentance of his or her erring way.**

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Comment [A4]: Name Change

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Comment [A5]: We felt that in some cases, the person in question may not be a "member" but still someone under the discipline of our church.

Comment [A6]: The entire section below was added to clarify the proper steps to be taken in order to restore members to the church.

- b. Should the person acknowledge his or her sin and repent at any point in this procedure, the matter is resolved. Continued service with the church will be decided by the Board of Elders.
  - c. Should the erring person refuse to repent, the confronting member shall meet with the erring person in the presence of one (1) or two (2) witnesses from the congregation in order to further establish the facts and urge repentance. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, the additional witness could include an elder.
  - d. Should the erring person continue in his or her unrepentant state, the confronting member shall make the matter known to the Board of Elders. The elders will proceed as they deem appropriate and every person so charged shall have the opportunity to appear before the Board of Elders.
  - e. Should the erring person still refuse to repent, the Board of Elders will make the matter known to the congregation in order to urge individual members to appeal to the erring person. At this time, the Board of Elders shall use official correspondence to urge the erring person to repent.
  - f. Should the erring person remain in an unrepentant state, the Board of Elders shall inform the membership of their disciplinary action at a congregation meeting.
- 1) ~~The recommendation for removal from membership shall be by majority vote of the Board of Elders for scriptural or constitutional reasons upon the testimony of two or more witnesses.~~
  - 2) ~~1) Every person against whom such proceedings are to be brought shall be notified in writing at least fifteen days prior to the date of the meeting. Such notice shall state the charges to be brought and the time and place of the meeting.~~
  - 3) ~~1) Every person so charged shall have the opportunity to appear at such meeting in his/her own behalf.~~
  - 4) ~~1) At the meeting the accused shall be faced by his/her accusers with the evidence of the charges made.~~

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## F. Membership Records

The church shall keep a membership book-records containing the name and address of each member, and date of membership, and date of termination if membership is terminated. This will be kept by an individual designated by the Deacon Board.

## Article VI. Church Leadership and Duties

### A. Church Leaders

1. ~~Pastor~~-Pastors – to be called.

2. Board of Elders – to be ~~electe~~ **nominated by the Elder Nominating Committee and then affirmed by vote of the congregation.**

**Comment [A7]:** Resolving conflicts with other sections of this constitution.

3. Administrative Committees **Members** – to be appointed by the Board of Elders ~~and confirmed by vote of the membership.~~ **Committee Chairperson appointed by the Board of Elders and the committee members are affirmed by the Board of Elders unless otherwise specified in the Constitution**

**Comment [A8]:** This practice has not been done in many years, and therefore has been removed.

## B. Qualifications

1. Pastor(s) ~~The Pastor~~ **Pastors shall be licensed or ordained** ~~a minister licensed by the Evangelical Free Church of America, who is~~ **ministers** ~~who is~~ **and who** ~~sympathetic and cooperative with said denomination, the , and who~~ **subscribes to this constitution, and the church's statement of faith, and the statement of church values (see Appendix B).** ~~heroin. Also, the Pastor~~ **All Pastors** shall meet the scriptural qualifications of Elders referenced below.

**Comment [A9]:** The restriction that pastors should be licensed through EFCA is unnecessary.

**Comment [A10]:** Since we now have multiple pastors, this qualification should refer to "all".

2. Board of Elders – The qualifications of the Elders are set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. In addition, an Elder shall be a member in good standing and be at least 21 years of age.

3. Administrative Committees – The qualification of those serving on the various ministry committees are set forth in I Timothy 3:8–13. Likewise they shall be members in good standing ~~and at least be 21 years of age.~~

## C. Duties of the Church Leaders

1. Pastor(s) ~~The Pastor~~ **Pastors shall fulfill his** ~~their~~ **divine calling by** conducting public services, preaching the Word of God, administering the ordinances of the New Testament, watching over the spiritual welfare of the fellowship and leading its members in accomplishing its purpose (**Article III above** ~~Article III~~).

a. Senior Pastor – He shall be a member of the Board of Elders and an ex-officio member of all other Boards, committees and organizations of the church. He is to be a leader among leaders. ~~The relationship of other pastors to the Board of Elders shall be defined by the Board based upon the duties of each Pastor.~~

b. Associate Pastors – The Board of Elders may nominate an Associate Pastor to be an Elder candidate, subject to the congregation's affirmation. They may serve for an indeterminate term. The number of pastoral staff serving on the Elder Board at any one time shall not equal or exceed 50% of the total number of Elders without approval by the congregation.

c. Pastors shall be non-voting members in matters concerning their own employment, including salary, performance review, and termination.

