

BYLAWS



FAITH CHURCH

Declaring the glory of God through
the gospel of Jesus Christ to the
ends of the earth.

PUBLISHED 2021

FAITH MISSIONARY CHURCH, INC

9125 North College Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana

BYLAWS

Organized and incorporated under the State Laws of Indiana, August, 1964. Bylaws adopted on September 18, 1974, amended on September 29, 1985, January 16, 1986, November 22, 1987, November 19, 1995, October 21, 2007, September 28, 2008, and November 3, 2019.

ARTICLE I PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

Section 1

Name

The name of this organization shall be Faith Missionary Church, Inc.

Section 2

Affiliation

This church will be affiliated as a member church of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) and the Great Lakes District of the EFCA.

Section 3

Purpose

The aim and purpose of this Church is to declare the Glory of God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth.

To accomplish this purpose, the Church will meet regularly in worship, prayer, fellowship, Bible teaching and training to develop growing and reproducing disciples of Jesus Christ with opportunities for the whole range of expression of our love and obedience to Christ with an intentional focus on reaching beyond ourselves to the evangelization of the world.

Section 4

Statement of Faith

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

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.

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.

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.

ARTICLE I

PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES CONTINUED

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Section 5

Church and State

While this Church recognizes the authority of the State and the responsibilities the Church members have to the government and its fellow citizens, the Church holds to the principle of local self-government and will follow the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate authority in matters of both faith and practice.

Section 6

Inter-Church Cooperation

This Church, however, in that it is an integral part of the Body of Christ, and to the end that the true objective of the Gospel be attained, dedicates itself to the principle of Christian cooperation with other evangelical churches. Such inter-church cooperation, as recommended by the Pastor(s), may be endorsed and practiced provided approval of the proposal has been granted by the Elder Executive Board.

ARTICLE I

PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES CONTINUED

Section 7

Financial Policy

This Church shall be supported by tithes, individual commitments, free-will offerings, and bequests. This Church and its auxiliary organizations may engage in only those fund-raising activities that are designed for a specific ministry project within a current area of ministry and that are approved by the Elder Executive Board. This Church shall not engage in any commercial activity on a regular basis to support its ongoing ministry.

Section 8

Gift Designations

The Church shall allow individuals to designate how funds they contribute will be utilized, subject to approval by the Elder Executive Board. While the Church shall attempt to utilize funds as directed, it reserves the right to utilize any funds it receives for any purpose, consistent with these Bylaws, as determined by the Elder Executive Board.

ARTICLE II

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Membership Qualifications

- a) Any person confessing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior from sin, giving evidence of regeneration, and subscribing to the Articles of Faith and the Church Covenant may be received as a member. Variations from the Statement of Faith at any point may be considered by the Elder Executive Board for possible exceptions.
- b) The Pastor(s) and Elder Executive Board shall determine whether and when membership applicants shall be required to attend a course of instruction.
- c) A former member whose membership has been taken away for any reason, may have membership restored upon approval by the Elder Executive Board.

Section 2

Membership Procedure

Applicants for membership shall complete an application, which will include a testimony of personal faith in Jesus Christ, and a signed affirmation of submission to the Statement of Faith, Bylaws, and Church Covenant. They shall appear before at least two elders for a personal interview, then be recommended to the Elder Executive Board for approval. Upon approval by the Elder Executive Board, prospective members will be listed in a church-wide publication for two consecutive weeks to allow for response from the congregation. If anyone communicates an objection to such prospective members, the Elder Executive Board will investigate and reconsider the application for membership. If no objections are raised, the applicant will formally become a member at such time as the Elder Executive Board duly documents that fact in their official minutes. The issuance of a call to a pastor pursuant to Article VII, Section 2 hereof, and his acceptance of such call will be deemed to meet the requirements for membership, for him and his spouse.

Section 3

Inactive Members

Resident members who have absented themselves from the Church for one year and concerning whom no satisfactory information can be obtained, or any members who shall have failed to respond to communications from the Church for a one-year period, shall be removed from membership by the Elder Executive Board, which shall be reported to the congregation. Any such person, upon satisfactory explanation to the Elder Executive Board, shall be reinstated to full and active membership.

ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP CONTINUED

- Section 4 **Transfer of Membership**
Members in good standing shall, upon request, be granted letters of reference to another church.
- Section 5 **Discipline**
Individual members who are found to be teaching doctrine contrary to the Statement of Faith or living contrary to the provisions of the Church Covenant shall be subject to discipline as outlined in the Policy on Church Discipline.

ARTICLE III FORM OF GOVERNMENT

- Section 1 **Authority**
Ultimate human authority shall reside in the members of the Church collectively. The exercise of this authority is subject to the Word of God.
- Section 2 **Elders**
The Church's authority is delegated, to the extent provided in the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, to the Elders as approved by the membership and to the Elder Executive Board. The Elders shall oversee the ministry and business of the Church as provided in Article V.
- Section 3 **Elder Executive Board**
The members of the Elder Executive Board shall be selected by the Elders from among the Elders to provide leadership and coordination for all the ministries of the Church. They shall report to and be accountable to the Elders as provided in Article V.
- Section 4 **Corporation Officers**
The officers of the Corporation shall be the Chairman and the Secretary of the Elder Executive Board.
- Section 5 **Deacons**
The Elder Executive Board shall appoint deacons as needed to oversee practical needs of the Church as provided in Article VI.

ARTICLE IV FORM OF GOVERNMENT

- Section 1 **Authority**
The Church may engage the services of one or more pastors according to need on conditions settled between the prospective pastor and the Elder Executive Board, and according to procedure stated in Article VII, Section 2 hereafter.

ARTICLE IV FORM OF GOVERNMENT CONTINUED

Section 2

Duties of Pastors

Pastors shall serve the Church with the Elders in teaching and preaching the whole counsel of God in accordance with the faith and practice of this Church. Pastors shall become voting members of the congregation, and ex-officio elders, though limited by the following provision: the voting pastoral staff shall not exceed 25% of the total elder positions. The Senior Pastor, or his designated associate, shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the Church.

Pastors shall share in and give leadership to the Elders in the oversight and care of the congregation. Pastors shall provide leadership for fulfilling the Church's mission and purpose. Pastors shall report to the Elders.

Section 3

Dissolution of the Relationship

A pastor's tenure shall be for an indefinite period, but the relationship may be terminated on thirty-day notice by either the pastor or the Church, or, if mutually agreeable, such notice may be waived.

A vote to dismiss a pastor can be taken only at a meeting of the membership for which at least two weeks' prior notice of its object has been given by mail. Fifty percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum at such a meeting and voting shall be by secret ballot. A pastor may be suspended from all active ministry at any time by a majority vote of the Elders.

Section 4

Credentialing of Pastors

Licensure and ordination of pastors shall be in accordance with the procedures and requirements of the EFCA.

ARTICLE V ELDERS

Section 1

Qualifications

Elders must be male members of the Church in good standing. Candidates will be evaluated in light of:

- a) The Scriptural standards as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9;
- b) The candidate's sense of God's call and desire to serve (1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 5:2).
- c) Completion of training and mentoring as determined by the Elders.

Section 2

Method of Approval

At the acceptance of these amended Bylaws, all current elders shall serve out their terms pending re-approval under the revised Bylaws.

Thereafter, candidates for elder will be evaluated by the Nominating Committee and recommended to the congregation for ratification by 75% of the votes cast and commissioning. At the end of every third year of ministry, an elder shall be subject to a review by the Elders. In addition, at the end of every sixth year of ministry, an elder shall be re-evaluated by the Nominating Committee and, if deemed appropriate, placed before the congregation for reaffirmation by 75% of the votes cast.

ARTICLE V ELDERS CONTINUED

Section 3

Elder Executive Board

The Elder Executive Board shall be comprised of 5 to 9 elders who have gifts of leadership, wisdom and administration. They shall be comprised of lay elders and the Senior Pastor, and one additional pastor if deemed appropriate by the Elders in light of his assigned responsibilities. They shall organize themselves as needed with a Chairman, a Vice-chairman and a Secretary. These individuals shall serve in the same capacity for the Elders as a whole.

