

Evangelical Friends Church  
Eastern Region

**FAITH** & **PRACTICE**  
2023 EDITION



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### Notes:

Wherever the term “Yearly Meeting” appears related to the organization of the Church, it refers to the annual business sessions of the delegates of EFC-ER.<sup>1</sup>

All Scripture references are King James Version (KJV) or New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.

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<sup>1</sup> #420

**2023 Edition**

**SECTION ONE**

**FAITH**

The expression of the Faith upon which Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region is based is presented in this section of the Faith and Practice. It includes a brief historical background, a statement of doctrine, and a statement of testimonies.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

SECTION 100            DOCTRINE

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## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In seventeenth-century England, there arose many groups of seekers who were dissatisfied with the rigid forms of the Church of England and were searching for a more inwardly satisfying way of worship and life. George Fox (1624-1691) went, as a young man, to many priests seeking inner peace and received only irrelevant answers. One day he heard a Voice saying, "There is One, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." Joy filled his heart, and from this experience the central conviction of Friends was born – that the living Christ can speak directly to the need of every seeking soul.

In 1652 George Fox climbed Pendle Hill and was deeply moved by what he saw. Later he wrote in his Journal: "The Lord let me see a-top of the hill in what places He had a great people to be gathered." At Firbank Fell he preached for over three hours to a thousand people, and out of that gathering the Valiant Sixty arose to work with Fox in evangelizing all of England. In spite of severe persecution, Fox went about speaking in churches, homes, and fields with multitudes of people attracted to hear his message. Since religious freedom was as yet unknown in England, these early Quakers were imprisoned in great numbers under the foulest conditions. In spite of these sufferings, the number of Quakers multiplied greatly, and eventually they won – not only for themselves – but also for all, the Act of Tolerance which guaranteed religious freedom (1689).

From 1650 to 1690 Quakerism spread rapidly throughout the British Isles and to other parts of the world, including the English colonies on the western shore of the Atlantic Ocean. Historians have labeled the Quaker Movement during those forty years as the fastest growing movement of the Western world.

At that time no church was permitted to exist except the Church of England; hence the followers of Fox called themselves "Publishers of Truth", "Children of Light", "Friends of Jesus", and later "Religious Society of Friends." The origin of the word "Friends" is from John 15:14 when Jesus said: "You are my friends if you do what I command." The nickname "Quaker" was originally a term of derision and insult, but through the years has become a symbol of integrity. In more recent times, Friends of evangelical persuasion have used the term Evangelical Friends Church.

Restoring primitive Christianity was the goal of early Friends. They defined it as authentic, apostolic Christianity based on New Testament teaching with no frills. In other words, preaching the essentials and omitting the non-essentials. They were a people gathered as followers of Christ, baptized with the Holy Spirit, and communing with God (often in silence) as they waited for guidance of the Holy Spirit to share, whether in prayer, message, or exhortation based on a deep concern.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Friends seemed almost to forget the Biblical basis for their faith, putting a premium on silence as a way of worship. Speaking, reading Scriptures, and praying were considered intrusion. Called the Age of Quietism, unprogrammed meetings declined as they became active in social issues, such as fair treatment for Indians, refusing to participate in war, and responding to John Woolman's call to simplicity, frugality, and tolerance. As an itinerant preacher bent on abolishing slavery, Woolman carried his message to plantations of the South, boldly preaching equality for all. It is

noteworthy that prior to 1800 – more than 60 years before the Emancipation Proclamation – Quakers in North Carolina had liberated their slaves. During the Civil War, Friends assisted runaway slaves as part of the establishment of the “underground railroad,” a secret route to freedom in the North.

As the American West opened up after the Civil War, Friends migrated in great numbers. In the latter part of the 1800s, revivals and camp meetings throughout the Midwest were part of what has been called the “Great Revival.” Thousands were converted, and churches, including Friends churches, were crowded with new converts. It was at this time that pastored meetings came into vogue in order to disciple new believers. An emphasis was placed on ministering to children and youth in Sunday Schools and included music in a programmed worship format.

While the majority of Friends were simple, God-fearing people, there were some who became widely known. These include William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and peaceful negotiator with the Indians; Robert Barclay, Scottish gentleman, scholar, and theologian; John Woolman, best known for his anti-slavery work; John Greenleaf Whittier, poet; Stephen Grellet, French nobleman, who, escaping from the guillotine, became a vibrant Quaker evangelist in the remote parts of the United States; Elizabeth Fry, noted for prison reform in different parts of the world; and Joseph John Gurney, banker, scholar, theologian, and preacher who called the Society back from quietism to an evangelical position.

London Yearly Meeting, founded by George Fox, is the original organization from which all others have developed. Although boasting of never having had an official division, London Yearly Meeting has nevertheless changed over the years, reflecting some of the tensions which led to divisions in other parts of the Society of Friends. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was strongly evangelical, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it followed the trend of modern liberalism and became closely akin to the General Conference of Friends.

Currently there are five major groups of Friends: Hicksite, Orthodox, Conservative, Independent, and Evangelical Yearly Meetings. In their character they reflect major divisions which have occurred among Friends.

Friends General Conference (Hicksite) is a combination of Yearly Meetings which have their origins in the separation of 1828-29. The followers of Elias Hicks, who had been influenced by rationalism and unitarianism, separated from the Orthodox Friends. Today their meetings are united in keeping the tradition of unprogrammed meetings but are in serious tension between those with a humanistic philosophy and those who are Christocentric.

Friends United Meeting (Orthodox) came into being at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the Five Years Meeting. With a more appropriate name-change, since they meet every three years, it is currently a federation of Yearly Meetings of diverse character. The majority are predominantly evangelical, but there are a few Yearly Meetings whose liberalism has made them very comfortable in joining both the Hicksite and Orthodox branches of the Church.

Conservative Friends is a term applied to a group which has great cohesion without having a formal organization combining their Yearly Meetings. These have their roots in the teaching of John Wilbur, whose opposition to Joseph John Gurney led to separation in 1854. The difference was not so much doctrinal as it was a matter of older traditions concerning manner of worship in silence, Quaker garb, and other practices. Wilbur so emphasized the "Inner Light" that it sounded almost like infallibility. Gurney, on the other hand, laid great emphasis on the Scriptures as the guide for salvation.

There are several Independent Yearly Meetings which are not affiliated with any larger grouping of Friends. However, they honor their Quaker roots and basically seek to share the message of Friends as they interpret it.

Evangelical Friends believe in the Biblical teaching of entire sanctification<sup>1</sup> as a second work of grace. This is the position of George Fox, Robert Barclay, and Joseph John Gurney. The emphasis on the Holy Spirit, always characteristic of Friends, made the Wesleyan-Arminian teaching on holiness congenial to these Friends also. The baptism with the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the way God cleanses from the sinful nature and makes believers holy.<sup>2</sup> George Fox said, "and Christ did baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire and did thoroughly purge his floor and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Holiness is deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. The experience is called "perfect love."<sup>3</sup> John tells us, "because as He is so are we in the world."<sup>4</sup>

In 1965, the Evangelical Friends Alliance brought together four independent, distinctly Evangelical Yearly Meetings – Ohio (Damascus), Kansas, Rocky Mountain, and Oregon. The roots of this group (as is true of many Yearly Meetings in the Friends United Meeting) are in the Orthodox, Gurneyite trend. In 1987 the International Friends Conference on Evangelism was held in Guatemala with over 250 Friends in attendance from 25 countries. It was decided to internationalize the organization and so the Evangelical Friends International (EFI)<sup>5</sup> was formed. In 2008, the name was changed to Evangelical Friends Church International (EFCI).

EFCI is composed of five geographical regions for member Yearly Meetings and countries of mission endeavors: EFC-North America, EFC-Latin America, EFC-Asia, EFC-Africa, and EFC-Europe.

Currently the North America Region includes:

Alaska Yearly Meeting

Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region

Evangelical Friends Church – Mid-America Yearly Meeting

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<sup>1</sup> I Thessalonians 5:23

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 3:11-12

<sup>3</sup> I John 4:14-18

<sup>4</sup> I John 4:14-18

<sup>5</sup> Appendix B

Evangelical Friends Church – Southwest

Northwest Yearly Meeting

Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting

Additionally, mission endeavors are going on in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and the Navajo Nation.

EFC-Latin America: Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru.

EFC-Asia: Bhutan, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Taiwan, and Teachers in China.

EFC-Africa: Burundi, Congo, and Rwanda.

EFC-Europe: Albania, Croatia, Ireland, Hungary, Romania, and Serbia.

Because of the strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit and the teaching on holiness, EFC-North America is a member of the National Association of Evangelicals.

## DOCTRINE

The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region presents its Statement of Doctrine in the following Statement of Faith.

### 100 GOD

- a. We believe in one<sup>1</sup> eternal,<sup>2</sup> omnipresent,<sup>3</sup> unchanging,<sup>4</sup> personal<sup>5</sup> God; perfect in holiness,<sup>6</sup> wisdom,<sup>7</sup> love,<sup>8</sup> power,<sup>9</sup> and justice<sup>10</sup> without preceding cause or beginning;<sup>11</sup> creator<sup>12</sup> and preserver<sup>13</sup> of all things, visible and invisible.
- b. He exists as one divine being and yet as a trinity of three distinct persons, identical, inseparable, and equal in divinity, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup>
- c. God revealed Himself in the past in many and various ways, though supremely in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>15</sup> He continues to reveal Himself today through His creation,<sup>16</sup> the Holy Scriptures,<sup>17</sup> and the workings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of people.<sup>18</sup>
- d. He alone is worthy of our worship, honor, praise and thanksgiving, now and forevermore.<sup>19</sup>

### 110 JESUS CHRIST

- a. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Word who was with God and was God,<sup>20</sup> is the only begotten Son of God.<sup>21</sup> He was conceived by the Holy Spirit<sup>22</sup> and born of

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<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 90:1-2; Romans 1:20

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 139:7-12

<sup>4</sup> James 1:17; Malachi 3:6

<sup>5</sup> John 14:9

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16

<sup>7</sup> Romans 11:33

<sup>8</sup> I John 4:8

<sup>9</sup> I Chronicles 29:11-12; Isaiah 40:26-28; Ephesians 1:18-20

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 89:14; Romans 3:26

<sup>11</sup> Psalm 93:2

<sup>12</sup> Genesis 1:1; Romans 11:36

<sup>13</sup> Psalm 104:27-30; Colossians 1:16-17

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 14:16, 18, 23; II Corinthians 13:14

<sup>15</sup> Hebrews 1:2; John 1:18

<sup>16</sup> Romans 1:19-20

<sup>17</sup> II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21

<sup>18</sup> Acts 8:29; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6-10

<sup>19</sup> Galatians 1:5

<sup>20</sup> John 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16-17

<sup>21</sup> John 1:18; I John 4:9

<sup>22</sup> Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35



the Virgin Mary<sup>23</sup> and is the express image of the invisible God.<sup>24</sup> He combines within Himself both the divine nature of God and human nature in one perfect indivisible personality, the God-man.<sup>25</sup>

- b. He lived and suffered in the world to show the Way of Life.<sup>26</sup> He was crucified and died as the atonement for the sins of the whole world,<sup>27</sup> making the only provision whereby people can find forgiveness of sins and cleansing from all unrighteousness.<sup>28</sup>
- c. He died in our place<sup>29</sup> and was raised the third day for our justification;<sup>30</sup> He ascended into heaven<sup>31</sup> and sits at the right hand of God, ever living as our only Mediator and High Priest making intercession for us,<sup>32</sup> and from there will return again to receive His church unto Himself<sup>33</sup> and to judge the world in righteousness.<sup>34</sup>

## 120 THE HOLY SPIRIT

- a. We believe in the Holy Spirit, not as an impersonal principle or influence, but as a divine person,<sup>35</sup> and though distinct from the Father and Son, proceeding from both,<sup>36</sup> with whom He is equal in authority, power, glory, and titles.<sup>37</sup>
- b. He is the divine agent in conviction of sin,<sup>38</sup> regeneration,<sup>39</sup> sanctification,<sup>40</sup> and the believers' assurance.<sup>41</sup>
- c. He is given as an indwelling Presence to every believer to be a teacher,<sup>42</sup> guide,<sup>43</sup> and source of comfort.<sup>44</sup> He purifies the heart of the believer<sup>45</sup> and imparts at His own choosing spiritual gifts for service and the building up of the

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<sup>23</sup> Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34

<sup>24</sup> Colossians 1:15

<sup>25</sup> John 1:14; Colossians 2:9

<sup>26</sup> John 14:6; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 5:2; I Peter 2:21

<sup>27</sup> Romans 3:23-25; I John 2:2

<sup>28</sup> Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14; Titus 2:14

<sup>29</sup> I Corinthians 15:4; I John 4:10

<sup>30</sup> Romans 4:25; I Corinthians 15:4

<sup>31</sup> Acts 1:9; Ephesians 4:8

<sup>32</sup> Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24

<sup>33</sup> I Thessalonians 4:15-17

<sup>34</sup> Romans 2:16; II Timothy 4:1

<sup>35</sup> John 14:16-17, 26; 16:13-14

<sup>36</sup> John 15:26; 16:7

<sup>37</sup> Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14

<sup>38</sup> John 16:8

<sup>39</sup> John 3:5

<sup>40</sup> I Corinthians 6:11

<sup>41</sup> Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:6

<sup>42</sup> John 14:26

<sup>43</sup> John 16:13

<sup>44</sup> Acts 9:31

<sup>45</sup> Acts 15:9; I John 1:9

body of Christ.<sup>46</sup> He produces in believers the fruit of the Spirit<sup>47</sup> so that they may conform to the image of Christ.

### 130 HOLY SCRIPTURE

- a. As with early Friends, we believe that all Scripture,<sup>48</sup> both of the Old and New Testaments, is given by inspiration of God, without error in all that it affirms,<sup>49</sup> and is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.<sup>50</sup> It is fully authoritative and trustworthy, fully sufficient for all believers now and always,<sup>51</sup> and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.<sup>52</sup>
- b. Thus, the declarations contained in it rest on the authority of God Himself,<sup>53</sup> and there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatever. They are the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound as Christians to believe,<sup>54</sup> and of the moral principles which are to regulate our behavior.<sup>55</sup> Only such doctrines as are contained in the Scripture can be regarded as Articles of Faith.<sup>56</sup> The Holy Spirit, who inspired the Scripture, must ever be its true interpreter.<sup>57</sup> Whatever any person says or does which is contrary to the Scripture, though under profession of the guidance of the Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a delusion.<sup>58</sup>
- c. The Scripture demands of believers complete obedience<sup>59</sup> and is made increasingly open to those who study and obey it.<sup>60</sup>

### 140 CREATION

- a. We believe creation to be that free act of the triune God,<sup>61</sup> the Father,<sup>62</sup> Son,<sup>63</sup> and Holy Spirit,<sup>64</sup> by which in the beginning and for His own glory<sup>65</sup> God made, without use of pre-existing material,<sup>66</sup> the whole visible and invisible universe.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> I Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:7-13

<sup>47</sup> Galatians 5:22-23

<sup>48</sup> II Timothy 3:16

<sup>49</sup> Psalm 19:7-11

<sup>50</sup> Psalm 119:4, 105

<sup>51</sup> Psalm 119:89; I Peter 1:25

<sup>52</sup> II Timothy 3:16-17

<sup>53</sup> I Thessalonians 2:13

<sup>54</sup> Romans 1:16-17

<sup>55</sup> Psalm 119:9

<sup>56</sup> John 17:17

<sup>57</sup> John 14:26; 16:13; II Peter 1:21

<sup>58</sup> II Peter 1:20; I John 4:1

<sup>59</sup> Psalm 119:4; I Corinthians 4:2

<sup>60</sup> I Corinthians 2:4-5, 12

<sup>61</sup> Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:26-27

<sup>62</sup> Hebrews 1:2

<sup>63</sup> Colossians 1:16

<sup>64</sup> Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30

<sup>65</sup> Psalm 19:1; Colossians 1:16

<sup>66</sup> Hebrews 11:3

<sup>67</sup> Nehemiah 9:6; John 1:3

## 150 SATAN

- a. We believe in the existence of the Evil One, "that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan,"<sup>1</sup> the old deceiver who by his own choice rebelled against God<sup>2</sup> and became evil, who tempted our first parents to sin,<sup>3</sup> and who through their disobedience brought about the fall of the human race,<sup>4</sup> with all its attendant degeneracy, unhappiness, and misery.<sup>5</sup>
- b. Satan demonstrated his evil character and purpose in his perpetual opposition to Christ by the temptations in the wilderness,<sup>6</sup> and to His people and to His kingdom.<sup>7</sup> But Satan's power is limited,<sup>8</sup> and in God's own time he will be chained and finally cast into the lake of fire.<sup>9</sup>
- c. While Satan is active in this world, Christians through the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them are able to resist Satan's temptations and have victory over him.<sup>10</sup>