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2. The Board of Elders – The Board of Elders shall have the responsibility to watch over the spiritual life and ministries of the church and shall assist the ~~Pastor~~ Pastors in the performance of ~~his~~ their duties, and administer the ordinances of the church. It shall have complete responsibility for the administration of all church business subject to the final authority of the congregation. ~~The Board of Elders~~ shall regularly report its decisions to the congregation using appropriate communication which may include letters, Emails, special meetings, or announcements during worship services.

~~2.3.~~ Officers of the Church – The Board of Elders shall elect its own officers, ~~consisting~~, who will also be considered the official officers of the Christ Community Church of Laguna Hills Corporation. These officers will consist of:

a. Chairman, ~~who shall preside~~ serve as Moderator of the Church. In addition to ~~presiding~~ over all meetings of the Board of Elders, the Chairman shall preside over congregational business meetings and shall assist the Pastor in the work of the church. He shall have power to call meetings involving the Board of Elders and also to call special congregational meetings at the direction of the Board of Elders (see Article XII. D below Article XII). ~~He shall appoint a Recording Secretary each year to keep accurate minutes for each congregational meeting.~~ He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

b. Vice-Chairman, ~~who shall act as Moderator~~ preside in the absence of the Chairman.

c. Secretary, ~~who shall also be the Clerk of the church.~~ The secretary shall keep accurate minutes for each board meeting as well as congregational meetings.

d. Treasurer, shall serve as the chairman of the Stewardship Committee.

4. Administrative Committees – The duties of the administrative committees shall be determined by the Board of Elders. (See Article VII Section D Article VII. D below)

#### D. Terms of Office

1. The ~~Pastor~~ Pastors – The ~~Pastor~~ Pastors shall serve for an indeterminate term.

2. Board of Elders – The Elders shall be elected for terms of three (3) fiscal years and, as far as practicable, one-third (1/3) of the Board of Elders shall be elected each year at the annual congregational meeting. An Elder, after serving a full three- (3) year term shall be ineligible for re-election until the lapse of one (1) year.

3. Administrative Committees Members – Members are appointed or reappointed each Fiscal year. ~~Their term of office shall be for three (3) years~~

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Comment [A11]: Clarifying the "Official Officers" of the church

Comment [A12]: Assigned to Board of Elders Secretary (see section c below).

Comment [A13]: The Treasurer is an official officer of the corporation.

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~~commencing with the fall congregational business meeting. Committee members, after serving one full three-year term, shall not be eligible for reappointment to that committee until the lapse of one year; however, they would be eligible for appointment to other committees.~~

Revised 5/24/93

## Article VII. Board of Elders

### A. Number

The Board of Elders shall consist of a minimum of five (5) elected members. The Board of Elders may vary its size subject to approval of the congregation.

### B. Vacating of Office

~~An Elder shall be presumed to have vacated his office if he ceases to be a member in good standing or if he moves from the community. An Elder may also be removed from office, for failure to attend regular meetings of the Board of Elders without reasonable cause or for conduct impairing his efficiency. If, after being admonished, there is no correction, he shall be removed from office upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Elders and ratification by the membership (Matthew 18:15-17). An Elder may also resign from the board for personal issues by submitting a letter to the Board of Elders.~~

### C. Board of Elders Vacancies

Any vacancy on the Board of Elders may be filled for the remainder of the term of the vacating Elder. The Board of Elders may appoint a member from the congregation. Any appointment shall be ratified at the next congregational meeting.

### D. ~~Administrating Committee Ministries~~ Administrative Committees

~~The Board of Elders shall organize itself annually according to the recognition of its members' spiritual gifts, interests and experience. Each Elder shall oversee one (1) or more administrative committees. The Board shall appoint all the administrative committee members that are necessary to accomplish the purpose of this church (Article III). All appointees shall be ratified by a majority vote of the congregation.~~

The Board of Elders may create special committees and appoint sufficient personnel members as it deems necessary for the duration of the need. The Elders may direct additional duties to each committee as the need arises. The following are typical, but not exclusive, administrative ministries to be overseen by the Board of Elders:

**Comment [A14]:** Wording Simplification:  
Added this text so that it could be removed from each of the descriptions below...

