



# **“By-Laws”**

We, the members of the congregation at Commitment Church, commit and voluntarily submit ourselves first to the authority of the Scripture and to the organizational instrument called, Church By-Laws.

# I. STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION AND AUTHORITY

Our local “By-Laws” exist to complement the ultimate vision and purpose of Commitment Community Church of Lindenwold, NJ and all its affiliated Churches/Campuses, thus herein referred to as the Church. This document is to assist the Church to fulfill its Great Commission responsibility, while supporting the laws of the State and obeying the highest law ever established for mankind, the Scriptures. Therefore, this document should never usurp or override the Authority of God’s Word and the Church’s calling to obey and fulfill it (The Bible).

The Church will endeavor to maintain the unity of spirit toward all doctrinally sound Bible-believing groups and will maintain filial bonds with the Evangelical Free Church of America, herein referred to as EFCA. The Church is an autonomous body, claiming the right of free government, but recognizing no religious authority or control other than that of God and the Bible.

The Church (Members), using the congregational form of government, exercises its authority as the legislative and governing body at its annual and special meetings, herein referred to as “Family Meetings”. The Church Elders function as the board of directors under the authority of the Membership. Our Deacons, Women’s Leaders, and Ministry Team Leaders (MTL) serve in our context of government as advisory teams.

The exposure of the crisis of integrity within the Church always provokes ridicule and contempt from the world. To those guilty of such disobedience, Romans 2:24 suggest that: “The name of God is blasphemed among unbelievers because of you.” Another form of tragedy that defiles the reputation of the Bride of Christ is when a brother takes another brother to court. Such a thing plagued the Church at Corinth. Again, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul wrote to rebuke this practice in the Church in all ages and to provide an alternative saying: “Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?...are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? ... I say this to your shame... Actually, then it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another.” (1 Cor.6:1-7). Thus, we are exhorted in the Scriptures to “abstain from every appearance of evil” (1 Thess. 5:22); to “let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner” (1 Cor. 14:40); and that Church leaders (Elders|Deacons|Women’s Leaders|MTL) must “have a good reputation with those outside the Church” (1Tim 3:7).

Therefore, with these and other matters in-view we have drafted our “By-Laws” with the Scriptures as our guide, and in compliance with the direction that God has established for our Church to follow. We believe these principles will assist Commitment Community Church in becoming a Church without spot or blemish, and a local Body of believers who will affirm the Name of Christ to be honored here on earth for all eternity.

## II. Concerning Our **SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION & HERITAGE**

At the core of what we believe and why we exist as a Church is **Jesus Christ**.

**Colossians 1:15-19:** <sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him.

We uphold these 7 Core Beliefs as essential to the Christian faith:

**We believe.** . . . that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God and without mistakes as originally written. It is the complete revelation of His will for salvation and the only unfailing rule of faith and practice for the Christian life.

**We believe.** . . . in one God, Creator of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that these three are co-eternal and of equal dignity and power.

**We believe.** . . . in the deity of Jesus Christ; His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit; His virgin birth; His sinless life; His substitutionary death on a cross; His bodily resurrection; His ascension to the right hand of the Father; and His personal, imminent return.

**We believe.** . . . that man was created by and for God; that by man's disobeying God, every person incurred spiritual death, which is separation from God, and physical death as a consequence; and that all people are sinners by nature and practice.

**We believe.** . . . the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins and that all who believe in Him are declared righteous because of His sacrificial death and are, therefore, in the right relationship with God.

**We believe.** . . . in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit indwelling all believers and thus enabling and empowering the life and ministry of the believer.

**We believe.** . . . in the bodily resurrection of everyone who has lived, the everlasting blessedness of those in right relationship with God, and the everlasting punishment of those who have rejected God's forgiveness in His Son.

## OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH:

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

- 1. God:** We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.
- 2. The Bible:** We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.
- 3. The Human Condition:** We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.
- 4. Jesus Christ:** We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.
- 5. The Work of Christ:** We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.
- 6. The Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.
- 7. The Church:** We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.
- 8. Christian Living:** We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.
- 9. Christ's Return:** We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.
- 10. Response and Eternal Destiny:** We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

### **III. Concerning CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

1. Must have acknowledged Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Romans 10: 8 -13
2. Must do one's best to consistently live the Christian life according to their knowledge of the Scriptures. Galatians 5: 16
3. Must be willing to serve and use one's giftedness as service unto the Lord through His people. Galatians 5:13; I Corinthians 12: 1-31
4. Must have a willing desire to financially support the Church as the Lord has prospered through ones "tithes and offerings" as it pertains to the Scripture. Malachi 3: 8-12; Haggai 1: 2-7
5. Must have a desire to continuously strive for personal spiritual growth in one's relationship with Christ through our NextStep Training Process. II Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 4: 7-23; Romans 12:1-2
6. Must have the desire to develop lasting relationships with other Church Members through the avenues the Church has created (Growth Groups, Engage Groups, Prayer, Bible study, etc.) or on one's own initiative. Proverbs 27: 3- 21
7. Cannot be intentionally purposefully living in any sinful patterns contrary to the written Scriptures. Ephesians 2:1-8; 4:17-32
8. Must have completed the first step of Commitment's "NextStep" Spiritual Growth Process.

### **IV. Concerning GENERAL CHURCH MEETINGS**

1. Must be led by the Holy Spirit and conducted in a spirit of love with the desire to move the Church closer to God's purpose for it.
2. Meetings are to be held at a minimal annually. These meeting, called "Family Meetings" are to provide and maintain fiscal responsibility, vision, direction, and answer pertinent questions and while maintaining a spirit of unity.
3. Meetings are not the time to voice complaints but to provide solutions to any problems or concerns that arise. If there are complaints or concerns, a separate meeting can be requested with the Elders and Advisory Team to address any needs.
4. Meetings can use the "Robert's Rule of Order as a method of conducting such meetings but are not limited to only this method of meeting. Meeting notes and documents should be archived.
5. Voting for directional or non-directional decisions can and should be allowed by Church members only as defined in Section III. All voting members must be physically present. These are those who have formally participated in "Discovering Commitment" our New Member's Classes and has completed our NextStep Discipleship Training or is actively matriculating through it per our "Spiritual Growth Tracker". They are consistently participating in our church community; is in good standing within the Church; consistently financially support the ministry work; and who are in regular worship attendance.
6. A "Unanimous Decision Vote" method will be used for general voting; "All in favor say aye or no". If a vote is too close to call, we will use a "Raised Hand or Standing Vote" to affirm our congregational decision. A "Majority Vote" in our context is 84%. We should always use wisdom in voting because voting should never be used as a divisive tool of the enemy but rather a privilege that affirms the voice of the congregation/Body and establishes another layer of accountability to our Lord—not one another!
7. Annual Budgets should be voted on during our "Family Meeting" which requires a "majority vote".
8. "Special Votes" may be needed for specific directional decisions and requires a "majority vote".
9. "Amendment Votes" to Bylaws requires a "majority vote".

# V. Concerning **GOVERNANCE**

## **Section A: The Appointment to Servant Leadership**

**\*Note:** “**Examination Team**” is made up of the Lead Pastors and current Elders, Deacons, Women’s Leadership, and assigned Pastors. **Qualifications** must meet the stated based upon Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus for an “Overseer” found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1; and the completion the Church’s “NextStep Discipleship Training Program”.

1. If none exist, the Lead Pastor would have this responsibility. Through prayer and counsel with other Pastors and leaders within our EFCA District, he would be responsible to develop qualified men to help him lead and govern the Church as Elders. (Titus 1:5)
2. If some Servant Leaders (Elders, Deacons, Women’s Leadership, and Pastors) already exists, the “exiting” Servant Leaders can prayerfully recommend and assist the Lead Pastor and “Examination Team” in the appointment of a “biblically” qualified man as Elders and Deacons, and “biblically” qualified women as Women’s Leadership. (Titus 1:5)
3. The Lead Pastor and Current Leadership (Elders, Deacons, Women’s Leadership, and Pastors) should pray and fast to unanimously agree before any recommendation and appointment. (Acts 6: 1-7)
4. Servant Leaders can be reappointed if there are not any men “biblically” qualified to serve and if they are spiritually and physically able to do so.
5. Deacons and Women’s Leadership are affirmed and voted in by the Congregation with a necessary “vetting process” conducted by the Elders, “Examination Team” and any other qualified members prior to the publishing of the ballot. See selection process. (Acts 6: 1-7)
6. Future Servant Leaders (Elders, Deacons, Women’s Leadership) should be developed, mentored and suggested by our current Servant Leaders and affirmed by the congregation.
7. The appointment Elders, Deacons, Women’s Leadership, Pastors, Ministers, and Ministry Team Leaders are observed and confirmed by both the Congregation and *current* Elders prior to contacting and deploying the individual into service.