## 160 HUMANITY

- a. The Creation: We believe that by a definite act God created man and woman in His own image, holy and capable of knowing and obeying God's will, in order to glorify God and enjoy His fellowship forever.<sup>11</sup>
- b. The Fall: We believe that Adam and Eve fell from this original state by a voluntary act of disobedience,<sup>12</sup> thus suffering the immediate loss of a perfect relationship with God<sup>13</sup> and making self the center of their lives. By this act, they suffered spiritual death, and sin entered the world and death by sin, so that death passed upon all.<sup>14</sup> The devastating effects of the Fall extend to all areas of God's created order, including our physical bodies, our relationships with others, and the cosmos.<sup>15</sup>
- c. We further believe that as a consequence of the Fall, all people are born with a nature which is thoroughly sinful<sup>16</sup> and not subject to the law of God,

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 20:2

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 12:7-9

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 3:1-6; II Corinthians 11:3

<sup>4</sup> Romans 5:12, 15-19

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:18-22

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-15

<sup>7</sup> II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2

<sup>8</sup> Job 1:12; 2:6; I Corinthians 10:13

<sup>9</sup> Revelation 20:1-3, 10

<sup>10</sup> I Corinthians 10:13; I Peter 5:8-11; I John 4:4

<sup>11</sup> Genesis 1:26-27, 31; 2:7; James 3:9b

<sup>12</sup> Genesis 3:6-24; Romans 5:12-13

<sup>13</sup> Genesis 2:17; Isaiah 59:2

<sup>14</sup> Ezekiel 18:19-20; Romans 5:12-14, 17-19; 6:23a; Psalm 51:5; 58:3

<sup>15</sup> Genesis 3:14-19; Genesis 6:5-6; Romans 5:12, 18; Romans 8:19-23

<sup>16</sup> Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:12-16; Titus 1:15; Ephesians 2:1; Ephesians 4:18-19

so that only through the operation of the grace of God can they repent and call upon Him. However, by God's grace infants are not under condemnation but are heirs of salvation.<sup>17</sup>

- d. Equality: We believe that, as image bearers of God, all human beings are of infinite and equal value, worthy of dignity and respect from conception through natural death.<sup>18</sup> We reject all forms of racism and any philosophy that claims the inherent superiority of one group of people over others.<sup>19</sup> We recognize and celebrate the great diversity of human ethnicities as we together reflect the image of God, affirming our biblical duty to seek justice for all people.<sup>20</sup>
- e. Gender: We believe that, as part of God's good design for humankind, people are purposefully and immutably created as male or female. These two distinct genders together reflect the image and nature of God and are essential to God's design for human flourishing. Consequently, God's holy purposes in creation serve as the foundation for our identity as male or female in accordance with our biological sex at birth.<sup>21</sup>
- f. Family: We believe that family is the basic unit of human relationship, and as such is also the foundational unit of society. From the beginning, God blessed and encouraged families, commanding Adam and Eve to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."<sup>22</sup> The Bible describes children as a gift to be received with joyful gratitude and to be lovingly disciplined in the ways of the Lord.<sup>23</sup> The Trinitarian family of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit demonstrates the unique bond of self-giving love and nurture that God intends to be shared within our own families.<sup>24</sup>
- g. Singleness: We believe that those who are called to singleness within God's family receive a good gift from God as seen in the life of Jesus<sup>25</sup> and later affirmed by the apostle Paul.<sup>26</sup> It is an opportunity for focused communion with God, increased opportunity for community with others, and service for God's purposes.<sup>27</sup>
- h. Marriage: We believe that God designed marriage for humanity. As first described in Genesis and later affirmed by Jesus, marriage is a God ordained, covenant relationship between a biologically born male and a biologically born female.<sup>28</sup> This lifelong, sexually exclusive relationship brings

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<sup>17</sup>Matthew 18:3

<sup>18</sup> Genesis 9:6; Psalm 139:13-16; Matthew 10:29-31

<sup>19</sup> Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; Acts 17:26; James 2:8-9

<sup>20</sup> Leviticus 19:15; Isaiah 1:15-17; Zechariah 7:9-10

<sup>21</sup> Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1-2; Matthew 19:4-6

<sup>22</sup> Genesis 1:28

<sup>23</sup> Psalm 127:3-5; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 2 Timothy 1:5

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2

<sup>25</sup> Matthew 12:46-50

<sup>26</sup> 1 Corinthians 7:25-35

<sup>27</sup> Matthew 19:12

<sup>28</sup> Genesis 2:18, 20b-25; Matthew 19:4-7

children into the world and thus sustains the stewardship of the earth. Biblical marriage – marked by faithfulness, sacrificial love and joy- displays the relationship between God and His people.<sup>29</sup> We believe it is God's intention that sexual relations occur only within the marriage covenant between one man (husband) and one woman (wife).<sup>30</sup>

## 170 SALVATION

- a. We affirm the truth that salvation can only be found through faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>31</sup> We believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>32</sup> through the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit,<sup>33</sup> persons may be reconciled to God and recovered from their fallen state through justification,<sup>34</sup> regeneration,<sup>35</sup> sanctification,<sup>36</sup> and ultimately the resurrection of the body.<sup>37</sup>
- b. Justification: In response to sinners' repentance, surrender of themselves, and sincere faith in the power and sufficiency of Jesus' atoning death and shed blood,<sup>38</sup> God pardons them from past sins and declares them righteous, not for anything they have done but because of the obedience and atoning death of Christ.<sup>39</sup>
- c. Regeneration: In response to sinners' repentance, surrender of themselves, and sincere faith in the power and sufficiency of Jesus' atoning death and shed blood, God also by His gracious power makes them new creatures.<sup>40</sup> By the Holy Spirit they are born again into the family of God<sup>41</sup> to a new life of love to God and to people.<sup>42</sup> Their minds are enlightened to understand His truth,<sup>43</sup> and their wills are renewed to do His will,<sup>44</sup> as He begins to conform them to His image. The evidence of this regeneration of the believer is the fruit of the Spirit.<sup>45</sup>
- d. Sanctification: We believe that children of God at the moment of their conversion do receive the Holy Spirit.<sup>46</sup> As they trust in Him and obey His will,

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<sup>29</sup> Ephesians 5:31-32

<sup>30</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:1-3

<sup>31</sup> John 14:6

<sup>32</sup> Galatians 1:3-5; Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>33</sup> John 3:5; Romans 5:5

<sup>34</sup> Romans 4:25; 5:1; Titus 3:7

<sup>35</sup> Colossians 3:9-11; Titus 3:5

<sup>36</sup> II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2

<sup>37</sup> I Corinthians 15:20-22

<sup>38</sup> Ephesians 1:7; I John 1:8-2:2

<sup>39</sup> Romans 3:23-26; II Corinthians 5:20-21

<sup>40</sup> II Corinthians 5:17

<sup>41</sup> Romans 8:14-16

<sup>42</sup> John 3:3; I John 4:7-21

<sup>43</sup> John 16:12-15; Romans 12:1-2

<sup>44</sup> I John 2:17

<sup>45</sup> Galatians 5:22-23

<sup>46</sup> John 3:5-8; Romans 8:14-17; I Corinthians 12:13

they manifest more and more of the fruit of the Spirit, conform more and more to the likeness of God, and thus are being continuously sanctified.<sup>47</sup>

- e. It is also the will of God that believers receive the fullness of the Spirit,<sup>48</sup> which He will graciously grant in response to their full consecration to His will and their faith in Christ's promises and in His atoning death.<sup>49</sup> Sanctification is thus a process in which the Holy Spirit continuously disciplines the believer into paths of holiness and an act in which He cleanses the heart from an imperfect relationship and state.<sup>50</sup>
- f. We further believe that the fullness of the Holy Spirit does not make believers incapable of choosing to sin, nor even from completely falling away from God, yet it so cleanses and empowers them as to enable them to have victory over sin, to endeavor fully to love God and people, and to witness to the living Christ.<sup>51</sup>
- g. Evangelical Friends believe that the security of the believer, even for eternity, is indicated in God's Word and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit to the individual, but we do not hold this security to be unconditional. As repentance and faith are the human conditions of acceptance of God's free offer of salvation, so faith manifested by obedience is necessary to continuance in that salvation.<sup>52</sup>

## 180 THE CHURCH

- a. We believe that the Church is made up of all those from the apostles until now,<sup>53</sup> both the triumphant dead and the living,<sup>54</sup> who through response to God's gracious offer of salvation<sup>55</sup> by repentance of their sins<sup>56</sup> and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior<sup>57</sup> have been born again<sup>58</sup> as new creatures in Christ.<sup>59</sup> This Church is spiritual in nature,<sup>60</sup> universal in scope,<sup>61</sup> holy in character,<sup>62</sup> and redemptive in its life and purpose.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Galatians 5:22-25

<sup>48</sup> Acts 2:38-39; Ephesians 3:14-19; 5:18; I Thessalonians 5:23-24

<sup>49</sup> Romans 8:5; 12:1-2

<sup>50</sup> John 17:17; Romans 6:1-2, 22-23; Acts 15:8-9

<sup>51</sup> II Corinthians 7:1; II Peter 2:20-22; Acts 1:8

<sup>52</sup> Hebrews 5:9; I John 2:4

<sup>53</sup> Matthew 16:18

<sup>54</sup> I Thessalonians 4:14-17

<sup>55</sup> Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>56</sup> II Chronicles 7:14; Mark 1:14-15; Acts 2:38

<sup>57</sup> John 1:12; Romans 5:1

<sup>58</sup> John 3:3

<sup>59</sup> II Corinthians 5:17

<sup>60</sup> John 4:23-24; I Peter 2:5

<sup>61</sup> I Corinthians 12:12-27; Hebrews 12:22-24

<sup>62</sup> Psalm 24:3-4; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-8

<sup>63</sup> Luke 24:46-48

- b. Its purposes are to make disciples of all nations by its witness to the grace and love of God<sup>64</sup> and to live as a loving fellowship, which builds up one another in the grace and knowledge of God.<sup>65</sup>
- c. The Church accomplishes these purposes by its existence as particular local congregations gathered out of the world<sup>66</sup> and as associations of congregations in larger organizations<sup>67</sup> under the leadership and service of those called and gifted to such service.<sup>68</sup> It worships in prayer,<sup>69</sup> thanksgiving,<sup>70</sup> and song;<sup>71</sup> diligently studies the Word of God;<sup>72</sup> witnesses to and proclaims the gospel of God's Son;<sup>73</sup> exercises the gifts of the Spirit;<sup>74</sup> administers discipline;<sup>75</sup> and performs works of blessing and service both physical and spiritual to its members and to all in need.<sup>76</sup>

## 190 LAST THINGS

- a. We believe that upon death the mortal body returns to the dust from which it came.<sup>77</sup> The spirits of the righteous will experience joy and life in the presence of God, but the unrighteous will be separated from His presence in the darkness and torment of their evil.<sup>78</sup>
- b. We believe in the literal and personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth at a time not revealed.<sup>79</sup> At His return the righteous dead will be raised and the righteous living will be changed to their glorification in bodies like their Lord's glorious resurrected body – bodies which they possessed in earthly life but now with glorified, heavenly qualities. The unrighteous will also be resurrected for the final judgment.<sup>80</sup>
- c. We believe that Christ will consummate His kingdom over all people and nations by His final triumph over Satan.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

<sup>65</sup> Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 4:11-16

<sup>66</sup> I Corinthians 1:2; Acts 11:22; I Thessalonians 1:1

<sup>67</sup> Romans 16:4, 16; I Corinthians 16:19; II Corinthians 8:1; Galatians 1:2, 22-23

<sup>68</sup> Ephesians 4:11-13; Hebrews 13:17

<sup>69</sup> Isaiah 56:7; Luke 19:45-46; I Thessalonians 5:17; James 5:13-16

<sup>70</sup> Psalm 100:1-4; Philippians 4:6; I Thessalonians 5:18

<sup>71</sup> Psalm 100:2; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16

<sup>72</sup> Acts 17:10-11; Colossians 3:16; I Peter 2:2-3

<sup>73</sup> Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8

<sup>74</sup> I Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 4:11-13; II Timothy 1:6

<sup>75</sup> Matthew 18:15-17; II Corinthians 2:5-8; Galatians 6:1

<sup>76</sup> Matthew 25:34-40; John 13:12-17

<sup>77</sup> Genesis 3:19; Psalm 103:14-16; Ecclesiastes 12:6-7

<sup>78</sup> Luke 16:19-31; 23:39-43

<sup>79</sup> Matthew 24:42-44; John 14:3; I Thessalonians 4:15-18

<sup>80</sup> Romans 6:5; Philippians 3:21; John 5:28-29; Revelation 21:1-8

<sup>81</sup> I Corinthians 15:20-26; Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 20:10-15

- d. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will finally judge all persons of their belief in Him as demonstrated by commitment of their lives to the way of the cross; the lost to everlasting punishment and the redeemed to eternal blessing and life.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Matthew 25:31-46; II Corinthians 5:10



## TESTIMONIES

### 200 SIMPLICITY

*We believe we should order our lives in such a way that nothing detracts from our pursuit of Christ.*

### 201 Simplicity in Lifestyle

- a. All outward manifestations of simplicity spring from an existing inward simplicity. Jesus speaks to this kind of simplicity when he encourages us to seek his kingdom and righteousness above all the worries and pressures that weigh on us. The psalmist shares similar thoughts while writing about how an “undivided heart” has a proper reverence for God and depends on his faithfulness. Attempts to live a simple life—without first having a simple, kingdom-oriented, undivided heart—will likely result in lifeless legalism.
- b. Amidst the growing complexity, busyness, and materialism in our world, Evangelical Friends are reminded that our citizenship is not of this world.<sup>83</sup> The New Testament command, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world,”<sup>84</sup> encourages us to wisely see the patterns of covetousness, greed, abundance, and overextended restlessness around us. Our response should be characterized by simplicity and contentment, no matter our circumstances.<sup>85</sup> The earliest Friends affirmed this testimony most visibly in the simple and modest manner of their dress.<sup>86</sup> Friends today should consider how their relationship to material possessions can be a powerful witness of godly contentment in Christ, and also an opportunity to avoid the temptations and traps of an affluent lifestyle.<sup>87</sup>
- c. Choosing to live simply frees us to live generous lives with a concern for the welfare of others. In this way, the testimony of Simplicity aids us in living out Jesus’ command to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- d. Sabbath is an opportunity to simplify our approach to life for one day each week, emptying it of its typical busyness and fullness, so that God may restore us for the good deeds he has prepared for us.<sup>88</sup> In celebration of our Lord’s rising on the first day of the week, and in order to honor and glorify Him, the early church established Sunday as the day for Christian

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<sup>83</sup> Philippians 3:20-21

<sup>84</sup> Romans 12:2

<sup>85</sup> Philippians 4:11

<sup>86</sup> 1 Timothy 2:9

<sup>87</sup> 1 Timothy 6:6-10

<sup>88</sup> Isaiah 58:13-14; Ephesians 2:10

worship and rest.<sup>89</sup> Evangelical Friends should joyfully consider how to make the most of a Sabbath day for the Lord's service and worship, as well as for rest of body and mind from the week's labors.<sup>90</sup>

## 202 Simplicity in Speech

- a. Historically, Friends have been known for intentionally maintaining simplicity in their speech in ways that were distinct within their culture. In keeping with the testimony of integrity, early Friends declined to "swear" under oath, choosing instead to simply affirm the truth. Doing so was a way to obey Jesus' command to "let our yes be yes"<sup>91</sup> and also a manifestation of the conviction that speaking the truth should be our normative, ongoing practice. In keeping with the testimony of equality, early Friends rejected the common cultural practice of showing partiality and favoritism by using privileged language to elevate some people over others.<sup>92</sup> Instead, they chose more simple, common language when addressing any person, regardless of his/her social standing.
- b. While what is culturally distinct changes over time, our speech still reveals the condition of our hearts.<sup>93</sup> In a world today that is overflowing with communication of all kinds, Friends should continue to practice a simplicity in speech that is consistent with the biblical directive to be "quick to listen, and slow to speak."<sup>94</sup> Our words, whether spoken aloud or communicated in digital spaces, should be rooted in integrity, expressed with respect, and used to build one another up.<sup>95</sup>

## 203 Simplicity in Worship

- a. The worship of Friends, from the beginning, has been rooted in an emphasis on the immediacy and availability of Jesus' real presence to all who gather. Simple forms of worship reflect our conviction that Christ is present within the gathered body of believers.
- b. While many of the earliest Friends gathered for worship to wait in silence for the Spirit to prompt them to speak, Evangelical Friends have, over time, recognized the value of "programmed" worship gatherings that include congregational singing, preaching, and other components. The worship experience in our churches can vary greatly, but each congregation

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<sup>89</sup> Matthew 28:1-7; Mark 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-6a; John 20:1

<sup>90</sup> Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Isaiah 58:13-14

<sup>91</sup> Matthew 5:37

<sup>92</sup> Deuteronomy 1:17; Job 32:21; James 2:9

<sup>93</sup> Luke 6:45

<sup>94</sup> James 1:19

<sup>95</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:11

should take care that its gatherings do not become overly complex or elaborate and therefore distract worshipers from what the Spirit wants to say to each one.