1. The Following Committees are required:

- a. Stewardship Committee – Under the direction of the Treasurer (Stewardship Elder), this committee has authority within the limitations of the budget in all matters dealing with the finances of the church. It shall submit in writing a monthly financial report to the Board of Elders as well as an annual report to the congregation. It shall consult with each of the Board of Elders members regarding the budgetary needs of their administrative committees at least 60 days before the annual business meeting. A proposed budget must be presented to the Board of Elders 30 days before the annual business meeting for their approval. The Treasurer will then submit the budget to the congregation for approval at the Annual Business Meeting. The Treasurer will be the Chairman, and the Financial Secretary shall be a member of this committee.
- b. Missions & Church Extension – Shall supervise all missionary activities and commitments. It shall seek to promote care and concern and coordinate training within the fellowship in response to the Great Commission at home and abroad.
- ~~a. Deacon Committee – Under the direction of the Deacon Chairman, this committee shall~~ Board – Shall supervise membership classes, administration of the Lord's Supper and baptisms; minister to the sick, shut-ins ~~or~~ and the bereaved by offering food and help; encourage church prayer for one another and to coordinate and enlist help for serving meals, and having church socials or picnics. It shall perform such duties as the Elder Board may direct. It shall consist of members appointed to coordinate each of the above mentioned ministries. The Deacon Board will create opportunities for promoting unity and will have a presence before and after Sunday morning service(s) to welcome and inform.
- c.
- d. Nominating Committee – The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Senior Pastor, four (4) non-pastoral members from the Board of Elders, selected annually by that Board and three (3) persons elected annually by the congregation. The vice-chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as the chairman of this committee. The committee shall seek to obtain the names of those qualified and willing to serve in the position of Elder. Nominees are to be approved by the nominating committee and the Board of Elders. Once approved, their names shall be released to the congregation at least two (2) Sundays before the annual congregational meeting. It shall meet as often as is necessary to perform its responsibilities as stated herein. The Nominating Committee shall also nominate candidates for the next nominating committee.
- e. Church Related School Boards – Any School which is officially recognized as being a ministry of Christ Community Church shall have at least one (1) active Elder who will serve as a member of the school board. The

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Comment [A15]: Name change to reflect current name of this committee.

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Comment [A16]: Clarification of duties

remainder of the School board shall be defined by the bylaws of said school.

2. The Following are typical, but not exclusive committees to be overseen by the Board of Elders.

2.a. **Worship Committee** – Under the Direction of the Chairman of Worship and the Pastor, it shall ~~Shall~~ supervise public worship services, music, choirs, musical features, ushering, and welcoming and shall perform such other duties as the Elder Board may direct. ~~The Music.~~ **The Director of Worship, Sound and Lighting** Coordinator and the Head Usher shall be members of this committee.

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~~a. Financial Committee~~ – Under the direction of the Chairman of Finance, this committee has authority within the limitations of the budget in all matters dealing with the finances of the church. It shall submit in writing a monthly financial report to the Board of Elders as well as a quarterly report to the congregation. It shall consult with each of the Elder Board members regarding the budgetary needs of their administrative committees at least 60 days before the annual business meeting. A proposed budget must be presented to the Elder Board 30 days before the annual business meeting for approval. The Chairman of Finance will then submit the budget to the congregation. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be members of this committee. This committee shall also

~~3.b. Facilities Committee~~ – Shall supervise all matters relating to the planning, acquisition, operation and maintenance of all church properties. This includes the opening and closing of facilities for all functions of the church and performing other duties as the Elder Board may direct.

Comment [A17]: These duties were formerly assigned to the "Financial Committee" but now fall under the Facilities Committee.

~~4.c. Youth Children's Ministries Committee~~ – Under the direction of Chairman of Youth, this committee shall ~~Shall~~ supervise all educational and recreational ~~childrens' ministries~~ activities, **discipleship**, such as children's ministries, youth programs, boys' and girls' clubs and the nursery. The chairman of any of these ministries, as well as any other persons appointed by the Executive Board, shall serve on this committee.

d. **Youth Ministries Committee** – Shall supervise all Jr. High and High School discipleship and youth programs.

~~5.a. Outreach Committee~~ – Under the direction of the Chairman of Outreach, this committee shall supervise all missionary activities and commitments. It shall seek to promote care and concern and coordinate training within the fellowship in response to the Great Commission at home and abroad. They shall perform such duties as the Elder Board may direct. The chairman of the W.M.S., F.C.L.F., Camp Registrar and Missionary Correspondent shall serve on this committee.