## **Section B: Elders Composition**

1. The composition of the Elders shall consist of a desired number of at 12 men, of whom 10 are laymen and two ex officio members, the Lead Pastor and the Executive Pastor. If there is no Executive Pastor, that seat is filled by an additional layman. If required, other Pastors may serve temporarily as interim Elders while other Elders are working through the appointment process. This would be determined by the current Elders serving.
2. These men shall begin serving following current Elder’s recommendation, Congregational affirmation from those in “good-standing” and then public laying on hands of our current and/or Elders Emeritus who are also in good membership standing.
3. After the achievement of the 12 Active Elder seats, we will rotate off the longest active Elder who has serve a minimal of three years. Those rotating off will be considered Elders Emeritus, for a minimum of one year or as needed do to an empty seat.
4. The Lead Pastor should serve as the Lead Elder while maintaining his shepherding responsibility.

5. If the number of Elders falls below twelve, then the *current* Elders may appoint an Elder Emeritus to serve as an active Elder until new Elders are available and installed at the next annual meeting. If there are no Elder Emeritus available, then current Pastors in good standing can be appointed by the *current* Elders and serve as interim Elders until new Elders are available and installed. The individual must have maintained participation and good-standing membership in Commitment Church since the last term of service and must have continued to meet the biblical qualities of an Elder to the current Elders' satisfaction.
6. Anyone serving in the capacity of Elder (Current Elder, Elder Emeritus, Interim Elder) surrenders all rights to pursue any legal against the Church (CCC) or anyone affiliated with Commitment Community Church.
7. Required Interview: with wife and/or family members and/or close friends where applicable.
8. Must be a member of Commitment Church in good standing for a minimal of 3 years at least 30 years of age.
9. Family members of the Lead Pastor or any current Elder or Interim Elder may not serve together as Elders during any time of their assigned term.

### **Section C: Elders Responsibilities**

1. To keep the Church focused on Jesus Christ, glorifying God, and His purpose for its existence. **Acts 6: 1-4**
2. To serve alongside the Lead Pastor and the Congregation. **I Peter 5: 1 – 4**
3. To help maintain Pastoral, Doctrinal, Spiritual and Fiscal Integrity. **I Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-22**
4. To assist the Lead Pastor and Congregation with “vital” decisions be it spiritual or business related. **Proverbs 11:14**
5. To assist the Lead Pastor and the Congregation with the implementation of the Church vision, mission and overall direction. **Proverbs 15:22**
6. **\*\*If sin or clear biblical error persist** in the life or teaching of an Elder, a Pastor or any Servant Leader, or Church Member, the Elders have the responsibility and the biblical right along with the Church to exercise **Matthew 18:15-20 and I Timothy 5:19-20.**

### **Section D: Elders Offices & Meetings (Points 4-8 are instituted when a minimal of 7 Elder Seats are filled)**

1. The **lead** Elder is the Lead Pastor, who has a primary spiritual care responsibility to all Current Elders, Elder Emeritus, and Interim Elders.
2. Elders shall meet, as necessary, to fulfill their responsibilities. Minimally 1X per month or as necessary.
3. An item shall be approved when 100 percent of the Elders present vote in favor. If not in complete agreement, the Elders will continue seeking the Lord's will until complete agreement is reached.
4. The **officers** of the Elders shall be the chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary.
5. The **chairman** shall call Elder's meetings, approve agendas, and chair all meetings of the Elders and of the congregation. The chairman, or his designee, shall represent the Elders and the congregation in matters of business outside the Church.