- c. Congregations are encouraged to construct and maintain their worship buildings and facilities with prayerful consideration of their functions. Doing so reminds us of the moderation and simplicity that characterizes the testimony of Evangelical Friends and reflects the teaching of Jesus that the physical context of our worship matters little compared to worshipping the Father in Spirit and truth.<sup>96</sup>
- d. Weddings, funerals, memorials, or other similar occasions are also opportunities for worship. Consequently, Friends should seek simplicity in their services of celebration and remembrance, and temptations toward extravagance should be avoided. Simplicity within these public circumstances can be a compelling witness to the world about what is truly valuable, important, and lasting.<sup>97</sup>

## **210 PEACE**

*We believe we are called to patiently demonstrate the love and compassion of Christ toward others, working to restore harmony within our broken world wherever possible.*

### **211 Peace with God**

- a. A genuine and sustainable testimony of peace must begin with, and remain rooted in, the peace with God we receive in Christ as a gift of grace through faith.<sup>98</sup> It is through the shed blood of Jesus that God reconciles all things to himself and offers us peace.<sup>99</sup> The efforts of the peacemaking to which we are called<sup>100</sup> find their foundations in Christ and the Cross.

### **212 Peace in the Church**

- a. The unity of Christ's church serves as a visible demonstration of God's peace to the watching world. Jesus prayed for harmony among his followers both because it reflects the relational oneness within the Trinity, and as an effective witness to the mission of his incarnation.<sup>101</sup> Consequently, Friends should make every effort to maintain unity in the Spirit through the bond of peace, seeking relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ that are characterized by humility, gentleness, and patience.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> John 4:19-24

<sup>97</sup> Matthew 6:30-33; 1 Timothy 6:6-7

<sup>98</sup> Romans 5:1-2, Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>99</sup> Colossians 1:20

<sup>100</sup> Matthew 5:9

<sup>101</sup> John 17:20-23

<sup>102</sup> Ephesians 4:2-3, Hebrews 12:14

- b. In pursuit of peace, congregations—with the guidance of the Pastor and elders—should be quick to discern differences of opinion in order to prevent those differences from degenerating into serious conflicts among the members of the congregation. If dissension or resentment arises, the Pastor and elders should admonish all parties and lead them in a Christ-centered path toward peace,<sup>103</sup> attempting to reach genuine forgiveness and reconciliation as swiftly as possible.<sup>104</sup>

### **213 Peace in our World**

- a. The earliest Friends were passionate in forsaking the patterns of violence and strife associated with war between nations. George Fox, during a time of social and political unrest marked by violent conflict in England, gave voice to this testimony of peace while publicly declaring to King Charles II that Friends—led by the Spirit of Christ—would not engage in “fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever . . . for the Kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world.” Standing upon this conviction, many Friends suffered imprisonment, cruelty, and death rather than violate their consciences.
- b. In keeping with the teachings and example of Jesus, Evangelical Friends affirm our call to be actively engaged in peacemaking within our world, to alleviate suffering, work for reconciliation, and seek a peace that is just, sustainable, and leads to fullness of life. As Jesus did in his own life, we believe that we are called to bear witness to God's love for us and his love for our enemies by suffering for them, if necessary, even unto death.<sup>105</sup> In this way, the church serves as a visible sign of the kingdom of God in anticipation of the day when God's peace will once again cover the earth.<sup>106</sup> As citizens of that kingdom, we affirm that our struggle is not ultimately against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of evil at work in our world.<sup>107</sup> Embracing Jesus' command to love both neighbor and enemy, Friends should work diligently to see justice and righteousness extended to people in every nation and to live at peace with all others so far as it depends on us.<sup>108</sup>
- c. We recognize the moral complexity inherent in issues of war and peace and the policing of civil order, and the difficult choices faced by governments and individuals. Followers of Jesus throughout the centuries have held differing convictions as to how best to apply Christ's commands

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<sup>103</sup> Matthew 18:15-17

<sup>104</sup> Church leaders should use guidelines from *Faith and Practice* 312ciii as needed.

<sup>105</sup> Romans 5:6-8; 1 Peter 2:21

<sup>106</sup> Isaiah 2:4

<sup>107</sup> Ephesians 6:12

<sup>108</sup> Romans 12:18-21

to pursue love and justice within a fallen world. Even among Evangelical Friends, there are disagreements regarding Christian participation in armed conflict. While each person must live out his or her understanding of Scripture, the traditional Friends' counsel is to decline to serve, or where the state allows, to give alternative service. Therefore, we continue to support those Evangelical Friends who choose conscientious objection to war rather than active military service.

- d. While affirming our historic peace testimony, Evangelical Friends also recognize that many of our members have felt compelled to serve in the armed forces as an expression of their devotion to Christ and with a desire to protect innocent lives against unjust aggression. In doing so, these Friends likewise seek to live out their calling to be actively engaged as peacemakers within our world. On this difficult issue, we respect individual conscience and surround our members with loving care whether they for Christ's sake refuse military service or feel obligated to serve in some capacity in the armed forces.

#### **214 Peace as our Lifestyle**

- a. Our commitment to peacemaking extends far beyond issues of armed conflict. We believe that peacemaking is a basic, day-to-day element of Christian obedience and discipleship. Intentional efforts toward peace are critical in our neighborhoods, our churches, our families, and our individual lives. Resisting the temptation to seek revenge and refusing to use violence as a means of addressing conflict, Friends should be instruments of peace and ministers of reconciliation whenever possible, seeking to overcome evil with good.<sup>109</sup>

#### **220 INTEGRITY**

*We believe our daily lives should model honesty, uprightness, and accountability, displaying the holy character of God for all to see.*

#### **221 Integrity in Vocation and Commerce**

- a. By demonstrating a testimony of integrity within their business dealings, our Friends ancestors gained a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. No matter their vocation, Friends were commonly known to treat customers, employees, employers, and co-workers with consistent fairness. Friends granted loans equitably, and loans received by Friends were repaid honorably and fully. Evangelical Friends today would do well to reflect these practices in their own finances and vocations.

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<sup>109</sup> Romans 12:17-21

- b. Evangelical Friends recognize the lordship of Christ over all things and in all areas of human engagement. Our members should joyfully participate in business, the arts, the academy, and various other professions, bringing a distinctly Christian perspective to each of these fields.<sup>110</sup> Each vocation carries within it unique challenges to maintaining integrity, and so it is important to remember that all work we do is not merely done for the benefit of an employer, but also for the Lord.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, Friends are encouraged—except in cases in which Scripture or a Spirit-led conscience would be violated—to work passionately within the vocation to which they feel called.

## **222 Integrity in Recreation**

- a. With the increase of leisure and the wide availability of entertainment of every kind, Evangelical Friends should carefully consider the recreation and amusements to which we give ourselves, our interest, our time, and our money. Amusements can have a large influence upon the formation of our character and can easily claim an unhealthy amount of our attention.<sup>112</sup>
- b. While many forms of leisure and entertainment—engaged in proper measure—are gifts from God and good for bringing recreation and rest into our lives, Friends should altogether avoid viewing, attending, or participating in activities of a de-moralizing nature because of the desensitizing power they have to draw us away from God's will and instead attract us to worldly desires.<sup>113</sup> In pursuit of holiness and wholeness, Friends should also avoid interaction with forms of media or entertainment that may be detrimental to Christian growth.<sup>114</sup>
- c. Among de-moralizing and detrimental amusement and media, pornographic materials are especially harmful and carry unique potential to cause damage in our souls and our relationships, and thus should be diligently avoided at all times with no exceptions. The production and use of these materials contribute to lustful attitudes and activities condemned by Scripture.<sup>115</sup> Additionally, in both production and use, they dehumanize people made in the image of God.<sup>116</sup> Exposure to these materials entices us into the uniquely destructive kinds of sexual sin through which we disobey

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<sup>110</sup> Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 3:17

<sup>111</sup> Colossians 3:23

<sup>112</sup> I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; James 1:21-22

<sup>113</sup> 1 John 2:15-17

<sup>114</sup> Ephesians 5:8; 15-16

<sup>115</sup> Matthew 5:27-28; Romans 13:12-14; II Peter 2:14, 18-19

<sup>116</sup> Genesis 1:27

the Lord and desecrate our own bodies, which are intended as temples where the Holy Spirit may dwell.<sup>117</sup>

## **223 Integrity in Speech**

- a. The earliest Friends were convicted to express the integrity of their speech by refusing to “swear” an oath during court proceedings, believing that doing so would elevate some speech as more honest than others. Some Friends feel a conviction to continue this practice, insisting that merely affirming the intention to tell the truth is sufficient to verify the integrity of our words. We are grateful that the civil authorities have long granted us, and all others of like mind, the right to this practice.
- b. However, a full-life ethic of integrity in our speech encompasses much more of our everyday lives. Keeping a tight rein on our speech is a critical component of the proper practice of our faith.<sup>118</sup> For example, Friends should not use obscene or coarse language,<sup>119</sup> or speak in ways that may be technically true but are intended to deceive and conceal the fullness of truth.<sup>120</sup> Our speech also lacks integrity if the voices we use to worship the Lord are also used to demean and devalue His image bearers.<sup>121</sup> Our conversations should be inviting and full of grace,<sup>122</sup> our words should be used to build one another up,<sup>123</sup> and the truth that we speak should always be accompanied by love.<sup>124</sup>

## **230 COMMUNITY**

*We believe the Christian life is ordained by God to be lived out in loving relationship with others as an image of the community of the Trinity.*

### **231 Community within the Church**

- a. The community of the local church includes far more than worship gatherings. Friends should find inspiration and application from the church community described in the book of Acts when considering how to live together faithfully. A church community should be characterized by unity, generosity, joy, sincerity, and encouraging fellowship that extends into our homes and everyday lives. In the midst of this kind of

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<sup>117</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:18-20

<sup>118</sup> James 1:26

<sup>119</sup> Ephesians 5:4

<sup>120</sup> Proverbs 24:28b

<sup>121</sup> James 3:9-12

<sup>122</sup> Colossians 4:6

<sup>123</sup> Ephesians 4:29

<sup>124</sup> Ephesians 4:15

community, we believe God will be powerfully active, our witness will be enhanced, and the Lord will continue to add to the number of those who experience the saving knowledge of Jesus.<sup>125</sup>

- b. Friends should not forsake gathering together for worship. Members should attend the services of their congregation regularly and faithfully and commit themselves to both serve and be accountable to their church.<sup>126</sup>
- c. Because God and his glory are ultimate, corporate worship is a critical component of the church's local ministry. In these experiences, Friends unite themselves together to reverently and joyfully express genuine adoration, love, and gratitude to the Triune God.<sup>127</sup> Worship gatherings will regularly include times of prayer, praise, giving, and preaching, as well as frequent opportunities for reflection, meditation, and decision.<sup>128</sup>
- d. We believe that both Christian baptism and communion are spiritual realities which are symbolically portrayed within the church through the physical elements of water in baptism and bread and cup in communion.<sup>129</sup> In keeping with our heritage when observing of these ordinances, Friends should guard against any temptation to allow the outward symbols to replace or take preeminence over the inner spiritual realities to which they point.<sup>130</sup> Regarding baptism specifically, Friends churches practice "believer's baptism" for those who profess faith in Jesus and a desire to be joined to the Body of Christ.
- e. Friends affirm that God continues to graciously give the gifts of the Spirit in our day.<sup>131</sup> These gifts are distributed to individual Christians according to God's wisdom and should be used in ways that glorify the Lord and edify His church.<sup>132</sup> We do not regard any particular gift as a necessary sign of the fullness or baptism with the Spirit but believe that God distributes to each one individually just as he wills.<sup>133</sup> Specifically, regarding the gift of glossolalia (speaking in tongues), we encourage our churches—and individual members—to refrain from exercising the use of tongues in public ways during times of corporate worship due to their

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<sup>125</sup> Acts 2:42-47

<sup>126</sup> Hebrews 10:23-25

<sup>127</sup> John 4:21-24; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:1

<sup>128</sup> Psalm 22:22-23; 95:6; 100:2; 1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:19-21

<sup>129</sup> Mark 14:22-15, 16:16; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 22:14-20; Acts 2:39, 10:47; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 1 Peter 3:21

<sup>130</sup> Matthew 3:11, 15:8-9; 1 Corinthians 11:27-30

<sup>131</sup> Romans 12:6-8

<sup>132</sup> 1 Peter 4:10-11

<sup>133</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:11



tendency to lead to division within the community during such gatherings. Our desire is not to quench the work of the Spirit, but to give primacy to the need for unity,<sup>134</sup> clarity,<sup>135</sup> and order<sup>136</sup> within the worshiping community. Friends with the gift of tongues are encouraged to exercise this gift in times of private devotion or in appropriate group settings.

## **232 Community within Marriage**

- a. The covenant of marriage should be entered into only after much forethought, planning, and prayer “in the fear of the Lord.” For those who pursue marriage, it is vital that Evangelical Friends seek spouses who share their Christian faith and convictions in order to avoid becoming “unequally yoked” in marriage.<sup>137</sup> Marriage is the union of one man and one woman into a oneness that no other human relationship can provide. Made before divine and human witnesses, the marriage vow unites a couple so fully that they “become one flesh.”<sup>138</sup> Marriage also involves mental, emotional, and spiritual union. Evangelical Friends should therefore enter into marriage believing that it is a life-long commitment and union.
- b. Evangelical Friends believe that sex is a beautiful gift of God given to humanity in order to join a husband and a wife together in self-giving love as well as to bring children into the world.<sup>139</sup> We hold that this gift is therefore appropriately received only within the covenant of marriage between husband and wife.<sup>140</sup>
- c. The sanctity of the marriage vows requires Friends to seek earnestly to prevent serious marital discord, perhaps through counseling, and to make every effort toward a happy, harmonious, and holy marriage. We grieve the severing of any marriage by divorce, while also recognizing the prevalence of that reality in our fallen world. However, since the only explicit Biblical allowances for divorce are adultery<sup>141</sup> and abandonment,<sup>142</sup> Evangelical Friends discourage seeking a divorce on any other grounds, and even biblically permitted divorce should be sought only after genuine attempts at reconciliation have been exhausted.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:7, 12

<sup>135</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:19

<sup>136</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:40

<sup>137</sup> II Corinthians 6:14a

<sup>138</sup> Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31

<sup>139</sup> Hebrews 13:4

<sup>140</sup> Please see the “Family” and “Marriage” statements in the 160 Humanity section of our Doctrine for more on this topic.