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~~6.a. Deacon Committee — Under the direction of the Deacon Chairman, this committee shall supervise membership classes, administration of the Lord's Supper and baptisms; minister to the sick, shut-ins or the bereaved by offering food and help; encourage church prayer for one another and to coordinate and enlist help for serving meals and having church socials or picnics. It shall perform such duties as the Elder Board may direct. It shall consist of members appointed to coordinate each of the above mentioned ministries.~~

~~7.e. Adult Ministries Committee — Under the direction of the Adult Ministries Chairman, it shall —~~ **Shall oversee Adult and College age Sunday Bible study and fellowship groups, School classes, Mid-Week Home Bible studies, Growth Groups and Visitation for the church membership. All adults will belong to one specific adult class. Each class will consist of a class chairman, coordinating couples who administrate class socials, class needs and visitation of new members; each class will also have its own teacher. The emphasis of these Adult classes is to care and nurture one another in small groups. As classes grow or membership increases, new classes will begin under leadership that is available. Home Bible studies and Growth Groups will be formed for the different levels of commitment and maturity.** ~~The Adult Ministries Committee will consist of a chairman, chairman of each Adult Sunday School class, a Growth Group Coordinator and a Visitation Secretary and others as needed.~~

**Comment [A18]:** Simplified text to better reflect our current church needs.

~~8.1. — Membership of the Administrative Committees — A designated Elder shall give leadership and oversight to administrative committees (Article VII, Sec. C). Each administrative committee will consist of members appointed by the Elder Board and approved by the congregation in September. The Elder Board may appoint special committees and sufficient personnel as it deems necessary for the duration of the need.~~

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~~9.1. Nominating Committee — The Nominating Committee shall consist of four members from the Board of Elders, selected annually by that Board and three persons elected annually by the congregation. The vice chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as the chairman of this committee. A secretary shall be selected from those elected to the committee by the congregation. The committee shall seek to obtain the names of those qualified to serve in elected offices as listed in Article VI. Nominations for Elders and nominating committee members from the congregation are to be approved by the individuals being considered, the nominating committee and the Board of Elders, prior to their names being released to the congregation at least two (2) Sundays before the annual congregational meeting. This committee shall prepare, distribute and count these ballots at the congregational meetings. It shall meet as often as is necessary to perform its responsibilities as stated herein.~~

# Article VIII. Pastoral Relations

## A. Pulpit Committee

When it becomes necessary to call a Senior Pastor, a representative Pulpit Committee, consisting of four (4) members from the Board of Elders and three (3) members at large, shall be named by the Board of Elders and ratified by the congregation. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the necessary steps to secure a Pastor. In seeking a suitable candidate, the committee shall consult the leaders of our district, the EFCA West District and take suggestions from the members of the church. The committee shall investigate the merits of every candidate under consideration in regard to his agreement with the Statement of Faith and Constitution, as well as his personal character, education, ministerial record and preaching ability in determining his fitness for this pastorate. Only one (1) candidate shall be presented to the congregation at a time. When a suitable person has been found, the committee shall recommend him to the Board of Elders, who shall make its recommendations to the congregation for its consideration.

**Comment [A19]:** This procedure is only practice for calling a senior pastor.

## B. Calling a Pastor

### 1. Senior Pastor Position

- a. The proposed call of a Senior Pastor shall come before the congregation at a specially called business meeting; notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two (2) successive Sundays.
- b. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present and qualified to vote shall be necessary to extend the call. The vote shall be by closed ballot.

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### 2. Associate Pastoral Positions:

- a. The creation of new Associate Pastoral positions shall be made by a recommendation of the Board of Elders to the congregation at a regular or specially called Congregational Meeting. A recommendation from the Board of Elders will be entertained at this meeting requesting authority to pursue and to hire additional staff.
- b. Filling previously approved Associate Pastoral positions may be done with or without forming a Pulpit Committee. Once found, a candidate shall be approved by the Board of Elders, and then shall be presented to the congregation for approval.