6. The **vice-chairman** shall fulfill the duties of the chairman in the event that the chairman is unable to fulfill his duties.
7. The **secretary** shall maintain the records of all Elder and congregational meetings.
8. At least 66 percent of the Elders must be present at Elder's meetings to constitute a quorum.

### **Section E: Discipline**

1. Disciplinary action against anyone serving in the office of Elder should follow the steps described above in **Article V, Section C-6** for discipline of any Church member, except that in accordance with **1 Timothy 5:19** an accusation should only be received against an Elder if there are two or more witnesses of the offense.
2. If anyone serving in the office of Elder is found by his fellow Elders to have offended in a matter worthy of church discipline and based on the account of two or three witnesses, and if he fails to repent, his case should be treated like that of any other member.

## **VI. Concerning LEADERSHIP FOCAL POINTS**

### **Section A: Our Commitment to God**

1. To pray privately, together as church leaders, and to lead during corporate prayer within the Body (**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**)
2. To allow the Scripture to be our guide and final authority for reproof, correction, training in righteousness, and the preparation of the Body of Christ for every good work (**Psalms 119:9-16, Proverbs 3:1-2, 2 Timothy 2:15 & 3:15-16**)
3. To fully and aggressively seek to know and follow the heart of God in every matter (**Psalms 119, Proverbs 3:5-7a**)
4. To maintain the Sabbath Day principle in our personal lives, family, and within the Body—to take time for rest and physical rejuvenation (**Hebrews 4:9-11**)
5. To always deal with sin quickly—first in our own lives, then within the Body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 5:7, Ephesians 4:25-32, Colossians 3:1-17, 2 Timothy 2:19-26, & James 1:21**)
6. To always stay humble before our Lord and man through total and continual submission to the Holy Spirit—to remain teachable (**Romans 12:14-16, 2 Corinthians 11:7, Philippians Chapter 2, James 4:6-10, 1 Peter 3:8-9, & 1 Peter 5:5**)
7. To perpetually do all things for the glory of God! (**Isaiah 10:1-15, 44:23-28, 49:1-13, 60:15-22, 61:1-3, John 12:23-28, John 17:1-12, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, & 10:31**)

### **Section B: Our Commitment to the Body**

1. To endeavor to keep unity within the Body no matter the issue, race, culture, or social and economic class of a person (**John 17:11, Acts 4:32, Romans 12:3-16, 1 Corinthians Chapter 12, Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 2:11-22 & 4:1-6, Philippians 2:1-2**)
2. To always affirm every confidential or defaming conversation or rumor about anyone through 2 or 3 witness before jumping to any premature conclusions (**Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 18:16, John 8:17, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Timothy 5:19, 2 Timothy 2:24-26 & Hebrews 10:28**)



3. To actively fulfill the great commission through proactively evangelizing and making disciples of Christ of people from every race, culture, social & economic class (**Matthew 28:1-20**)
4. To maintain a heart of service towards the people we are called by God to faithfully serve and unconditionally love towards biblical maturity (**Mark 10:43-45, Luke 26-27, Philippians 2:14-17 & 19-22, 2 Timothy 2:24, & Hebrews 12:28-29**)
5. To guard our tongues—never to use them to tear down, but to build up each other and the entire Body (**2 Timothy 2:16-17& 23-26, and James 3:1-12**)

### **Section C: Our Commitment to Integrity**

1. To never be alone with a woman who is not my wife or relative (**1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 & James 1:13-16**)
2. To always let my yes be yes and my no be no—to be a man of my word (**James 5:12**)
3. To always care for God's resources (money) with integrity and with the utmost respect, which includes my personally tithing and sacrificial giving to the local Church (**Malachi 3:8-15, Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 16:1-15, & 1 Timothy 6:9-11**)
4. To never embellish or exaggerate the truth under any circumstances or for any purpose—to always tell the truth under any condition or climate (**Proverbs 12:19-22, John 8:31-32, Romans 3:1-3, & 1 Corinthians 5:6-8**)
5. To model in-private, authentic spiritual leadership, which is spoken of within the Scripture—at home and abroad (**1 Timothy 3:1-15**)