<sup>141</sup> Matthew 5:32

<sup>142</sup> 1 Corinthians 7:1-16

<sup>143</sup> Mark 10:2-9

- d. The break-up of many marriages in our world—including within our churches—places great responsibility upon congregations to be sensitive to the needs of those becoming involved in such crises and to be quick in showing loving concern for them.<sup>144</sup> Evangelical Friends discourage remarriage after divorce except for the innocent party in cases of adultery and abandonment. However, given the redemptive message of Christ, each case should be carefully and compassionately considered by the couple alongside the local church pastor and/or other leaders as needed.
- e. Evangelical Friends believe that all forms of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse are sin.<sup>145</sup> These forms of sin violently dissolve the communities of marriage and family. Our churches have a responsibility to vigilantly guard against incidents of abuse, confront abusers, and protect the abused, which includes the responsibility to report abuse to proper civil authorities.<sup>146</sup> Ongoing abuse by a spouse represents an abandonment of the marriage vow and as such may be grounds for biblical divorce and remarriage.<sup>147</sup>

### **233 Community within the Family**

- a. The many biblical references to the family assure us of its divine origin and of God's concern for the family and the home.<sup>148</sup> Families within Friends churches are encouraged to establish rhythms of discipleship within the home that reflect a deep love for God in order to both strengthen the community of family and encourage growth in Christian discipleship for each individual member.<sup>149</sup>
- b. From the bringing together of Adam and Eve<sup>150</sup> to the blessing given to Abraham's offspring,<sup>151</sup> the importance of family is affirmed many times throughout the Old Testament. Israel is also repeatedly instructed that those who suffer breakdowns in family relationships (widows, orphans, and foreigners) should receive special care from God's people.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Genesis 6:1-2

<sup>145</sup> Ephesians 5:28-29; Colossians 3:19; James 1:19-20; 1 Peter 3:7

<sup>146</sup> Psalm 9:9, 72:4; Romans 13:3-4

<sup>147</sup> 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; 1 Timothy 5:8

<sup>148</sup> Genesis 1:27-31; Psalm 68:6a; 127:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:5

<sup>149</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4-9

<sup>150</sup> Genesis 2:18-24

<sup>151</sup> Genesis 15:4-5; 17:19-22

<sup>152</sup> Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 14:28-29; Zechariah 7:10

- c. The New Testament reaffirms the value of family and outlines expectations for familial relationships.<sup>153</sup> At the same time, Jesus communicates that the value we place on the institution of family must be rightly aligned with Kingdom principles. A devotion to family should never hinder us from following Christ, and our loyalty to God and his family must take precedence even over our loyalty to our natural families.<sup>154</sup>
- d. The Scriptures speak regularly about the blessing and responsibility of parenthood.<sup>155</sup> Caring and providing for one's household is a key value of the Christian faith.<sup>156</sup> Children should honor and obey their parents,<sup>157</sup> parents should be sensitive to the needs of each child while setting an example—in word and deed—of a Christ-centered life, and all members of the family should seek unity with one another.<sup>158</sup>

### **234 Community within Society**

- a. While speaking about the “greatest” of commandments, Jesus included love of neighbor.<sup>159</sup> Our neighborhoods, and surrounding communities, are our primary mission fields. The people who reside nearby—whether the home next door, across town, in a nearby city, or down the country road—are the ones we are called to know, love, and serve. Within the relationships that develop with our neighbors, Friends should always be known for their hopeful lives and be ever prepared to share the Source of that hope in ways that are gentle and respectful.<sup>160</sup>
- b. God intends for His people to bless the larger society in which we live. Churches should actively look for ways to serve their neighborhoods and communities. The lives of Friends within society should reflect the biblical injunction to “seek the welfare of the city” into which we have been sent, knowing that as it prospers, so shall we.<sup>161</sup>
- c. Individual Friends are encouraged to bless their communities by serving in various civic organizations such as local school boards, volunteer fire departments, community centers, and other charitable groups outside of the church. When considering one's involvement in any organization, Evangelical Friends should carefully consider the time, commitment, and

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<sup>153</sup> Ephesians 5:21-6:4; Colossians 3:18-21

<sup>154</sup> Matthew 10:34-39; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 9:57-62

<sup>155</sup> Psalm 127:3-5

<sup>156</sup> John 19:25-27; 1 Timothy 5:8

<sup>157</sup> Ephesians 6:1

<sup>158</sup> Ephesians 4:32

<sup>159</sup> Matthew 22:39

<sup>160</sup> 1 Peter 3:15

<sup>161</sup> Jeremiah 29:7

resources required, as well as the likely influence of the organization upon them. Friends should especially avoid affiliation with “secret societies” which base their rituals on a distorted understanding of the Bible and directly or indirectly give Jesus Christ less than divine nature, even though they may appear to have spiritual value. The oath-bound character of such societies seems not only unnecessary, but also likely to prove harmful to our testimony of Integrity.

- d. Evangelical Friends are convinced that the New Testament requires Christians to respect their government and leaders therein. Therefore, it is necessary that we obey the laws of the nation insofar as they are not in conflict with our obedience to God. When it becomes necessary for Evangelical Friends to disagree with the practices and requirements of government, we should do so out of concern for the promotion of righteousness and justice, and not out of delight in controversy or strife.<sup>162</sup>
- e. Within a democratic context, where the populace has a part in choosing its leaders, Friends are encouraged to use Christ-centered principles and a Spirit-led consciences when casting votes—while also avoiding hateful, disrespectful, or insulting speech aimed at voters or candidates in the opposition. While positively engaging in the political process, Friends denounce any ideology or movement that co-opts the language, commitment, or passion that is fit for religious devotion alone and joins them with efforts to gain or maintain a form of political power. Friends should offer petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving for all those in authority, so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.<sup>163</sup>

## **240 EQUALITY**

*We believe every human being, without exception or qualification, is created in the image of God and one for whom Jesus laid down his life – and should be treated accordingly.*

- a. Evangelical Friends believe that all people are equal in the sight of God and all are loved by God. We believe that every person is created in the image of God and should be treated with dignity, love, and respect regardless of race, nationality, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, social or economic status, personal history, or religious affiliation.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Matthew 22:21b; Romans 13:1-7; I Timothy 2:1-2

<sup>163</sup> 1 Timothy 2:1-2

<sup>164</sup> See 160 Humanity in Doctrine for more on sexuality and gender

- b. The Christian virtue of love should characterize Evangelical Friends in caring for the material needs of the poor, underprivileged, neglected, or victimized within our membership and in the larger society. Alongside acts of charity, Friends should advocate for just laws that promote equitable opportunities for all people.<sup>165</sup>
- c. As various factors around the world lead to destabilization, injustice, and violence, it is often true that the vulnerable and victimized seek safety, shelter, and stability within nations and regions that have the ability to assist with those needs. This has been evidenced in nations like the United States and Canada for generations. Based upon the abundance of biblical support for caring for the stranger/foreigner among us, Friends who reside in well-resourced nations are encouraged to seek ways to offer compassion and care for immigrants and refugees that are suffering in these ways.
- d. Evangelical Friends reject all forms of racism. We believe that humanity has one ancestor in Adam, created in the image of God to love and live in harmony with God and other people.<sup>166</sup> Racism is a product of the Fall of mankind into sin and has no place in the life of the believer.<sup>167</sup> Evangelical Friends should seek to be sources of reconciliation across racial and cultural divides and work to eradicate racist ideologies, behaviors, and systems within society.<sup>168</sup>
- e. Evangelical Friends believe that every human life is a gift of God. We recognize the sanctity of human life and seek to preserve it from conception to natural death. As a result, we are opposed to intentional acts that violate the image of God found in each person. This includes the use of induced abortion for the purpose of ending the life of an unborn child. Instead, we must do all we can to preserve both the health and welfare of the mother and the life of the child.<sup>169</sup> We are also opposed to the practice of euthanasia and instead encourage those giving care to loved ones whose physical health is failing to work with health care professionals committed to the “comfort care” needed in those situations. Finally, Friends should find opportunities to support both suicide prevention as well as ministering to families who are affected by this tragedy. When confronting this difficult circumstance, Friends should

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<sup>165</sup> Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Proverbs 14:31; Galatians 6:10; I John 3:16-18

<sup>166</sup> Genesis 1:27; Acts 17:26

<sup>167</sup> James 2:8-9

<sup>168</sup> Psalm 82:3

<sup>169</sup> Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:13-16; John 15:13

always encourage trust in the love of God that is so unfathomably deep it is beyond our ability to fully understand.<sup>170</sup>

- f. All believers are encouraged to worship and participate in the life of Evangelical Friends Churches as equal recipients of God's grace.<sup>171</sup> Further, Jesus' call for the continued expansion of the Kingdom of God through the multiplication of disciples is equally given to all those who claim Christ as Lord. The sharing of the Gospel was never intended as a privilege or responsibility for a select few people, or only those with certain gifting. We desire to cultivate an environment in which all men and women of our churches are actively engaged in ministry to our world.<sup>172</sup>
- g. Since its inception and throughout its history, the Friends movement has recognized and celebrated equality between men and women within leadership. This conviction is rooted in the biblical evidence of both male and female leadership among God's people throughout Scripture.<sup>173</sup> We believe that the Holy Spirit bestows the gifts—and calling—needed for Christian leadership on both women and men.<sup>174</sup> Therefore, we celebrate the Recording of Ordination for men and women called into vocational pastoral ministry.

## **250 STEWARDSHIP**

*We believe the Lord has called us to be conscientious and wise custodians of everything He has entrusted to our care.*

### **251 Stewardship of Creation**

- a. Evangelical Friends believe that God in the beginning gave people dominion over the earth and expected them to be wise stewards, caring for the created world as God does. Proper concern for our world and its resources serves as a witness to our neighbors, blesses the world's most vulnerable populations, and expresses our love for God the Creator.<sup>175</sup> Wasteful and destructive use of the earth's resources is contrary to God's purposes.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Ephesians 3:17-19

<sup>171</sup> Genesis 1:27; I Corinthians 12:21-26; Galatians 3:26-29

<sup>172</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:4-26; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 2:9

<sup>173</sup> Judges 4:4-5; 2 Kings 22:11-20; Esther 4:12-14; Romans 16:1-2

<sup>174</sup> Acts 2:17-18; Acts 21:8-9

<sup>175</sup> Genesis 2:8-9; Deuteronomy 10:14; Psalm 95:3-5

<sup>176</sup> Genesis 1:28-31

## 252 Stewardship of our Finances

- a. The practice of tithing our income and giving offerings to the Lord began in the Old Testament and is referenced during the ministry of Jesus.<sup>177</sup> Evangelical Friends believe that generous giving is still the biblically prescribed method for supporting the ministry of the church and its mission to forward the Kingdom of God.<sup>178</sup> Each person who stewards his/her resources in these ways should do so with conviction and gladness, not reluctantly or out of a sense of compulsion.<sup>179</sup>
- b. Additionally, Friends do well to let a wider generosity beyond the tithe characterize the stewardship of financial resources. Wise and discerned giving is encouraged beyond the ministry of the local church, especially to care for the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized in our communities. These forms of generosity focused on mercy and justice should be offered in addition to the tithe, not in its place.<sup>180</sup> All forms of generosity are rooted in the teaching of Jesus that there is more blessing in giving than in receiving.<sup>181</sup>
- c. Evangelical Friends should prepare legal wills and testaments while in good health and sound judgment in order to express their wishes regarding their possessions and families. In the distribution of their estates, Friends are encouraged to consider contributions to the work of God in the local congregations and the ministries of EFC-ER.<sup>182</sup>

## 253 Stewardship of our Talents

- a. Evangelical Friends believe that all persons have natural abilities and spiritual gifts from God with which they are to make contributions to the work of God.<sup>183</sup> It is therefore the joyful duty of each individual to steward his/her particular gifts liberally in the ministry of the church.
- b. Evangelical Friends also believe that God provides for the Church by calling certain men and women to serve in vocational ministry. For the edifying and equipping of the Church, Jesus Christ confers on them the gifts of "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers."<sup>184</sup> While still embracing the "priesthood of all believers," Friends acknowledge that

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<sup>177</sup> Genesis 14:17-20; 28:20-22; Leviticus 6:20; 27:30; Deuteronomy 16:17; Malachi 3:6-12; Matthew 23:23

<sup>178</sup> Proverbs 11:24-25, Proverbs 19:17; 1 John 3:17; Proverbs 22:9; Psalm 112:5; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Hebrews 13:16

<sup>179</sup> 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

<sup>180</sup> Matthew 23:23

<sup>181</sup> Acts 20:35

<sup>182</sup> Proverbs 24:27; Proverbs 21:5; Matthew 6:19-21

<sup>183</sup> Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:42-48; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-13

<sup>184</sup> Ephesians 4:11-16

those who give evidence of these kinds of gifts may have unique callings and leadership roles in the local congregations.

## **254 Stewardship of our Bodies**

- a. Our members should avoid participating in activities or engaging in behaviors that result in destructive addictions, being mindful of the abundant suffering that has resulted from such behaviors, not to mention the tragic effect on health, mind, money, and relationships. As a result, Friends should avoid all drunkenness and the use of any illicit drugs.<sup>185</sup> While acknowledging that the Bible does not wholly prohibit the use of alcohol by believers, because of its destructive potential, Friends are encouraged to consider refraining from its use.<sup>186</sup>
- b. As an expression of our devotion to Christ, Evangelical Friends should abstain from any food, drink, drugs, or practices which harm the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.<sup>187</sup> The practical application of this commitment—as in many other areas of our lives as followers of Christ—must be lived out in accordance with the individual conscience of each believer.<sup>188</sup>
- c. When dealing with issues of conscience, Scripture reminds us that our motivation should not be rooted in permissibility, but in what is beneficial and constructive in building ourselves, and others, into Christ-likeness.<sup>189</sup> While we have received freedom in Christ, we should not use that freedom as a license to enter into actions and activities that may trap us in sin and addiction.<sup>190</sup> As we exercise freedom of conscience, we must also be careful that doing so does not lead a brother or sister in Christ, whose conscience may yet be weak, to stumble or fall.<sup>191</sup> This caution is especially true for those who are recognized as leaders within the local congregation.

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<sup>185</sup> Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; Romans 13:13; 1 Peter 4:3

<sup>186</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:22

<sup>187</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. 8:9; Romans 14:13

<sup>188</sup> Romans 14:5

<sup>189</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

<sup>190</sup> Romans 6:1-2

<sup>191</sup> 1 Corinthians 8:9



## **SECTION TWO**

### **PRACTICE**

This section outlines Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region's vision for the local church, EFC-ER structure and operations, and our relationship to Malone University.

SECTION 300	THE LOCAL EFC-ER CHURCH
SECTION 400	EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION
SECTION 500	BOARDS AND MINISTRY TEAMS OF EFC-ER
SECTION 600	MALONE UNIVERSITY

## THE LOCAL EFC-ER CHURCH

### 300 THE LOCAL EFC-ER CHURCH

#### 301 The Purpose of the Local Church

- a. The basic ministries of the local church grow out of Jesus' Great Commission<sup>1</sup> and are summarized in four basic responsibilities:
  - i. Biblical Leadership Development
  - ii. Multiplying Disciples
  - iii. Responsible Stewardship
  - iv. Church Health
- b. Every church, regardless of size, must provide for these areas of ministry.

#### 302 Developing Church

- a. A developing church is a group of people who gather regularly for worship who are moving toward meeting the requirements for full church status.

#### 303 Full Church

- a. A full church is a group of people who are in a covenantal relationship with EFC-ER working together to make the greatest possible Kingdom impact.
- b. A local church may apply to the Multiplication Team for full church status when it:
  - i. Is in theological alignment with EFC-ER doctrine as outlined in the Faith and Practice;<sup>2</sup>
  - ii. Is financially stable and independent;
  - iii. Is practicing a system of governance in accordance with the Faith and Practice;<sup>3</sup>
  - iv. Is intentionally engaged in biblical discipleship;
  - v. Is fulfilling the Great Commission by participation in multiplying disciples and churches;
  - vi. Is participating in the mission, vision, and core values of EFC-ER.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 28:18-20

<sup>2</sup> #100-257

<sup>3</sup> #320

<sup>4</sup> #400

### **304 Declining Church**

- a. When a full church experiences a decline to the point of possible closure, it will be taken under the care of the Church Health Team to determine next steps. The Church Health Team, in careful consultation with the remaining church members, may seek to replant the church, in which case the church will be referred to the Multiplication Team. The Church Health Team may find it necessary to close the church. Upon closure, the assets of the church will be administered by the Finance and Administration Team. Such action is to be reported to the delegates at the next Yearly Meeting.