Method of Selection

The Elder Executive Board will be appointed by the Elders. The Elders shall annually review each member of the Elder Executive Board. At least one new member of the Elder Executive Board shall be added every three years.

Section 4

Duties of Elders

The primary responsibility of elders is to act as spiritual shepherds and serve the Church according to their areas of passion and giftedness. They are responsible for the Body in guarding sound doctrine, teaching the Word of God, caring for the needs of the Body and overseeing all ministry of the Church. Guided by the Elder Executive Board, elders shall oversee worship, missions, evangelism, church administration, discipleship, prayer, pastoral care, administration of the ordinances, membership, discipline of members and all other ministries deemed Scripturally necessary and appropriate for the life and health of the Church.

They shall meet regularly (generally quarterly) to review the ministry of the Church and receive reports and recommendations from the Elder Executive Board. They shall annually approve and appoint the Elder Executive Board. They shall review recommendations of the Elder Executive Board which require congregational approval, including approval of the budget, purchase of property, major policy changes, and pastoral staff hiring.

Section 5

Duties of the Elder Executive Board

The Elder Executive Board will provide leadership, oversight, vision, communication and coordination to the Elders and to the Church. They shall perform leadership and administrative duties for the entire Church. They shall meet with staff, elder ministry leaders and teams and other ministry leaders to provide oversight and direction for all the ministries of the Church.

The Elder Executive Board shall appoint or approve the appointment of a treasurer, deacons and all committees (along with their respective chairs) as needed to assist in the ministry of the Church. They shall appoint delegates to the District and Annual Conferences of the EFCA. The Elder Executive Board, working with the Church Treasurer shall develop an annual budget for submission to the membership for approval at the annual spring business meeting.

The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of all Elder, Executive Board and Congregational Business meetings, carry on correspondence as directed, file, and preserve Church reports and documents, and other papers as should be retained in the official Church records.

It is understood that the Elder Executive Board shall operate within the framework of these Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation. Projects, activities, and actions beyond that framework must have authorization from the membership before the Elder Executive Board may proceed with them.

Section 6

Elder Accountability and Discipline

Elders are expected to maintain the highest standards of leadership. If an elder is charged with failure to uphold appropriate standards, an investigation will be pursued. If concerns are not adequately resolved, he shall be admonished by the Elders and may be dismissed by a majority vote of the Elders. However, dismissal of a pastor shall proceed according to Article IV, Section 3.

ARTICLE VI DEACONS

Section 1

Qualifications

The Elder Executive Board may appoint men and women as needed to serve as deacons. Deacons must be members in good standing and evaluated by the Scriptural standards for deacons as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Section 2

Duties

Deacons shall be assigned responsibility for specific interests of the Church as deemed appropriate by the Elder Executive Board, including the care and improvement of property, technology, finances and stewardship, personnel matters, and providing assistance to the needy.

It is understood that deacons shall operate within the framework of these Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation. They shall report and be responsible to the Elder Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1

Qualifications

The Nominating Committee shall have seven members, serving two year terms. They shall include one member of the Elder Executive Board, one other elder; four non-elder members of the congregation, and the Senior Pastor or his designated associate pastor. Nominating Committee members shall be recommended by the Elder Executive Board and approved by the members at the spring business meeting. At least one non-elder member of the congregation not currently serving on the Nominating Committee must be part of each recommendation made to the congregation by the Elder Executive Board.

The Nominating Committee shall seek qualified candidates for elder, giving careful attention to personal testimony, spiritual passion, Biblical knowledge, doctrinal balance, giftedness, heart for service and reputation following the Biblical guidelines for elders. Approved elder candidates will be listed in church publications for at least two weeks prior to congregational affirmation. If objections are raised to the qualifications of any proposed candidate, the Nominating Committee shall conduct an investigation to consider the validity of those objections. Elders may be presented and affirmed at any congregational business meeting.

Section 2

Pastoral Search Committee

When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the Elder Executive Board, in consultation with the Nominating Committee, shall propose a Search Committee of two elders, at least one of whom is a member of the Elder Executive Board, and five non-elder members of the congregation to be approved by the congregation. A Search Committee for a Pastor of Student Ministry may include one or two students who are children of members in place of one of the five non-elder members serving on the committee.