## **VII. Concerning APPOINTING A NEW LEAD PASTOR**

1. A search committee of (7) members is to be formed. This committee should be made up of members who are actively and faithfully serving within the Church.
2. Their responsibility is to pray and encourage the Church to pray for wisdom in the search and selection process and that the will of God would be revealed.
3. The search is to begin from within, identifying qualified men who are currently serving as Pastors of the Church.
4. If there is no one identified within the Church then the search is move outward, first through the EFCA East District, next the EFCA nationally, and then finally through external search resources.
5. Once any pastoral candidate is affirmed by the committee, the committee submits their candidates to the current Elders. The current Elders, Elder Emeritus, and/or Interim Elders will conduct a face to face interview with the candidate (s) and his wife.
6. After a candidate is found, the candidate should be affirmed by the EFCA East District Superintendent and other Pastors relationally connect to Commitment Church.
7. Then the Church will vote to install the new Pastor. Only members who are actively and faithfully serving within the Church are allowed to vote. The vote much reach a minimum of 85% in favor of the new Pastor.

8. After the required 85% vote, the new Pastor should be publicly installed and celebrated with a formal Installation Service. During this time, he should be challenged by the EFCA East District representative and other relationally connected Pastors, and then affirmed through prayer by the Elders, District Superintendent, and others.

## VIII. Concerning **APPOINTING, HIRING, & TERMINATION OF STAFF**

1. The hiring of any paid or volunteer staff must first have Elder and budgetary approval before search and conversations commence by the Lead Pastor.
2. Salaries are to be pre-approved before any search. Salaries are approved per voted on budget.
3. Roles and responsibilities are to be formally created by the Lead Pastor with the input and affirmation of the Elders, current Executive Pastor, Staff, and MTL.
4. The Lead Pastor then has the authority, along with the input and affirmation of the Elders, current Executive Pastor, Staff, and MTL to hire the identified person.
5. Termination of Paid or Volunteer Staff is ultimately the Lead Pastor's responsibility with the required input and affirmation of the Elders, current Executive Pastor, Staff, and MTL.

## IX. Concerning **THE GOD-INTENDED FAMILY**

We believe at **Commitment Community Church and its affiliated Churches/Campuses** that the Holy Scriptures fervently instructs, therefore we likewise fervently hold dear that marriage is defined and is intended for solely "one man and one woman, for one lifetime". Furthermore, we hold fast that God defines who a man and woman is at birth, not through any form of gender alterations, assumption, or other beliefs. Therefore our definition is as such fore stated –"one man and woman created in the sacred image of God for one lifetime, until death separates!" **Genesis 1:26-28; 31. Thus we will ONLY perform marriage ceremonies between the above described (man and woman). We moreover reserve the right to perform any such ceremonies at our discretion unescapably led by the Spirit of God and the authority of the written Word of God.**

1. **THE FIRST MARRIAGE: Genesis 1:24-31 & 2:21-24**
  - a. **GOD SAYS** – Things were "**GOOD**": pleasant; agreeable
  - b. **GOD SAYS** – Things are now "**VERY GOOD**": exceedingly right
  - c. "God caused..." **God ORCHESTRATES THE FIRST MARRIAGE**
  - d. "God fashioned..." **God defined that it's ONE MAN & ONE WOMAN**
  - e. "**Monogamous**" – **ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, for ONE LIFETIME!**
  - f. "God multiplied..." **God designed ONE MAN & WOMAN TO MULTIPLY**
2. **THE FIRST FAMILY: Genesis 4:1-10**
  - a. It started like any real-family with **DIS-FUNCTIONAL** tendencies
  - b. Cain – jealousy caused the first murder – **HIS BROTHER ABLE!**