### **305 Church in Crisis**

- a. A church may face a crippling crisis for any number of reasons. Among them may be the abrupt loss or departure of a lead pastor, staff misconduct, major conflict over doctrinal or moral issues, power struggles, and financial instability. At the first sign of crisis, the lead pastor or an elder should contact the Church Health Director. This process may also be initiated by the Church Health Director.
- b. In cases where a church's overall ministry is at risk, the Church Health Team will assess, advise, assist, and monitor the situation to move the church to a satisfactory resolution. In the event that differences arise in alignment between EFC-ER and the local church that appear to be irreconcilable, the local church should contact the Church Health Director for applicable procedures.
- c. The goal of the Church Health Team in these cases will be to resolve issues, reconcile people, and restore healthy functionality to the church. If progress toward church health is not made, the Church Health Team will take the control and management of the local church. In such cases, the local church is directed to turn over immediately to the Church Health Team the leadership of all business meetings, the care of its business affairs, and all records as the Church Health Team may deem necessary. The Church Health Team will determine a timeline to return the church to its regular plan of operation.

### **310 ORGANIZATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH**

- a. Although church size varies, each local church needs to ensure that four basic areas of ministry are provided:
  - i. Biblical Leadership Development
  - ii. Multiplying Disciples
  - iii. Responsible Stewardship
  - iv. Church Health

- b. Each local church should develop and maintain, in written form, an organizational structure that provides for each of these minimum areas of ministry. Examples of possible organizational structures are available from the Church Health Team. While each local church has the liberty to set its own organizational structure, that structure should be submitted for review and approved by the local church's Congregational Meeting prior to implementation, with a copy of the approved structure filed with the Church Health Team.
- c. As local churches grow, the organizational structure should grow, reflecting the diversity of the congregation, ministry needs, and input from members.

### **311 The Local Church's Organizational Minimums**

- a. Each local church's organization must include:
  - i. An Elder Board consisting of at least three elders, one of whom is the lead pastor, charged with overseeing the implementation of the four basic areas of ministry;<sup>5</sup>
  - ii. A process for electing church officers and elders,<sup>6</sup> selecting other leadership team members, and approving legal representatives of the church;
  - iii. A policy regarding terms of service for elders and officers;
  - iv. A written job description for elders and ministry leaders;
  - v. A process for scheduling regular and special Congregational Meetings;<sup>7</sup>
  - vi. A method of proposing to the Congregational Meeting new concerns, policies, programs, and budgets;
  - vii. A method of maintaining Congregational Meeting and other meeting minutes, legal documents, bylaws and policies, and other guiding principles for the local church;
  - viii. A method of implementing and managing the concerns, policies, programs, and budgets approved in basic principle by the Congregational Meeting;
  - ix. A method of maintaining good order, unity, adherence to the Faith and Practice, and efficiency in the work of the church;
  - x. A method of communicating to the Congregational Meeting full and regular reports of the actions and concerns of the leadership;
  - xi. A process for receiving and removing members.

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<sup>5</sup> #310 a.

<sup>6</sup> #330

<sup>7</sup> #313

- b. Officers of the congregation will be members of the local church. The slate of officers at a minimum will include:
- i. The moderator (presiding clerk, presiding elder, or other title), who presides over the Congregational Meeting and is considered an elder by virtue of office.
  - ii. The financial secretary (who may not serve as the treasurer), who receives the offerings and enlists a process of proper safeguarding and confidentiality of funds, counting them in the presence of a nonfamily second party. The financial secretary oversees bank deposits and accounting of contributions, and makes available individual contribution statements.
  - iii. The treasurer (who may not serve as the financial secretary), who keeps accounts and makes payment of bills, working closely with the church leadership, pastoral staff, and/or other staff members where applicable. The treasurer also serves on the administrative team assigned to cover the area of church finances. The treasurer must also maintain an accurate understanding of federal and state laws pertaining to the local church. All financial records must be available for examination for proper financial accountability on an annual basis or upon request by those in financial responsibility.
  - iv. The legal trustees, who are the representatives of the local church who have the authorization to sign legal documents based on the action of the Congregational Meeting. Such items include loans, property deeds, and other legally binding documents. At a minimum each church should have three legal trustees.
  - v. Elders, who are considered officers of the congregation by virtue of office.<sup>8</sup>

### **312 Membership in the Local Church**

- a. An individual who has experienced salvation through Christ has become a member of the body of Christ.<sup>9</sup> Because individuals are united to Christ and the other members of the body in this way, it is a natural expression of this reality to be joined formally to a local body, the local church. To become a member of a church is to commit oneself formally to an identifiable, local body of believers. Therefore, membership is a covenant relationship. Covenantal church membership is a wise and helpful path for those who desire to walk together in obedience to the Lord and in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> #331

<sup>9</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13

<sup>10</sup> Philippians 1:27

## b. Requirement for Membership

- i. The basic requirement for membership in an EFC-ER local church is one's confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.<sup>11</sup>
- ii. The local church will provide a process for becoming a member, which will include an application to be completed by prospective members. The local church may stipulate age requirements and other indicators of spiritual readiness.
- iii. Members in the local church are also considered individual members of EFC-ER. Therefore, each church must provide prospective members a training session(s) to, at a minimum, cover the following topics:
  1. Relationship to EFC-ER;
  2. History of Evangelical Friends Church;
  3. Friends Doctrine;
  4. Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the Local Church;
  5. Local Church Structure.

## c. Membership Covenant

- i. Members of an EFC-ER local church agree to a mutual covenant relationship.
- ii. Members of EFC-ER local churches make a covenant with the local church in the following ways:
  1. To bear testimony to a real conversion experience, based on the Word of God and assurance from the Holy Spirit of sins forgiven and commitment to Christian discipleship;<sup>12</sup>
  2. To continuously seek spiritual growth, according to the Scriptures;<sup>13</sup>
  3. To attend faithfully the services of the local church and accept responsibilities in its work;<sup>14</sup>
  4. To give cheerfully for the financial support of the church and its approved ministries;<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Romans 10:9

<sup>12</sup> Psalm 51:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:11-12

<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 4:15-16; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18

<sup>14</sup> Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 12; 1 Timothy 4:14-15; Hebrews 10:25

<sup>15</sup> Deuteronomy 16:17; Malachi 3:10; Acts 11:29; 2 Corinthians 9:7

5. To listen to and respect the counsel of the leadership of the church;<sup>16</sup>
  6. To acquaint themselves with the Faith and Practice and to support its positions.<sup>17</sup>
- iii. The relationship between the local church and its members will be guided by Biblical principles,<sup>18</sup> with the purpose of experiencing redemption and reconciliation as follows:
1. Members will make every effort to keep clear relationships between themselves and other members of the church.<sup>19</sup>
  2. When any member is guilty of conduct inconsistent with our Christian profession, has a broken relationship with another church member, or is living a life inconsistent with the Scriptures and the testimonies of the Faith and Practice, that member should be admonished in the spirit of restoring love.
  3. Should the efforts to bring reconciliation in the church family be resisted, the matter will be brought to the local church Elder Board, which may recommend that the member(s) agree to biblically based coaching/mediation and, if necessary, arbitration.<sup>20</sup>
  4. If further efforts toward reconciliation are deemed harmful to the church body, the local church Elder Board should contact the Church Health Director for counsel.
  5. Should the efforts at reconciliation and restoration of members still be resisted, and should the violations be of such character as to bring reproach or scandal to the name of Christ and/or the local church, the Elder Board may remove the member(s) from membership.<sup>21</sup>

d. Church Covenant

- i. An EFC-ER local church makes a covenant with its members in the following ways:
  1. To provide opportunity for and assistance in worship and in spiritual growth;<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 13:17

<sup>17</sup> Section One

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8

<sup>19</sup> Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15; Hebrews 12:14

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 18:16

<sup>21</sup> Matthew 18:17

<sup>22</sup> Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:15-16; 1 Timothy 4:11, 13; Hebrews 10:25

2. To provide help in discovering each member's talents and gifts, and opportunities to express these gifts in service;<sup>23</sup>
3. To provide discipleship training and instruction toward maturity in Christ;<sup>24</sup>
4. To provide counsel and accountability when members are neglecting faithful fulfillment of their covenant;<sup>25</sup>
5. To receive and respect the input of its members;<sup>26</sup>
6. To provide a system for spiritual care of its members.<sup>27</sup>

e. Membership Transfer

- i. When a request for providing a transfer of membership is received from another church, the local church may issue a letter of transfer at the discretion of the lead pastor.
- ii. Each local church may receive letters of transfer from other EFC-ER churches when members are in good standing with their covenantal responsibilities. Such members will enjoy the full rights, responsibilities, and privileges of membership in the receiving local church.

f. Membership List Maintenance

- i. Each local church should maintain a list of its current membership. Those members who are not fulfilling their Membership Covenant may be removed from the membership list following established procedures outlined by the local church.

### 313 Congregational Meetings

- a. The Congregational Meeting is the members of the local church gathered in business session. As such, it is the local authoritative body, and no member, officer, or group has any authority that it does not derive from the congregation.
- b. Each local church organizational structure should provide for a minimum of one Congregational Meeting per year. Churches may find it helpful to have meetings more often. Special meetings may be called at any time by the moderator, with the concurrence of the elders, providing notice has been given in at least one Sunday morning worship service and one week in advance of the meeting. Should a situation arise that necessitates an emergency meeting that does not allow for the required time for notice, the Elder Board must give great effort to notify the entire membership of the meeting.

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<sup>23</sup> 1 Corinthians 12; 1 Timothy 4:14-15

<sup>24</sup> Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 2:6-7

<sup>25</sup> Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2, 10

<sup>26</sup> Ephesians 5:21

<sup>27</sup> Galatians 6:1; James 1:27



- c. The purpose of the Congregational Meeting is:
- i. To have appropriate leaders report on the various areas of ministry and responsibility;
  - ii. To approve officers and elders;<sup>28</sup>
  - iii. To approve budgets;<sup>29</sup>
  - iv. To set and revise major church policies in accord with the Faith and Practice;
  - v. To call the lead pastor;<sup>30</sup>
  - vi. To approve capital building programs and capital debt;
  - vii. To seek prayerfully the Lord's direction and guidance for the church.
- d. Congregational Meetings will be presided over by the moderator.<sup>31</sup> Business should be conducted as an exercise in corporate, worshipful seeking of God's will. Therefore, in general, by waiting on the Holy Spirit's leadership, the congregation should expect to arrive at a high degree of unity in the proceedings. Business will be conducted using a simplified form of parliamentary procedure. When necessary, voting is an acceptable method by which the moderator may most accurately determine "the sense of the meeting." Where substantial agreement is in question, the moderator may decide that further consideration is in order.
- e. Items for attention at the Congregational Meeting are to be presented to the Elder Board prior to the Congregational Meeting. Items not on the agenda should be directed to the moderator, who has the discretion to determine appropriate action.
- f. Voting in any Congregational Meeting is only by members who are present and only those members eighteen or more years of age.
- g. Criticisms of a personal nature during the Congregational Meeting are out of order and should be handled in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17.

### **320 BUDGETING AND STEWARDSHIP GUIDELINES IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**

- a. The budget and stewardship guidelines should reflect the mission, vision, and core values of the local church.

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<sup>28</sup> #330

<sup>29</sup> #320

<sup>30</sup> #341

<sup>31</sup> #311 b.i.

### **321 Preparation of Budgets**

- a. Those chosen to be responsible for stewardship,<sup>32</sup> in conjunction with the treasurer:
  - i. Will begin by collecting funding requests from the ministry areas;
  - ii. Will give careful consideration to the funding requests of the ministry areas and compile a preliminary budget;
  - iii. Will present to the Elder Board a recommended budget that reflects the mission, vision, and core values of the local church.
- b. The Elder Board will review and finalize the budget prior to its being presented to the Congregational Meeting. The final recommended budget will be presented to the Congregational Meeting for review and affirmation. The budget presentation should be a celebration of the church's mission, vision, and core values.

### **322 Stewardship Guidelines**

- a. Those responsible for stewardship must adopt a set of procedures to provide transparency and accountability for all ministry funds. This must include:
  - i. Giving the treasurer authorization to make regular payments for fixed expenses (salaries, utilities, mortgage payments, etc.);
  - ii. Requiring appropriate ministry leaders to approve expenditures to be paid by the treasurer;
  - iii. Developing a policy on designated funds;
  - iv. Developing a policy for special offerings;
  - v. Establishing sound financial policies (i.e., audit/compilation/review, separation of duties, checks and balances, regular and accurate reporting).
- b. Refer to the Finance and Administration Team Handbook for support in establishing policies and procedures.

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<sup>32</sup> #311 b

### 330 LOCAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

#### 331 Qualifications and Expectations for Elders

- a. Qualifications – Leadership in the local church is both a great privilege and responsibility. Because elders enjoy a high office and heavy responsibility, they must have both personal and spiritual qualifications<sup>33</sup> to serve in these positions. Therefore, all elders who take on roles within the local church must meet the following qualifications:
- i. Be members in good standing in the local church;
  - ii. Be widely respected by the church membership body as people of integrity and service;
  - iii. Be persons of a deep, mature love of Jesus demonstrated in marriage and home life, in the church, and to the world;
  - iv. Be persons who display the fruit of the Spirit<sup>34</sup> and wisdom in all areas of their lives;
  - v. Be persons who have a passion for fulfilling the Great Commission, demonstrated by being disciplined and held accountable while also discipling others;
  - vi. Be persons who are rooted and grounded in the Word of God both in teaching and practice;
  - vii. Be persons who can view matters objectively;
  - viii. Be persons who can work constructively with pastors, staff, and other leaders and members of the church;
  - ix. Be persons who display a servant-leader disposition.
- b. Expectations – All elders who take on roles within the local church lead by example and, therefore, are expected to:
- i. Be involved in regular, consistent attendance at weekly worship gatherings;
  - ii. Prayerfully prepare for and participate in Congregational Meetings;
  - iii. Cultivate a faithful prayer life;
  - iv. Generously give tithes and offerings in support of the local church;
  - v. Maintain a supportive and encouraging relationship with the pastoral staff;

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<sup>33</sup> 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1-2

<sup>34</sup> Galatians 5

- vi. Be competent communicators, as they will likely serve as liaisons between the lead pastor and the congregation;
- vii. Be persons who can view the matters under their care with objectivity;
- viii. Recuse themselves from business items in which they have a conflict of interest.

### **340 THE LEAD PASTOR**

- a. The lead pastor is called by the congregation and works in conjunction with the Elder Board to oversee the ministries of the local church.

### **341 The Call of the Lead Pastor**

- a. A pastoral call acknowledges the will of God and the desire of the pastor, the local church, and EFC-ER for the pastor to lead in serving the local church.
- b. The process for calling a lead pastor is:
  - i. An elder contacts the Church Health Director, who will provide guidelines to begin the process of securing a new pastor.
  - ii. A pastoral search team, composed of members in good standing, will be established by the elders to conduct the search process. Pastoral staff may not serve on the search team.
  - iii. All applicants proposed for pastoral candidacy must be vetted by the Leadership Development Team.
  - iv. The pastoral search team will recommend a pastoral candidate for approval by the congregation.
  - v. A Pastoral Call Agreement will be issued.
  - vi. Once a Pastoral Call Agreement is accepted, an elder will notify the Church Health Director.
  - vii. Upon acceptance of the Pastoral Call, the pastor, and spouse if applicable, are deemed members of that church. If he/she is a member of another EFC-ER church, the presiding elder should notify the former church of the transfer of membership.
- c. Churches may proactively plan for a successor pastor to follow as the new lead pastor. Planning for a successor often facilitates a smoother transition from one pastor to the next. The process for calling a successor pastor is:
  - i. The lead pastor contacts the Church Health Director to review the succession plan.

- ii. The lead pastor presents the succession plan to the elder board. This plan should include a specific timeline for the transference of duties between the lead and successor pastor and when the initial two-year call begins.
- iii. The elders recommend the agreed upon succession plan to the congregation for affirmation and/or vote.