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### C. Pastoral Salaries and Annual Review

1. The initial terms of a Pastor's salary, vacation allowance and other benefits shall be established at the time of the call. In addition, the Pastor shall be entitled to attendance at the National and Southwest EFCA West District Conferences; any additional time shall be approved by the Board of Elders. ~~The Worship Committee shall be responsible for the pulpit supply in the Pastor's absence.~~
- 1.2. The Pastors' salaries shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Board of Elders prior to the finalization of the annual budget. ~~Any additional changes to the initial terms accompanying a Pastor's call shall be first recommended by the Board of Elders and then confirmed by vote of the congregation.~~
3. All pastors will be provided an annual written and verbal performance review by the Senior pastor/Pastor and/or the Elder responsible for the pastor's duties. This review is given to provide feedback of their performance during the previous year. The Senior Pastor's annual review will be given by the Chairman of the Elder board/Board of Elders.
4. Each Pastor will have a written job description given to him at the time of his calling. The job description will be reviewed and updated as necessary on an annual basis.

**Comment [A20]:** Added to specify that Pastors also get performance reviews.

### D. Terminating of Pastorate

1. The terms of this office may be ended upon thirty (30) days notification in writing on the part of the Pastor or the congregation. A Pastor shall first give his resignation to the Board of Elders before it is presented to the church.
2. Accusations against thea Pastor shall be considered in the following order:
  - a. They must be in writing; signed; and presented to the presiding Chairman of the Elder Board.
  - b. The accusations shall then be considered by the Board of Elders and if resolved in a meeting with the pastor to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned, no further action need be taken.
  - c. -If not so resolved, those signing the accusations must meet with the Board of Elders and the Pastor. The Board of Elders shall determine if further action is necessary. At this time the Southwest EFCA West District shall be advised and consulted. ~~A request for dismissal signed by one-quarter of the church membership and processed in the above manner must be presented to the membership of a specially called meeting of the congregation.~~

1) The Senior Pastor may be recommended for dismissal by a majority vote of the Board of Elders. A special congregational meeting will be called by the Board of Elders to present the recommendation. A majority vote, by closed ballot, of members present shall be necessary to carry the motion for dismissal. If dismissal is demanded, the pastoral tenure shall terminate immediately. Severance pay shall be determined by the Board of Elders. ~~and 30 days additional salary shall be paid.~~

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2) The Board of Elders may request a letter of resignation from an Associate Pastor. An associate Pastor may be dismissed by a majority vote at the Board of Elders. The church is to be informed of the action taken by the Board of Elders. If termination is decided, the pastoral tenure shall terminate and severance pay shall be determined by the Board of Elders.

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d. In the event the Senior Pastor ~~wins~~ receives a vote of confidence ~~of from~~ the church at such an election, all ~~officers~~ members signing such petition mentioned ~~above in Article VIII. D. 2 above~~ Section D, #2 of this Article, shall automatically relinquish ~~their offices~~ any elected or appointed position for the remainder of their ~~elected~~ terms.

## Article IX. Other Employees

### A. Calling

~~B.A. The addition of Non-Pastoral Staff shall be made by a recommendation of the Elder Board to the congregation at a regular or specially called Business Meeting. A recommendation from the Elder Board will be entertained at this meeting requesting authority to pursue and to hire additional staff with or without forming a Pulpit Committee.~~

Comment [A21]: Section A was inserted to better define "other Employees".

Non-pastoral staff includes, but is not limited to the following employees:

1. Program Directors including, but not limited to: Music Director, Nursery Director, Children's Director, and Youth Director.
2. Pastoral Interns
3. Office Staff
4. Paid Instrumentalists
5. Grounds Keepers & Janitorial staff

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## B. Hiring of Other Employees

1. Creation of new employee positions shall be made by a recommendation of the Board of Elders with approval of the congregation at a Congregational Meeting.
2. Employee Vacancies may be filled by the pastoral staff, with the approval of the Board of Elders.

## C. Supervision:

1. All ~~salaries~~ employees shall be under the general supervision of the Senior Pastor, ~~the pastoral staff,~~ and the ~~Elder Board of Elders.~~
- 1.2. ~~Such~~ All employees shall be provided with a written job description at the time of ~~call or hire.~~ The job description will be reviewed and updated as necessary.
- 2.1. ~~All salaries for pastoral staff and church employees will be reviewed prior to the annual congregational meeting in May.~~
3. The Pastors' salaries shall be reviewed. All employees' salaries will be reviewed by the Board Stewardship Committee prior to the finalization of Elders prior to finalizing the annual budget.
  - a.1. ~~All salaries for non-pastoral support staff will be reviewed by the Finance Committee prior to the annual congregational meeting in May.~~
- 4.1. ~~The Finance Committee shall draft recommendations for a proposed yearly budget which shall be submitted to the Elder Board for approval prior to the annual congregational meeting in May.~~
4. All employees will be provided an annual written and verbal performance review by their direct supervisor to provide feedback of their performance during the previous year. |

**Comment [A22]:** Moved to Section VIII above

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**Comment [A23]:** This was already explained above in Pastoral section.