### 3. THE FAMILY FORMATION: Genesis 4:16-26 & 10:5-10

- a. (4:16-17; 26) MULTIPLICATION Continues
- b. **SO, WHERE DID CAIN & SETH WIVES COME FROM?**
- c. **ADAM & EVE HAD OTHER CHILDREN** – Genesis 5:4-5: Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup> So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.
- d. **IF THEIR WIVES CAME FROM “SOME OTHER HUMAN RACE” – IT THEN NULIFIES THE GOSPEL**  
– 1 Corinthians 15:42-48 (1<sup>st</sup>Adam)
- e. **MULTIPLICATION Progressed solely from ONE Man and ONE Woman; BUT God’s Law was established against close relatives; ESTABLISH ABOUT 400 YEARS LATER (See: Leviticus 18:6-17)**
  - (10:5,9,30-31) After the flood FORMATION BEGINS
  - **GOD STRATEGICALLY POSITIONED THE FAMILY**
    - (V5) JAPHETH – Positioned near the COASTLANDS
    - (V10) HAM – Positioned near the FLATLANDS
    - (V5) SHEM – Positioned near the HILL COUNTRY

## X. Concerning **MALE & FEMALE**

God made us very good – Male and Female

We do not believe that a person’s biological sex should be separated from their “self-perception” as a man or a woman nor that the body should be altered when it does not conform to that self-perception, but we do believe that some people experience a distressing struggle between these two and that we must treat those who struggle in this way with love and compassion as we seek to help them, **with the truth and power of the gospel, toward the wholeness of a biologically-sexed identity grounded in God’s “very good” design in creation as male and female.** Gen 1:26-31; 2:18-24

## XI. Concerning Our **SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**Section A: To Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all mankind, in all the world**

1. **Acts 1:7-8:** <sup>7</sup>He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; <sup>8</sup>but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
2. **Matthew 28:18-20:** <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

## Section B: To remain as the light and salt of the earth while being a “sweet aroma” of Christ

1. **Matthew 5:13-16:** <sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. <sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; <sup>15</sup> nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
2. **2 Corinthians 2:14-17 (NASB95)** <sup>14</sup> But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. <sup>15</sup> For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; <sup>16</sup> to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? <sup>17</sup> For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

## XII. Concerning **DIVISION OR DISSOLUTION**

### Section A: Division

In case of a division of the Membership within the congregation of the Church, all rights, title, and interest in all property of the Church shall belong to the Church and governed by the remaining members who continue to abide by the Core Beliefs as set forth within **these Bylaws** and who adhere to the other provisions of these Bylaws as determined by the oversight of the Superintendent of the EFCA East District.

### Section B: Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this Church, all rights, title, and interest in all property of the Church shall be transferred to the EFCA East District of the Evangelical Free Church of America. The Elders holding office at the time shall act with full powers on behalf of the Church. Their terms of office shall be automatically extended, if necessary, until such dissolution has been accomplished. **The resources and interests of the Church should be used only to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ through Church Multiplication. This may look like repurposing the Church assets to rebirth or plant an entirely new Kingdom work for the glory of God!**

### **XIII. Concerning AMENDMENTS**

Amendment(s) of these Bylaws requires two congregational meetings. The amendment(s) shall be introduced at a first congregational meeting, but shall not be voted on until a subsequent congregational meeting. Revisions to the amendment as a result of the first meeting will not require a second introductory meeting. The amendment(s) and/or revised amendment(s) shall then be voted upon at a second congregational meeting. Both meetings shall be announced in accordance with the provisions within these Bylaws. "Amendment Votes" to Bylaws requires a "majority vote".

### **XIV. Concerning Our KINGDOM PURPOSE:**

- To **MAKE KNOWN JESUS CHRIST TO ALL NATIONS:** Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ creatively to all people in all the world.

**Acts 1:8:** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

- To **MAKE READY GOD'S PEOPLE:** Equipping men, women, and children for their Kingdom work.

**Matthew 28:19-20:** <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

- To **MAKE ROOM FOR HEAVEN ON EARTH:** Manifesting Heaven on earth – "A Place for All Nations!"

**Revelations 7:9-10:** <sup>9</sup> After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; <sup>10</sup> and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.

- To **MAKE SURE GOD'S GLORY REMAINS HIS ALONE:** Preserving the glory of God amongst us, no matter His work through us to all generations.

**Ephesians 3:20-21:** <sup>20</sup> Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup> to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.