### **342 Renewal of the Lead Pastor Call**

- a. A pastoral call renewal is conducted two years after the initial call and every four years subsequently.
- b. Pastoral Call Renewal Process
  - i. Each member of the Elder Board, and if applicable, pastoral staff should complete a survey, provided by the Church Health Team, of the pastor's performance.
  - ii. The lead pastor will complete a self-evaluation provided by the Church Health Team.
  - iii. The Church Health Team will provide a survey to the congregation for input.
  - iv. The Church Health Director will summarize and present the findings to the Elder Board and lead pastor.
  - v. When there is not consensus between the elders, lead pastor, and the Church Health Director about the continuation of the pastoral call, the Church Health Director may recommend a church assessment.
  - vi. As a result of the renewal of call process, the Elder Board, lead pastor, and Church Health Director may agree to continue or discontinue the pastoral call.
  - vii. In cases where there is not agreement, a Congregational Meeting may be held to discern the continuation of the lead pastor's call.

### **343 Early Termination of the Pastoral Call Agreement**

- a. The Elder Board or pastor may initiate an early termination of the Pastoral Call Agreement by furnishing written notice to the other.
  - i. If the Elder Board or pastor considers termination of the Pastoral Call Agreement outside of the standard review timeline, a pastor and elder review should be completed under the guidance of the Church Health Director.

- ii. As a result of the review process, the Elder Board, pastor, and Church Health Director may agree to continue or discontinue the pastoral call.
- iii. If a decision is made to end the pastoral call, the Elder Board in consultation with the Church Health Director will determine the details and timeline for transition.

### **344 Responsibilities of the Lead Pastor**

#### a. Lead pastors will:

- i. Be disciples of Jesus Christ who pursue knowing, loving, and obeying Christ as they lead others to do the same;<sup>35</sup>
- ii. Be saturated with the written Word, diligent in prayer, and dynamically led by the Holy Spirit;<sup>36</sup>
- iii. Discern God's vision for the church;
- iv. Be responsible to establish the core values to fulfill the vision of the local church;
- v. Equip and empower people to live the mission, vision, and core values of the local church;<sup>37</sup>
- vi. Oversee the preaching and teaching of the Word of God;
- vii. Protect the unity of the local church;<sup>38</sup>
- viii. Ensure and oversee that pastoral care is taking place among the church body;<sup>39</sup>
- ix. Serve as an elder;
- x. Be an ex officio voting member of all groups within the organizational structure of the local church;
- xi. Be responsible for keeping the history, doctrine, mission, vision, and core values of EFC-ER before the local church;
- xii. Be a supportive liaison between EFC-ER and the local church.

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<sup>35</sup> 2 Timothy 2:2

<sup>36</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Ephesians 4:11-12

<sup>37</sup> Ephesians 4:12

<sup>38</sup> Ephesians 4:2-7

<sup>39</sup> Acts 20:2

### **345 Pastor in Crisis**

- a. In the case of ethical or moral crisis in the life of the pastor, the elders and/or the pastor must contact the Leadership Development Director to begin an investigation and develop a plan toward a healthy resolution as outlined in the Leadership Development Team Handbook.
- b. In the case of personal crisis (health, marital, family, grief, etc.) in the life of the pastor, the pastor or the elders must contact the Leadership Development Director for assistance.

### **350 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL CHURCH TO THE PASTOR(S)**

- a. The local church recognizes the gifts and calling of its pastor(s). A pastor is most effective when the church is respectful, loyal, cooperative, and supportive. It is vital for the church to pray for its pastor(s).
- b. The local church will provide for the financial support of its full-time (30 hours or more per week) pastor(s) in the following ways:
  - i. Salary: The local church sets the salary of the pastor(s). A method for determining minimum salary (including parsonage or housing allowance) will be recommended each year by the Church Health Team. Churches should strive to generously support their pastor(s) above the minimum salary. If the minimum salary is not offered by the church, the pastoral position(s) will be considered part-time and the pastor(s) given freedom to seek supplemental employment and income.
  - ii. Moving expenses on first arrival.
  - iii. A contribution equal to 12% of salary plus parsonage or housing allowance, made monthly to the EFC-ER Pension Plan on behalf of the pastor(s).
  - iv. Provision for payment of medical and dental insurance premiums for the pastor(s) and dependents.
  - v. Payment of life insurance premium for the pastor(s) as established through EFC-ER.
  - vi. Yearly Meeting and Pastors Conference expenses for the pastor(s), as well as for each married pastor's spouse.
  - vii. An established accountable reimbursement plan that complies with all applicable tax rules subject to the church's budget limitations. Such expenses may include:
    - (a) Business use of automobile;

- (b) Business travel away from home, including transportation, lodging, and meals on overnight trips;
  - (c) Subscriptions, books, and software related to ministry;
  - (d) Entertainment and hospitality expenses related to ministry.
- c. Every full-time pastor will be eligible for vacation and other leaves of absence. Churches are required at a minimum to provide leave for their pastors in the following ways:
  - i. One day off per week.
  - ii. Annual vacation, with the local church paying for the pulpit supply. The pastor(s) will enjoy a vacation schedule according to the following years of service to EFC-ER:
    - (a) 0-5 years of service: 3 weeks of vacation;
    - (b) 6-10 years of service: 4 weeks of vacation;
    - (c) 11 and more years of service: 4 weeks or more of vacation.
  - iii. Time off for ministry opportunities outside of the local church for up to a total of 2 weeks per year (e.g., revivals, camp ministry, mission trips);
  - iv. Time off for attendance at Yearly Meeting and Pastors Conference;
  - v. Time off for attendance at and fulfillment of services for EFC-ER boards and teams.
- d. Sabbatical or Leave of Absence
  - i. A pastoral sabbatical is essentially a time of rest which results in renewal. At the heart of the sabbatical is a connection between the pastor and God. The connection happens through spiritual disciplines, study, vacations, and/or simple relaxation. Since God does not intend for His people to live exhausted lives, sabbaticals are practical ways to overcome exhaustion. Reasons for investing in sabbaticals are related to mental, physical, spiritual, or emotional weariness.<sup>40</sup>
  - ii. A sabbatical or leave of absence conversation may be initiated by the pastor, the Elder Board, or the Leadership Development Director.
  - iii. A sabbatical or leave of absence is granted with the approval of the local church and the Leadership Development Director.

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<sup>40</sup> 1 Kings 19:3-18



- iv. Reasons for sabbatical or leave of absence may include:
  - (a) Rest and renewal;
  - (b) Education;
  - (c) Ministry or mission project;
  - (d) Personal crisis/emergency.
- v. The local church will continue to pay the full salary and benefits of the pastor(s) as well as cover any necessary pulpit supply.

### **360 MINISTRY STAFF**

- a. The local church may call other ministry staff (pastors and directors) to serve.
- b. The lead pastor, in consultation with the elders, will plan for the hiring of ministry staff (pastors and directors).
- c. Selection of any person for a pastoral staff position in the local church must be vetted by the Leadership Development Team.
- d. The ministry staff of a local church will submit their provisional resignations upon the resignation/retirement of the lead pastor. The conclusion of staff tenure will be arranged by the Elder Board in consultation with the Church Health Team. The incoming lead pastor may recommend the hiring of staff members previously employed.

### **370 CREDENTIALING**

- a. Ministry Certificate
  - i. A member of the local church may apply for a ministry certificate through EFC-ER when credentials are necessary to fulfill ministry. Guidelines for application is available in the Leadership Development Team Handbook.
- b. Ministry License
  - i. Ministry License is for members of the local church who need an accredited denominational license to perform various ministries (hospital visits, recovery, prison/jail, children/youth, etc.). This license is not for Lead Pastors and would apply to those that are full-time, part-time, and volunteer Ministry Leaders.
- c. Pastor's License
  - i. All individuals called to vocational ministry and fulfilling a pastoral ministry role in the local church must apply for a pastor's license with the Leadership Development Team. The procedures for application are detailed in the Leadership Development Team Handbook.

- ii. Full-time licensed pastors are required to enter the recording-of-ordination process.
- iii. Licensure will be renewed annually by the Leadership Development Team according to the application process outlined in the Leadership Development Team Handbook.

d. Recording of Ordination

The process for recording of ordination is outlined in the Leadership Development Team Handbook. Candidates will only be considered for recording after a pastor's license has been approved.

- i. When a candidate is deemed ready, the Leadership Development Director will submit a recommendation for the recording of ordination to the Leadership Development Team. Candidates are then brought to Yearly Meeting delegates for final approval.
- ii. The relationship of recorded pastors with EFC-ER will be reviewed every four years by the Leadership Development Team.
- iii. Retired pastors in good standing will maintain their credentials.

e. Transfer of Credentials

Those licensed/recorded as ordained pastors seeking transfer from other Evangelical Friends Yearly Meetings or other denominations will be under the care of the Leadership Development Team. The team will evaluate experience, education, and ministerial training in the determination of credentials with EFC-ER.

## EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION

### 400 THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION (EFC-ER)

- a. The EFC-ER is a movement of connected churches intentionally working together to fulfill a common mission, vision, and core values, based on the person and redemptive message of Jesus Christ. EFC-ER local churches send delegates to Yearly Meeting and agree to submit to its directives.
- b. The EFC-ER churches delegate the leadership and management of its programs to the Ministry Teams and Oversight Board.
- c. The mission of EFC-ER is to equip its member churches to make disciples.
- d. The vision of EFC-ER is to produce healthy, Christ-centered churches that produce disciples.
- e. The EFC-ER will be guided by the following core values:
  - i. Biblical Faithfulness – We will seek faithfulness to the inspired and authoritative Word of God, both in the truth we profess and in the practices we embody.
  - ii. Empowered Leadership – We will discover, develop, and deploy leaders into clearly defined ministry roles.
  - iii. Innovative Multiplication – We will use and encourage innovative multiplication across our movement.
  - iv. Efficient Organization – We will organize around mission, core values, and vision, increasing efficiency by being a nimble, right-sized organization.
  - v. Connectional Ministry – We will strengthen local and global ministries by partnering together with local churches and other organizations to accomplish our mission.

### 410 INCORPORATION

- a. The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region is incorporated and its Executive Director is the statutory agent.
- b. The fiscal year for EFC-ER is August 1 through July 31.
- c. EFC-ER bylaws provide supplemental directives and are approved by the delegates. The bylaws are included in the appendices.

## **420 YEARLY MEETING**

- a. The annual conference of the delegates for EFC-ER is known as Yearly Meeting and is held at the time and place decided upon by the Oversight Board. The purpose of the meeting includes worship, fellowship, resourcing, encouragement, and attending to the following areas of business:
  - i. The selection of the Executive Director;
  - ii. The election of the at-large members of the Oversight Board;
  - iii. The election of trustees to the Malone University Board of Trustees;
  - iv. The hearing and receiving of reports from Malone University, the Oversight Board, and the Ministry Teams;
  - v. The approval of changes to the Faith and Practice;
  - vi. The approval of the annual budget;
  - vii. The affirmation of the recording of ordination;
  - viii. The celebration of the establishment of new churches;
  - ix. The approval of purchasing, leasing, or otherwise acquiring real and personal property valued in excess of 5% of the annual budget;
  - x. The approval to sell, transfer, or dispose of; or to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property owned by EFC-ER valued in excess of 5% of the annual budget.
- b. The Oversight Board is responsible for approving the general format, schedule, and programming for Yearly Meeting as presented by the Executive Director.
- c. Between Yearly Meeting sessions, the Oversight Board may call for a vote by mail or electronically of the delegates.
- d. Where action is necessary, the Oversight Board acts in lieu of the Yearly Meeting delegates when they are not in session.

## **430 YEARLY MEETING DELEGATES AND DELEGATE BODY COMPOSITION**

- a. A delegate represents the local church at Yearly Meeting sessions. The local church determines the delegate selection process.
- b. The lead pastor of each local church and one full-time associate pastor will serve as delegates. All other staff pastors may qualify to serve as part of a church's delegation if selected by the local church.

- c. Additionally, each church will send one delegate for each fifty members or major portion thereof as reported to the Evangelical Friends Headquarters at the end of the previous calendar year.
- d. A church with fewer than twenty-five members may have one delegate in addition to its lead pastor.
- e. A developing church may seat a delegate who represents that church.
- f. Churches should select delegates who are:
  - i. Active members in the local church;
  - ii. Open to participate in the business sessions and discussions while being supportive of decisions made by the delegate body;
  - iii. At least eighteen years of age.
- g. The local church will forward the names and contact information of delegates and alternates to the Evangelical Friends Headquarters by the deadline established by the Oversight Board.
- h. Alternate Delegates
  - i. Each local church should appoint as many alternate delegates as necessary. The alternate delegates should be selected on the same basis as regular delegates.
  - ii. In the absence of a lead pastor delegate, a person may be appointed to be a delegate in that seat.
- i. EFC-ER Missionaries as Delegates
  - i. All active EFC-ER missionaries in attendance at Yearly Meeting will serve as delegates.
- j. Financial Assistance to Delegates
  - i. The local church is expected to contribute to the expenses of delegates attending Yearly Meeting.

#### **440 OFFICERS OF THE YEARLY MEETING**

- a. A moderator and recording secretary shall be the officers of Yearly Meeting. They shall be appointed annually by the Oversight Board. Yearly Meeting officers will be members in good standing of an EFC-ER local church.
- b. The moderator presides at the business sessions of the delegates at Yearly Meeting and supervises the work of the recording secretary. In the absence of the moderator, the Oversight Board will appoint a replacement.

- c. The recording secretary is responsible for writing the Yearly Meeting Minutes; proofreading and preparing them for printing; and preparing Returning Minutes for guests from other Yearly Meetings. In the absence of the recording secretary, the Oversight Board will appoint a replacement.

#### **450 THE YEARLY MEETING NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

- a. The Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee will include the Executive Director, the chairperson of the Oversight Board, and four at-large members who are not serving on the Oversight Board. At-large members will be recommended by the Oversight Board and approved by the Yearly Meeting delegates for a three-year term. In the event of a vacancy during a term, a replacement will be appointed by the Oversight Board to complete the term. The committee will elect a chairperson from among the committee members.
- b. The Nominating Committee will nominate trustees for the Malone University Board of Trustees and the at-large members of the Oversight Board. These names will be presented to the delegates for formal approval.

#### **460 INITIATION OF BUSINESS**

- a. Requests, recommendations, and proposals for consideration at Yearly Meeting are received from two sources:
  - i. Local churches may send proposals and requests to the Oversight Board. The Oversight Board may present these proposals and requests to the Yearly Meeting delegates or refer them to a suitable Ministry Team or special committee for preliminary study and recommendation.
  - ii. The Oversight Board may offer proposals to the Yearly Meeting delegates.

#### **470 CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

- a. Friends believe that business is an act of worship. This involves prayerfully seeking God's guidance. Together we will seek God until the meeting arrives at a high degree of unity. In general, the moderator discerns the consensus of the meeting. At times, voting is an acceptable method by which the moderator may more accurately determine "the sense of the meeting."
- b. Voting at Yearly Meeting is restricted to seated delegates, though members of local churches are encouraged to attend Yearly Meeting and to participate in discussions.
- c. The quorum requirement to conduct business in Yearly Meeting session will be any number of the delegates present at the session.

**480 MINUTES AND THE FAITH AND PRACTICE**

- a. Minutes of Yearly Meeting are written by the recording secretary and distributed to delegates following Yearly Meeting. Corrections or questions should be directed to the Evangelical Friends Headquarters. The final minutes will be approved by delegates via mail or electronic communication.
- b. Preservation: Minutes of Yearly Meeting and all other important records are kept by Malone University in the Archives of the Cattell Library.
- c. The EFC-ER Oversight Board recommends changes in the Faith and Practice to the delegates.

**490 FUNDING THE MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

- a. The mission, vision, and core values of EFC-ER will be funded by the annual budget.
- b. The purpose of the annual budget is to provide a unified approach to support the EFC-ER Ministry Teams.
- c. Funds needed are raised cooperatively through EFC-ER. Each local church commits to, and is expected to, share in supporting the annual budget.
- d. In the spring, each Ministry Team, and the Oversight Board, will present to the Finance and Administration Team its proposed budget for the ensuing fiscal year. The Finance and Administration Team leader will present the annual budget and funding plan for the next fiscal year at the spring meeting of the Oversight Board. With Oversight Board approval, the annual budget and funding plan will be presented to the Yearly Meeting delegates for adoption.
- e. The promotion of the annual budget is the responsibility of the Executive Director.
- f. Funds supporting the annual budget will be sent to the Evangelical Friends Headquarters to be administered by the Ministry Team leaders and the Ministry Directors.
- g. In the event of an annual budget shortfall, the Executive Director may require Ministry Teams to adjust their budgets appropriately.