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**Comment [A24]:** This is a duty of the finance committee, and is already stated above. It has nothing to do with the "Supervision" category.

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**Comment [A25]:** Added to clarify employee relations.

## Article X. Auxiliary Organizations

### A. Formation of Organization

The formation of an auxiliary organization ~~may~~ will be initiated only with approved by consent of the Board of Elders and the congregation.

### B. Leaders of Organizations

Presidents, leaders and/or chairmen of all organizations, including organized classes, shall be members of the ~~Evangelical Free~~ Christ Community Church of

Laguna Hills. Exceptions to this rule may be made on a temporary basis in cases of specific need by **with** approval of the Board of Elders.

## Article XI. Finances

### A. Income

Necessary finances for ~~conducting~~ **operating** the church, its programs and missionary outreach shall be obtained through voluntary tithes and regular offerings, **and rental income**. Additional pledges and free-will offerings may be taken as deemed advisable by the Board of Elders. Any fund raising, ~~entertainment, suppers, bazaars or other~~ projects held by the church or auxiliary organizations must be approved by the Board of Elders. This corporation shall not afford ~~pecuniary~~ **financial** gain, incidentally or otherwise, to its members.

**Comment [A26]:** Simplify Language

### B. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of this church shall be from June 1 to May 31.

**Comment [A27]:** Moved from Article XII section C

### B.C. Liability

The extent of personal liability, if any, of members for corporate obligations and the methods of enforcement and collecting are as follows:

No member, officer, director or other associates of this corporation shall be personally liable for any corporate obligations.

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### C.D. Stock

This corporation shall have no capital stock.

### D.E. Expenditures

Every conveyance, sale or mortgage of church property, real or personal, must be ratified by the congregation.

Expenditures not provided for in the budget greater than ~~\$5,000~~ **1% of the total annual budget** for one (1) item in any one (1) fiscal year shall not be made without approval of the congregation **except in the case of an emergency, in which case, a full written report will be given to the congregation within two (2) weeks following such emergency.**

**Comment [A28]:** Allows the amount to float over time with inflation and with the church budget. At this time, the amount would be less than \$10,000.

**Comment [A29]:** This clause makes it possible to resolve emergencies.

**E.F. Transfer of Funds**

No money in an approved designated fund shall be transferred from one fund to another fund without a two-thirds authorization majority vote of the voting members present at a congregational meeting.

**F.G. Designated Gifts**

The Board of Elder approves all new Designated Funds. Donations given to unapproved Designated Funds will only be accepted with the approval of the Elder Board. Unbudgeted gifts designated to charitable organizations, or unbudgeted church activities, programs, people or items, must be approved by the Trustee Board and the respective ministries under which these gifts would be administered. Donors are encouraged to petition the Trustee Board to include their gifts in the church budget.

**Article XII. Meetings**

**A. Public Services**

Regular public worship services shall be conducted every Sunday. Other public services may be arranged by the Board of Elders.

**B. The Lord’s Supper**

The Lord’s Supper shall be regularly observed as deemed appropriate by the Pastor and the Board of Elders. All Believers believers present shall be invited to participate, while nonbelievers will be asked to refrain.

**C. Business Baptism**

Water Baptism shall be performed for those professing faith in Christ and desiring to be baptized. Baptismal services shall be regularly scheduled by the Pastor and the Board of Elders.

**Comment [A30]:** Since Baptism is a requirement of membership, it should be highlighted here as well.

**C.D. Congregational Meetings**

1. The annual congregational meeting shall be held in the month of May at which time the Senior Pastor and all Elder Board of Elders members shall present a written report of the fiscal year’s activities. The fiscal year of this church shall be from June 1 to May 31.

**Comment [A31]:** Moved to Article XI section B

2. Additional Congregational meetings shall be held in May, September and January. Meetings

**Comment [A32]:** In practice, we have not held these meetings for many years.

- a. ~~Special business~~ **Additional** meetings may be called as often as the Board of Elders deems necessary. ~~Any business meeting~~ **and** must be announced in a written notice to members (**Email and** church bulletin will suffice) and at all public services during the ten (10) days before it is held. ~~Announcements of a special business meeting~~ **The announcement** must specify the purpose for which the meeting is called. Only the announced agenda may be acted upon.