## BOARDS AND MINISTRY TEAMS OF EFC-ER

### 500 BOARDS AND MINISTRY TEAMS OF EFC-ER

#### 501 Ministry Strategy

- a. The administrative structure consists of the Oversight Board and four Ministry Teams.
- b. The Oversight Board and Ministry Teams for EFC-ER will establish a Policy and Procedures Manual (Team Handbook) to provide needed detail of implementation of the vision.

### 510 STRUCTURE

#### 511 Oversight Board

- a. The Oversight Board is made up of the Executive Director, the President of Malone University, the four Ministry Team leaders, and six at-large members. Ministry Team leaders are recommended by the Executive Director and appointed by the Oversight Board. The at-large members are elected by the delegates of EFC-ER<sup>41</sup> and serve for three-year terms for a maximum of three terms before rotating off for a minimum of one year.
- b. The Oversight Board will give direction to EFC-ER between Yearly Meetings, and responsibilities will include:
  - i. Recommending the Executive Director to the Yearly Meeting delegates for approval;
  - ii. Reviewing the Faith and Practice and recommending changes to Yearly Meeting delegates for approval;
  - iii. Approving Ministry Team members as presented by the Ministry Team Directors;
  - iv. Approving the Ministry Team leaders as presented by the Executive Director;
  - v. Approving a plan for the Yearly Meeting sessions as presented by the Executive Director;
  - vi. Approving the moderator and recording secretary for Yearly Meeting business sessions as presented by the Executive Director;
  - vii. Serving as the governing body for EFC-ER;
  - viii. Monitoring the relationship between EFC-ER and Malone University;

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<sup>41</sup> #430



- ix. Approving a yearly strategic plan as presented by the Executive Director;
- x. Discerning and discovering God's best plan for EFC-ER.

## **512 Executive Director**

a. The Executive Director will:

- i. Carry out the Mission, Vision and Values of EFC-ER;
- ii. Serve on the Oversight Board;
- iii. Recommend the Oversight Board chair and vice-chair, Ministry Team leaders and Ministry Team Directors for approval by the Oversight Board;
- iv. Oversee and supervise the Ministry Team Directors;
- v. Be responsible, or appoint a designee, for the hiring, supervision, and separation of support staff;
- vi. Develop a plan for the Yearly Meeting sessions;
- vii. Develop a yearly strategic plan;
- viii. Promote EFC-ER's annual budget;
- ix. Serve on the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee;
- x. Serve on the Board of Trustees of Malone University;
- xi. Serve on the Board of Evangelical Friends Church – North America (EFC-NA);
- xii. Serve on the Board of Evangelical Friends Mission (EFM).

## **513 Ministry Team Directors**

a. The Ministry Team Directors will:

- I. Carry out, under the guidance and direction of the Executive Director, the Mission, Vision and Values of EFC-ER within their ministry team;
- II. Nominate, in consultation with the team lead, new team members for approval by the Oversight Board.

## **514 Ministry Teams**

- a. The day-to-day work of implementing the mission, vision, and core values of EFC-ER will be led by four Ministry Teams. The four Ministry Teams are the Leadership Development Team, the Church Health Team, the Multiplication Team, and the Finance and Administration Team.
- b. Each Ministry Team will be assembled as follows:
  - i. The team leader is nominated by the Executive Director and approved by the Oversight Board. Each team leader is an ex officio member of the Oversight Board.
  - ii. The team director is recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the Oversight Board.
  - iii. Team members are nominated by the team Director in consultation with the Ministry Team leader and approved by the Oversight Board.
  - iv. Team members (including the team leader) are appointed for a three- year term and can serve a maximum of three terms before rotating off for a minimum of one year.

## **515 Leadership Development Team**

- a. The Leadership Development Team will:
  - i. Oversee the credentialing process for pastors;
  - ii. Recruit potential pastors and leaders, while identifying methods to give potential leaders practical training and experience;
  - iii. Develop a structure for mentoring and/or coaching;
  - iv. Equip ministry leaders in the local churches (worship, children, youth, adult);
  - v. Provide assessment tools to help leaders grow in self-awareness;
  - vi. Oversee providing internships and/or scholarships for leaders;
  - vii. Promote and resource spiritual formation for pastors;
  - viii. Promote and resource pastoral support amid crisis;
  - ix. Resource and encourage lifelong learning;
  - x. Oversee the annual Pastors Conference.

## **516 Church Health Team**

- a. The Church Health Team will:
  - i. Provide an assessment process for the local churches;
  - ii. Resource churches to develop mission, vision, and core values;
  - iii. Provide resources to encourage missional engagement;
  - iv. Oversee/assist in pastoral placement;
  - v. Oversee establishing minimum salary for pastors;
  - vi. Provide biblical accountability and encouragement to pastors and churches;
  - vii. Promote and resource the starting of new ministries within local churches;
  - viii. Provide direction for declining churches;
  - ix. Exercise authority for churches in crisis.

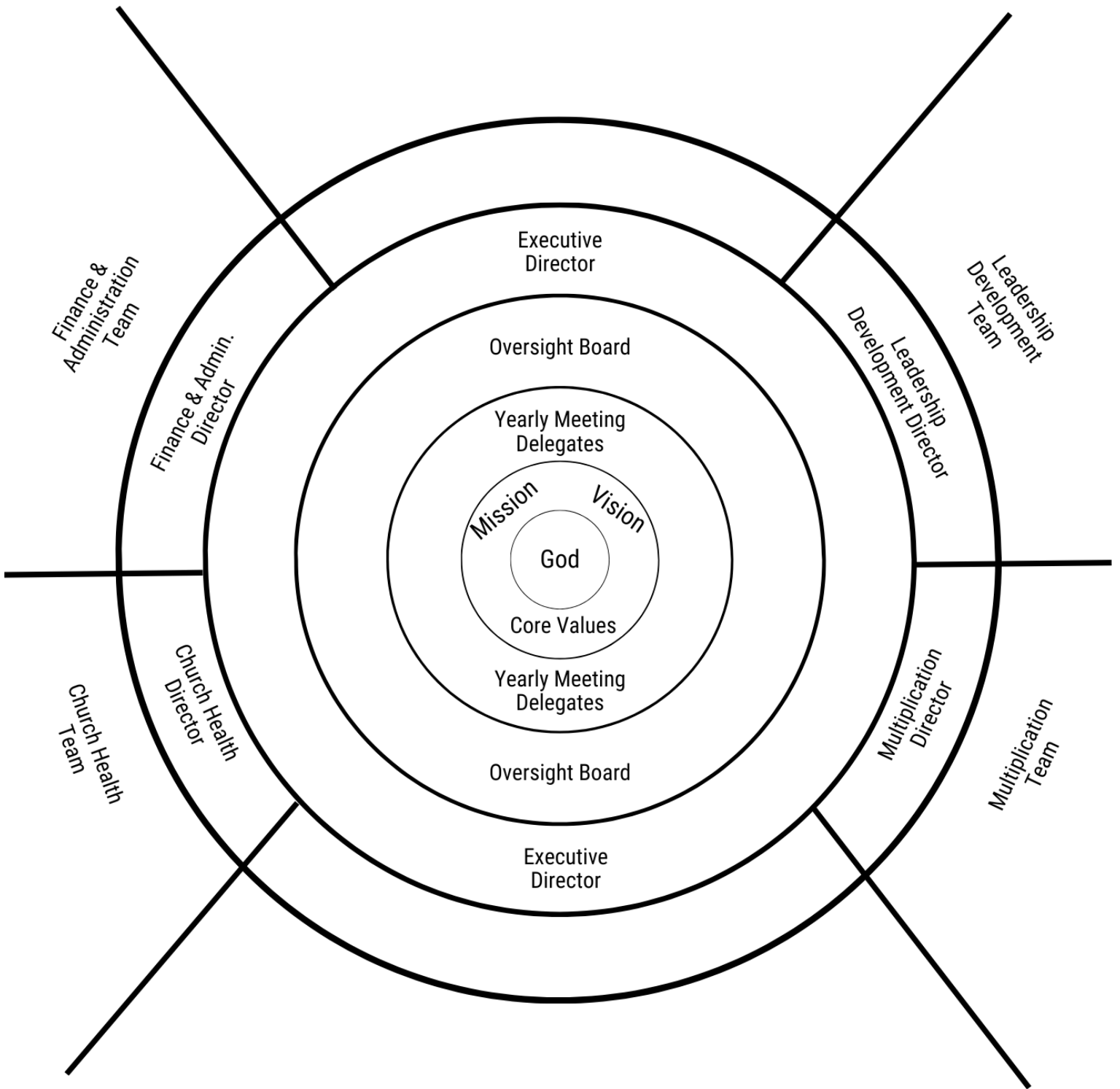
## **517 Multiplication Team**

- a. The Multiplication Team will:
  - i. Promote and resource the planting of new churches;
  - ii. Determine full church status;
  - iii. Oversee international partnerships focused on church planting;
  - iv. Resource churches to develop cross-cultural ministries.

## **518 Finance and Administration Team**

- a. The Finance and Administration Team will:
  - i. Care for the finances of EFC-ER;
  - ii. Develop policies for maintaining financial accountability and transparency;
  - iii. Oversee the EFC-ER pension program;
  - iv. Oversee management of insurances (e.g., life, disability, property);
  - v. Submit the annual budget to support EFC-ER's mission with a corresponding funding plan;
  - vi. Oversee the EFC-ER Development Fund;

- vii. Oversee the properties of EFC-ER;
- viii. Oversee the communication and marketing for EFC-ER.
- ix. Resource churches in setting up systems for administration and finance through templates, checklists, and consultations.



## MALONE UNIVERSITY

### 600 THE MALONE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- a. Composition: There are not fewer than 25 and not more than 33 Trustees composed of the following:
  - i. The Malone University President (ex-officio) who shall be or become a member of an EFC-ER church.
  - ii. The EFC-ER shall elect seventeen Trustees: two of such Trustees being the Executive Director and the chairperson of the Oversight Board (should the Oversight Board chairperson be an employee of the university, then the moderator shall serve as a Trustee in his place, and if the moderator is an employee of the university, then someone named by the Oversight Board shall serve); and fifteen Trustees, five elected each year for a three-year term. The Trustees shall take office at the close of Yearly Meeting. EFC-ER has the right to replace any of the 17 Trustees that it has elected at any time for their unexpired term.
  - iii. The Board of Trustees of Malone University shall elect the remaining Trustees, which shall number up to 15, to serve as it shall determine.
- b. The EFC-ER regards Malone University as an institution founded and operated to express its concern and provide for its needs in Christian higher education. It supports the university through the annual budget and encourages its youth to attend.
- c. Malone University is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio and is certified by the Ohio Board of Education to grant certain degrees. It is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.
- d. It operates under its own Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation, which recognizes the right of EFC-ER to appoint certain Trustees and to receive an annual report from its President. EFC-ER recognizes the need for loyalty to the doctrines and to the Faith and Practice of EFC-ER and reserves the right to approve any amendments of the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation.
- e. Article Five of the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation provides that "Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue law) as the Trustees shall

determine, however, subject to any restrictions placed upon said assets by the donors. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be conveyed, assigned, and transferred to Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region to be used as the church shall determine."

- f. Within the framework of the foregoing provisions, the Board of Trustees is charged with the full authority and responsibility of administering the university.

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A      EFC-ER Bylaws
- Appendix B      The Constitution of Evangelical Friends Church International (EFC-I)
- Appendix C      The Evangelical Friends Mission (EFM)
- Appendix D      The Epistle of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados, 1671



**Appendix A**  
**Bylaws of Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region**

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

This association of churches shall be known as Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region (also referred to as “EFC-ER”). It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of Ohio. The principal office shall be located at 5350 Broadmoor Circle NW, Canton, Ohio 44709.

**ARTICLE II: NON-PROFIT STATUS**

This association is organized as a church denomination exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), for such purposes including, not limited to, the proclaiming of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirement of Holy Scripture; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and foreign countries.

**ARTICLE III: INUREMENT**

No part of the net earnings of EFC-ER shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the tax-exempt purposes of EFC-ER.

**ARTICLE IV: PURPOSE**

EFC-ER is a movement of connected churches intentionally working together to fulfill a common mission, vision, and core values, based on the person and redemptive message of Jesus Christ. EFC-ER member churches send delegates to Yearly Meeting and agree to submit to its directives.

**ARTICLE V: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis of EFC-ER's Doctrine and Testimonies as written in EFC-ER's Faith & Practice (F&P).

**ARTICLE VI: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND DELEGATES**

The relationship of member churches with EFC-ER, including, but not limited to candidacy of churches and the appointment and responsibilities of delegates is detailed in the Faith & Practice sections 303 and 400-490.

## **ARTICLE VII: OVERSIGHT BOARD**

- A. The composition, role and responsibilities of the Oversight Board is defined in the Faith & Practice sections 511 a and b.
- B. The composition, role, and responsibilities of the Executive Committee of the Oversight Board is defined in the Faith & Practice section 511 c.

## **ARTICLE VIII: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

- A. Roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director

The roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director are defined in the Faith & Practice section 512.

- B. Executive Director Search Team

The Oversight Board chair will recommend an Executive Director Search Team to the Oversight Board for approval. The team will consist of five to seven members. The Search Team will make their recommendation to the Oversight Board for approval.

- C. The Call of the Executive Director

The Oversight Board will recommend the Executive Director to the Yearly Meeting delegates for approval. (F&P 511.b.) The Oversight Board shall recommend an initial two (2) year call to the delegates in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to Yearly Meeting. The initial call will be voted on in person at Yearly Meeting. If circumstances prohibit Yearly Meeting from being held in person, delegates will vote electronically.

- D. The Renewal of the Executive Director Call

The Executive Director's renewal of call is conducted two (2) years after the initial call. The Oversight Board will recommend a call from one (1) to four (4) years. The call is affirmed through a vote by mail or electronically from the delegates to the last Yearly Meeting.

- E. Early Termination of the Executive Director Call Agreement

1) The Oversight Board or Executive Director may initiate an early termination of the Call Agreement by furnishing written notice to the other party at least two (2) weeks in advance.

2) In instances where the Executive Director may be incapacitated or resigns, the Oversight Board shall appoint an Acting Executive Director to serve until the subsequent Yearly Meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX: COPORATE OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES**

- A. As an accommodation to legal relationships outside of EFC-ER, the Executive Director shall serve as president of the corporation, the Oversight Board chair shall serve as vice president of the corporation, the Finance and Administration team lead shall serve as treasurer of the corporation, and the Oversight Board vice-chair shall serve as secretary of the corporation. The Oversight Board shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation.
- B. The Executive Director, Director of Finance and Administration, Oversight Board chair and Finance and Administration team lead shall function as trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents on behalf of EFC-ER involving the purchase, sale, mortgage, rental, or transfer of property, or to other legal documents where the signatures of trustees or directors are required, including, but not limited to, serving as statutory agent for the state of Ohio. Upon approval of the oversight Board, one signature of the aforementioned trustees may affix their signatures to legal documents on behalf of EFC-ER

## **ARTICLE X: MALONE UNIVERSITY**

EFC-ER regards Malone University as an institution founded and operated to express its concern and provide for its needs in Christian higher education. The relationship between EFC-ER and Malone University is detailed in section 600 of the Faith and Practice.

## **ARTICLE XI: INDEMNIFICATION**

### **SECTION 1 INSURANCE**

- A. EFC-ER will purchase and maintain liability insurance on behalf of any and all persons who are or were a director, officer, leader, employee, team member or volunteer of EFC-ER (while serving in their capacity as such).
- B. Such insurance will be purchased for the purpose of protecting such persons from covered loss resulting in liability asserted against the above individuals in connection with their activities on behalf of EFC-ER.