Revised 5/24/93

- b. **The meeting may be called for multiple purposes including, but not limited to: communicating important Board of Elders decisions, disciplinary actions, staffing, and approval of expenditures outside of the budget.**

#### **D.E. Rules for ~~Business~~ **Congregational Meetings****

1. The chairman or vice-chairman of the Board of Elders shall moderate at all business meetings. Should both be absent, a member of the Board of Elders may be selected by the Board to preside at the meeting.

##### ~~2.1.~~ Rules of Order

- ~~3.2.~~ ~~Annual and quarterly business~~ – **All Congregational** meetings shall be conducted as follows:

- a. Scripture reading and prayer
- b. Approval of agenda
- c. Reading and approval of minutes
- d. Reception of new members
- ~~e.a.~~ Elders' reports
- e. **Written & Verbal Presentation of Annual Report including:**
  - 1) **Minutes from previous Congregational Meeting(s)**
  - 2) **Pastors' reports**
  - ~~1)3)~~ **Elders' reports**
  - ~~2)4)~~ **Committee reports**
- f. Undecided or unfinished business
- g. Election/approval of board members and special committees as needed
- h. New discussions:
  - 1) Action upon recommendation brought by officers and/or committees
  - 2) Action proposed by members of the meeting
- i. Closing prayer

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4.3. Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) shall be the parliamentary manual of this church except where it may be contrary to this constitution.

5.4. Ratification

- a. A simple majority of members shall decide every issue except when otherwise stipulated by the constitution.

### Article XIII. Authority

The congregation, at its ~~regular, special and annual business~~ congregational meetings, shall grant legislative and governing authority to the Board of Elders of this corporation.

### Article XIV. Voting

#### A. Eligibility

All members who are at least 18 years of age and in good standing are eligible to vote.

#### A. Appointments

~~Appointments by the Board of Elders may be ratified at any Congregational meeting and shall be by majority vote.~~

#### B. Elder Election

~~The election of the Board of Elders for any fiscal year shall be held at the annual business meeting in May.~~

#### C.A. Terms of Office

- ~~1. The term of office for Elder Board members shall be three (3) fiscal years. Approximately one third of the members shall be elected every year. No Elder may serve two successive full terms.~~
- ~~2.1. Administrative committee appointments shall be for a single two (2) year term, commencing with the fall congregational business meeting. Committee appointees may not serve two successive terms on any committee. Approximately one half of the members shall be appointed annually.~~

#### D.A. Vacancies

~~Any vacancy on the Board of Elders will be filled for the remainder of the term of the vacating Elder by the regular procedures for election at the next business meeting. Administrative Committee vacancies shall be filled for the balance of the fiscal year~~

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by appointment of the Board of Elders. They shall be confirmed by vote of the membership at the next regularly scheduled business meeting.

**E.A. — Nominees**

Nominations for the officers of the church and the Nominating Committee shall be presented by the Nominating Committee at the annual congregational meeting in May. The proposed slate of officers is to be mailed to members at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting.

**F.A. — Appointments**

Appointments by the Board of Elders may be ratified at any business meeting and shall be by majority vote.

**G.A. — Officer Election**

All church officers shall be elected by closed ballot. Election of officers ~~Elders shall be elected by closed ballot. Election of Elders shall be based on qualification (by guidelines of Article VI. B. 2 above Article VI).~~ Any nominee must receive a majority vote of members present to be elected.

**C. Absentee Ballots:**

Absentee ballots for the election of Elders may be obtained from the nominating committee by submitting a written request at least 24 hours prior to the meeting time. The ballot must be submitted to the nominating committee prior to the ~~business~~ congregational meeting.

**H.D. Quorum and Vote:**

Type of Meeting	Quorum	Vote Required
Annual Meeting	20%-voting membership	Majority present
Board of Elders Meeting	66%-voting membership	Elders Majority Vote
Quarterly/Special Meeting		20%-voting membership Majority present
Calling of Pastor	33%-voting membership	Closed Ballot – 2/3 majority present
Executive Board	2/3 members	Majority present

**Comment [A33]:** We have no "Executive board" anymore.

**Article XV. Property Rights**

- A. The church shall have power to buy, own and sell real property in its own name.
- B. Should the church membership vote to dissolve and cease to function as a church, or if the membership should be dissolved through some disaster, the property of the church, both real and personal, shall pass to the ~~Southwest~~ EFCA

~~West District Board. Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America to~~ enable said District to renew the work of this church or use the values thereof for further gospel enterprises.