### **SECTION 2 INDEMNIFICATION REQUESTS**

Should any director, officer, leader, employee, team member or volunteer of EFC-ER incur any liability as a result of their affiliation with or service to the ministry that is not covered by EFC-ER's insurance policy and should such liability result in any out-of-pocket cost to such individual, then such individual may request indemnification from EFC-ER. The granting of full or partial indemnification shall be at the discretion of the Oversight Board as set forth in Section 3 herein.

**SECTION 3  
INDEMNIFICATION DECISIONS**

- A. In relation to any indemnification request that is made pursuant to Section 2 herein, if such request is made by an individual who is not currently serving on the Oversight Board, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting individual, and the dollar amount of such indemnification), will be made by the Oversight Board. Such decision of the governing board will be final.
  
- B. If the indemnification request is being made by a person who is currently serving on the Oversight Board, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting party, and the dollar amount of such indemnification), will be made by the remaining disinterested members of the Oversight Board. A decision on the indemnification request by a majority of disinterested members of the Oversight Board will be final.

**ARTICLE XII: ARBITRATION**

**SECTION 1  
SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION**

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture (I Cor 6:1-8), all churches and church members of EFC-ER agree to submit to binding arbitration on any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

**SECTION 2  
NOTICE OF ARBITRATION**

- A. In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians in accord with Matthew 18:15-17.
  
- B. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution.
  
- C. If they do not reach such solution within a period of ninety (90) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 1, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 4, below.

**SECTION 3  
LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS**

- A. Should any dispute involve matters of EFC-ER intervention in a member church, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for EFC-ER intervention, as outlined in section 305 of the Faith & Practice, were followed.
- B. Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor, church staff member, or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in EFC-ER's Faith & Practice were followed.

**SECTION 4  
ARBITRATION PROCEDURES**

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the Oversight Board. It is suggested the best practice of resolving doctrinal issues is settled by the Oversight Board. Issues that fall outside of the doctrinal purview should be arbitrated by a Christian attorney familiar with the function of EFC-ER.

**ARTICLE XIII: CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**SECTION 1  
PURPOSE**

The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect EFC-ER's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might either benefit the private interest of an officer, trustee or employee of EFC-ER or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

**SECTION 2  
DEFINITIONS**

- A. Interested Person: Any trustee, officer or member who has a direct or indirect financial interest.
- B. Financial interest: A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
  - 1) An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which EFC-ER has a transaction or arrangement,
  - 2) A compensation arrangement with EFC-ER or with any entity or individual with which EFC-ER has a transaction or arrangement, or
  - 3) A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which EFC-ER is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

4) A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the board decides that a conflict of interest exists.

- C. Compensation: Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

### **SECTION 3 PROCEDURES**

- A. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the trustees, staff or team leader considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

- B. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, the Oversight Board will meet to make the determination if a conflict of interest exists. If the interested person is a member of the Oversight Board, the remaining board members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

- C. An interested person may make a presentation at the board meeting, but after the presentation, he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

1) The chairman of the board shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or team to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2) After exercising due diligence, the board or team shall determine whether EFC-ER can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

3) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested elders whether the transaction or arrangement is in the best interests of EFC-ER, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

- D. If the board has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

- E. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the board determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**SECTION 4  
RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS**

- A. The minutes of the Oversight Board shall contain the names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Oversight Board's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
  
- B. The minutes of the Oversight Board also shall contain the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

**SECTION 5  
COMPENSATION**

A voting member of the Oversight board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from EFC-ER for services rendered may not vote on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

**ARTICLE XIV: DISSOLUTION**

Upon discontinuance of EFC-ER by dissolution or otherwise, any assets lawfully available for distribution are to be transferred to an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code by a majority vote of Yearly Meeting delegates.

**ARTICLE XV: AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended, modified, or repealed only by the voting delegates present at any duly convened Yearly Meeting, provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented to the delegates in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date established for voting on said amendment.

Any amendments to the Bylaws shall immediately go into full force and effect from and after their adoption.

**ADOPTION**

These bylaws were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of EFC-ER in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of EFC-ER.

**7/17/2023**

Date

*Clark Hoopes*

Moderator

**Appendix B**  
**THE CONSTITUTION OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH INTERNATIONAL (EFC-I)**

**Preamble**

Arising out of a God-given concern to participate fully as Friends in seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness through the church, we herein set forth a constitution to serve as a guide for faith and action by Evangelical Friends Church International. In so doing, we declare our belief in the value of Christian unity for the spiritual welfare and for the advancement of the program of the Evangelical Friends Church worldwide.

**Article I – Name**

The name of this organization shall be: Evangelical Friends Church International.

**Article II – Purpose**

The organization shall be an international alliance of Friends churches that officially accept and communicate the evangelical doctrines of the Christian faith as herein defined. This purpose of the alliance will be seen:

1. By working together under policies and arrangements herein stated,
2. By serving together in Christian ministries based upon Biblical principles,
3. By prayerfully investing both personal and material resources in order to fulfill the Great Commission,
4. By seeking continuously to discern both the call of God and the need of humanity as it is expressed in diverse cultures and respond appropriately in a Christian manner.

**Article III – Objectives**

1. Renewal. To motivate a renewed sensitivity to God's voice through Scripture and contemporary needs by persistent waiting on the Lord and total availability to the Holy Spirit for living the life of Christ in and through us.
2. Evangelism. To share creative and effective methods of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world with those who have not received Him as Savior and Lord.
3. Fellowship. To stimulate genuine sharing of joys and burdens with one another in the family of Friends, locally, nationally and internationally.
4. Leadership. To develop individuals whose God-given call and vision, spiritual gifts and Christ-like lifestyles command respect as servant leaders among God's people.



## **Article IV – Statement of Faith**

### **THE HOLY BIBLE**

We believe that the 66 books of the Holy Bible were given by the inspiration of God; that there can be no appeal from these Scriptures to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith that is in Jesus Christ; that the Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures must ever be its true interpreter as Christ works through the disciplined and dedicated minds of those within His Church; that any professed guidance that is contrary to these Scriptures must be counted as a delusion.

### **GOD**

We believe in one God, revealed through the Holy Spirit in the person of Jesus Christ; that He is both the creator and preserver of all things visible and invisible; that He alone is worthy of worship, honor, glory, dominion, praise, and thanksgiving both now and forevermore; and that in the unity of the Godhead there exists three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, inseparable in divinity, power, glory, and eternity.

### **JESUS CHRIST**

We believe Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God; that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; that He is the express image of the invisible God; and that He combines within Himself both the nature of God and the nature of man in one perfect indivisible personality, the God-man.

We believe that He was crucified as a substitutionary atonement for us and for the sins of the whole world, making provision whereby each person may find the forgiveness of sins, the power for a new life, and be brought back into a perfect relationship with the Father. We believe that He arose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, making intercession for us, and that He will come to earth again to receive His Church unto Himself and to judge the world in righteousness.

### **HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third person of the Trinity, proceeding from both Father and Son, but equal with them in authority, power, and glory; that He convicts the world of sin, imparts life to the penitent believer, sanctifies the child of God, empowers the disciple for service to others, and enables each one by His indwelling presence to love God supremely.

### **PEOPLE**

We believe that God created people as male and female in His own image; that they enjoyed unbroken fellowship with their Maker; and that their whole life centered in the person of God. We believe that people fell from this original state by an act of transgression; that in this fall they suffered the immediate loss of their perfect relationship to God, making self the center of their life; and that in this act they suffered immediate spiritual death. All people are born in this disposition to sin. We own no principle inherent naturally by which they may be saved, except by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ as a provision for all people.

## **MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY**

God designed marriage for humanity. As first described in Genesis and later affirmed by Jesus, marriage is a God ordained, covenant relationship between a biologically born male and a biologically born female. This lifelong, sexually exclusive relationship brings children into the world and thus sustains the stewardship of the earth. Biblical marriage - marked by faithfulness, sacrificial love and joy - displays the relationship between God and his people.

## **SALVATION**

We believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, people can be recovered from their fallen state through divine enlightenment, forgiveness of sin, regeneration and sanctification of their affection, and the final glorification of their bodies; that in this life they can love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength; that they can live in victory over known sin and enjoy unbroken fellowship with the Heavenly Father; and that once more their whole lives may center in and revolve around their Creator and Redeemer.

We believe that the experience of sanctification is the work of God's grace by which affections are purified and exalted to a supreme love to God and others, and the believer is empowered to witness of the living Christ. This is accomplished by the filling with the Holy Spirit in the life of a dedicated and believing child of God; that this is both an act in which the heart is purified by faith and a process in which the life is continuously disciplined into paths of holiness. By submission and availability to Jesus Christ, people become channels for Christ to do His work in this present age.

## **THE CHURCH**

We believe that all those persons who repent of their sins, believe in and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, are born again into His kingdom by the Holy Spirit, and that these constitute the Church of Jesus Christ. This Church we believe to be spiritual in nature, universal in scope, holy in character, and redemptive in her life and purpose.

We believe that wherever two or three are gathered together regularly and faithfully in the name of Christ, He is truly present in the person of the Holy Spirit and that such an assembly is a local church, the visible expression of His body and the Church universal.

We believe that believers must relate themselves to the local and visible body of Christ being fitly framed together with others into a holy temple in the Lord and built together for a habitation of His Holy Spirit.

## **CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES**

We believe that in the church, the believer is committed to both the worship and the work of God; that this work involved not only personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but the ministry of evangelism and teaching; that in this commission of Christ every believer is involved in the stewardship of the kingdom, and that is fulfilled only by faithful service in and through the fellowship of His Church; and that this work is continuous until Christ comes again calling the Church unto Himself. We believe that all Christians are called upon to witness by word and by deed within a sinful world, not returning evil for evil, but in Christlikeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace.

We believe that in the fellowship of His body, the Holy Spirit gives to every member a gift to be exercised for the mutual advantage of every member in the body, and for the influence of the Church upon those outside; the ministry is a special calling given to certain ones whom God ordains for a service of leadership in His Church; that this service may be that of pastoring, teaching, evangelizing, administration, or other kinds of service to humanity.

### **LIBERTY**

Regarding Christian liberty, we recognize that among Evangelical Friends and among the larger body of evangelical Christians there are minor differences of faith and practice, due in part to historical and cultural differences and our imperfections. We look forward to the time when we shall all come into a greater unity of the faith. Until then, we believe that in biblical essentials there must be unity, that in nonessentials there must be liberty, but in all things there must be charity.

### **SPIRITUAL REALITIES**

We believe that both Christian baptism and communion are spiritual realities which are not dependent upon physical and outward ordinances; that baptism is an inward receiving of the Holy Spirit in which He becomes Lord over all -- guiding, cleansing, empowering, and in general, representing God to us in immediate experience; that communion is the daily receiving and realization of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; that this communion is dependent not only upon the condition of the believer walking daily in the light of Christ but also in the historic act of Christ on Calvary as His body was broken and blood shed once and for all for us; that Christ thus becomes a daily personal spiritual reality known immediately in Christian experience; and that through Him and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, God and divine realities are known experientially and immediately.

### **RESURRECTION AND JUDGEMENT**

We believe in the second coming of Christ; that at His coming the dead shall be resurrected, some to everlasting glory and others to everlasting condemnation; that we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive recompense for the things done in the body; that the judgment of the blessed shall be unto heaven, and the judgment of the lost shall be unto hell; that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; that this judgment is in the hands of our compassionate Redeemer, who does all things after the counsel of His wisdom, love and holiness.

## **Article V – Membership**

Any Yearly Meeting of the Friends, or any organized Friends group of churches, may apply for membership in Evangelical Friends Church International and will be accepted provided there is official agreement with the doctrines and policies of Evangelical Friends Church International and the Regional Coordinating Council of the respective region approves such application.

For a single international or regional event, a non-member Yearly Meeting or Friends group of churches who agrees with the Statement of Faith may participate on a temporary basis. Their financial support will be proportionate for this event. Planning and participation will last for this single event only.

## **Article VI – Organization**

Membership shall be under a two-level system.

Level I -- Membership in Evangelical Friends Church International by geographical region, i.e.:

EFC – AFRICA

EFC – ASIA

EFC – LATIN AMERICA

EFC – NORTH AMERICA

EFC – EUROPE

It shall be directed by an International Council composed of the Director of each region, plus an International Director to be nominated by them and approved by each Regional Coordinating Council.

Level II -- Membership in respective regions as a Yearly Meeting or organized Friends group within any of the regions. It shall have a controlling body to be known as the Coordinating Council and is made up of representatives of member Yearly Meetings, as determined by each respective region.

There shall be in addition an Executive Committee of each Regional Coordinating Council composed of the general superintendents or their equivalent, and a member-at-large of each member Yearly Meeting, or any organized Friends group of churches.

**Appendix C**  
**THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS MISSION (EFM)**

The Evangelical Friends Mission ([www.friendsmission.com](http://www.friendsmission.com)) represents the coordinated mission work of the North American Region of Evangelical Friends International represented by EFC-ER, Mid-America, Northwest, Rocky Mountain, Southwest, and Alaska Yearly Meetings.

The purpose of EFM is to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ through healing to build His church, encouraging the efforts of Friends Internationally in proclaiming Jesus Christ as “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” EFM seeks to fuel a worldwide movement of people who seek first the kingdom of God, planting churches that live and die to carry out the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment.

EFM carries out its mission by moving into the neighborhoods where God leads, learning languages and cultures, proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed, discipling those who respond to the Gospel in holistic ways, and helping them to form churches. EFM also helps to equip disciples for ministry with the goal of creating self-sustaining ministries that can send out missionaries on their own.

The rationale for EFM is that by working together, Evangelical Friends can accomplish more in fulfilling the Great Commission and bringing others into the family of God.

## Appendix D

### The Epistle of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados, 1671

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God; who is the Creator of all things, both in heaven and earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; Who is God over all, blessed forever; to Whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and evermore!

And we do own and believe in Jesus Christ, His beloved and only begotten Son, in Whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the virgin Mary; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; Who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by Whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers all things were created by Him.

And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, Who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; and that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and we do believe that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God.

This Jesus, Who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we do believe that there is no other foundation to be laid but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; Who, we believe tasted death for every man, and shed His blood for all men and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world; according as John the Baptist testified, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."<sup>1</sup>

We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the Captain of our Salvation (Who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works), Who is the seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to wit, Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.

That He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved.

It is He alone Who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; He it is Who is our Prophet, Whom Moses long since testified of, saying "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto Me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear the prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."<sup>2</sup> (He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." And He rules our hearts by His law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death.)

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<sup>1</sup> John 1:29

<sup>2</sup> Acts 3:22-23

And we have no life but by Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by Whose blood we are cleansed and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God.

And He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace and peace; the Author and finisher of our faith.

Now this Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly Man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in Him Whom the high priests raged against, and said He had spoken blasphemy; Whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against and put to death; the same Whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach an horrible lie, namely, that His disciples came and stole Him away by night while they slept.

And after He was risen from the dead, the history of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus for preaching Christ and His resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, Whom we own to be our life and salvation.

And as concerning the Holy Scriptures we do believe they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who (as the Scripture itself declares<sup>3</sup>) "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled (He that fulfills them is Christ); and they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,"<sup>4</sup>; and are able to make wise "unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (We call the Holy Scriptures, as Christ and the apostles called them, and holy men of God called them -- the words of God.)

We do declare that we do esteem it a duty incumbent on us to pray with, and for, to teach and instruct, and admonish those in and belonging to our families. Now, Negroes and Indians make up a very great part of the families in this island for who an account will be required by Him Who comes to judge the quick and the dead, at the great day of judgment, when every one shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil; at that day, I say, of the resurrection both of the good and of the bad, of the just and the unjust. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."<sup>5</sup>

We sincerely confess that divine honor and worship is due to the Son of God; and that He is, in true faith to be prayed unto, and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ called upon (as the primitive Christians did), because of the glorious union of oneness of the Father and

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<sup>3</sup> II Peter 1:21

<sup>4</sup> II Timothy 3:16-17

<sup>5</sup> II Thessalonians 1:7-10; II Peter 3:3

Son, and that we cannot acceptably offer up prayer and praises to God, nor receive a gracious answer or blessing from God, but in and through His dear Son.

-- From a declaration of Christian Doctrine given forth on behalf of the Church, 1671.