C. In the event this church shall ~~vote~~ decide with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present at a specially called congregational meeting to unite or combine with another church, it shall not be considered to have been dissolved, and the property rights shall be retained by the new combined church.

~~C.D.~~ If a division occurs in the church, the name and property shall be retained as recommended by the Board of Elders, and confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a specially called Congregational meeting. If a two-thirds (2/3) vote is not attained, the name and property shall be retained by those adhering to the constitution as ~~determined~~ arbitrated by the District Superintendent and the ~~Southwest~~ EFCA West District Board.

**Comment [EU34]:** Elder board felt that this clarification was necessary. Old version did not clearly state what should be done in the case of indecision of direction of the church

## Article XVI. Amendments

Any article or section of this constitution may be amended by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at any ~~business~~ Congregational meeting. Written notice of such amendments must be mailed to all active members at least thirty (30) days prior to said meeting.

**Comment [EU35]:** "Business" meeting could be misinterpreted as "Elder board meeting"... we want to clarify that changes can ONLY be done by a 2/3 vote of the congregation.

## Appendix A

### Third Draft Revision of the Evangelical Free Church of America Statement of Faith:

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united in a common commitment to God's evangel--the gospel of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again to give us eternal life. To God's glory, the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. Our essential theological convictions are vitally connected to this gospel.

***God's gospel originates in and expresses  
the wondrous perfections of the eternal, triune 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.

***God's gospel is authoritatively  
announced in the Scriptures.***

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.

***God's gospel alone addresses our deepest need.***

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 sinful 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.

***God's gospel is revealed supremely  
through the Person of 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.

***God's gospel is accomplished  
through 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.

***God's gospel is applied by the power of 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, baptizes them into union with Christ and adopts them into God's family. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

***God's gospel is now embodied in the new community called 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. When celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances strengthen the believer, but they are not a means of justification.

***God's gospel compels us to Christ-like living and witness to the world.***

8. We believe that God's justifying grace also has sanctifying power to conform us to the image of Christ. Commanded by Christ to love God supremely and others sacrificially, we are to live out our faith with 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 final commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

***God's gospel will be brought to fulfillment by the Lord Himself at the end of this age.***

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ with His holy angels when He will bring His kingdom to fulfillment and exercise His role as Judge of all. This coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, requires constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

***God's gospel calls for a response that has eternal consequences.***

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel, 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. Our identity as the Evangelical Free Church of America is centered on God's evangel, the gospel of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again to give us eternal life. To God's glory, the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe. Our fundamental theological convictions are aspects of this gospel.

## Appendix B

### Statement of Church Values

This document, prayerfully and carefully written by the elders of this church, is intended to describe the basic attitudes, choices, and assumptions of our congregation. It answers the question, "to what are we devoted?" This value statement is both an introduction for those who are new to this church and a guide for those who will lead the church in the future. Our Statement of Faith defines in more detail what we believe and our constitution explains how we live and function as Christ's church.

We, the Christ Community Church of Laguna Hills, value...

- Scripture alone, which is our ultimate authority for faith and practice.
- Biblical doctrine, believing it is vital for maturing faith; it is inherently practical for life, and that through it we come to see the Triune God of the Bible as He has revealed Himself.
- Christ-centered preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God's Word, both Old and New Testaments, which shows Jesus to be the glorious fulfillment of redemptive history.
- Worship services that are Word-driven, Christ-centered, and Spirit-led, so that God will be glorified and honored and our joy may be truly found in Him.
- Church membership as a living commitment of the fellowship of believers in the local church, evidenced through faithful and consistent attendance, giving, prayer, loving service, and submission to biblical authority.
- A plurality of elders who humbly and lovingly shepherd the flock of God through godly example, biblical teaching, sacrificial service, and compassionate care.
- Church discipline, both formative by teaching and preaching, as well as corrective by confronting the unrepentant, as a way of showing our concern for Christ's holy reputation, our protection of His church, our love for one another, and our desire for restoration of the erring believer.
- Intentional disciple making through growth in knowing biblical doctrine, pursuing holiness, expressing sacrificial love to one another, and experiencing joy in serving.
- Evangelism that focuses on presenting both God's Law and the Gospel of redeeming grace, while fully trusting that only God can bring about the salvation of the lost by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone for God's glory alone.
- Missions ministry to the local community and the world at large, recognizing that our biblical duty is to joyfully spread the Good News of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.