It shall be the duty of the Pastoral Search Committee to seek out and recommend a suitable pastor and arrange for him to come before the Elder Executive Board who will then pass the recommendation on to the Church. The committee shall determine that any candidate, and his spouse, recommended to the congregation meet the requirements for church membership and leadership as set out in Article II, Section 1 and Article I, Section 3. Only one pastor shall be officially before the Church or voted upon at one time. Another shall not be officially considered by the membership until disposition has been made concerning the one already before the Church.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES CONTINUED

Section 2b

Pastoral Search Committee Continued

At a congregational business meeting, a notice of such meeting and its object having been mailed to the entire membership at least two weeks prior, the members shall vote upon calling a pastor, a secret ballot of three-fourths of the members present and voting in favor being necessary to call.

ARTICLE VIII CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1

Devotional Meetings

- a) The Church shall meet each Sunday for worship including the preaching of the Word of God.
- b) The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper at such regular times as the Elder Executive Board may decide.
- c) The Church shall provide regular opportunities for fellowship, Bible study, and corporate prayer.
- d) Scripture and prayer shall be included in each business meeting of the Church.

Section 2

Business Meetings

- a) Approval of new elders may occur at any congregational business meeting. They shall assume their responsibility as elders immediately after approval.
- b) An annual business meeting shall be held each fall for the purpose of receiving annual reports of the Pastor(s), the Elders, the Treasurer, and auxiliary organizations, and of transacting other necessary business. A spring meeting shall be held to approve the Nominating Committee and adopt the budget for the next fiscal year.

Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Elder Executive Board, the Elders, or upon written request of a quorum of the members of the Church. Notice of such meeting and the object for which it is called shall be given from the pulpit no later than the Sunday in advance of the date of the meeting.

- c) Thirty active members over eighteen years of age or twenty percent of the active voting resident membership, whichever is greater, shall constitute a quorum, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, for the transaction of business. A majority vote of the members present shall be determinative of all decisions, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.
- d) All business meetings shall be conducted according to Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised, unless otherwise provided by the Bylaws or the Chairman of the meeting.
- e) The Chairman, or designated member of the Elder Executive Board, shall preside at business meetings, yielding the chair to such other members as he may deem proper for the business being considered.
- f) No voting by proxy is permissible.
- g) Members must be at least eighteen years of age to vote.

ARTICLE IX GENERAL

- Section 1 **Fiscal Year**
The fiscal year shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.
- Section 2 **Annual Audit**
At the close of each fiscal year the Treasurer shall present the books for audit as determined by the Elder Executive Board.
- Section 3 **Removal and Resignation of Officers**
An elder or deacon removing his place of residence from this general community shall by such removal automatically vacate his office, except by special approval of the Elders. Resignation shall be in writing to the Elder Executive Board, such resignations to be effective upon the date specified but in no case more than thirty days after their submission.
- Section 4 **Standards for Leadership**
Because of the high standards in the New Testament for those who serve in positions of leadership or teaching, all leaders are expected to pursue holiness in the fear of God with all diligence and continually pursue growth and intimacy in their relationship with Christ. In order to serve as an officer, teacher, or other elected or appointed leader or advisor, a person must submit to the Articles of Faith. Should any officer, teacher, elder, or other elected or appointed leader or advisor find himself out of accord with the Articles of Faith, he will on his own initiative make known the issue of disagreement or reservation to the Elder Executive Board.
- Section 5 **Auxiliary Organizations**
All organizations meeting regularly on church property or in the name of the Church must have the approval of the Elder Executive Board. Their activities must not conflict with these Bylaws or their meetings with regular Church meetings.
- Section 6 **Effectiveness and Availability of These Bylaws**
Upon the adoption of these Bylaws, all previous Bylaws and amendments thereto are null and void. The date of adoption shall be shown on all copies thereof and a copy sent to each household in the active membership. As amendments may be made, copies of the amendments with effective dates indicated or revised copies of the entire Constitution and Bylaws incorporating the dates of changes together with the original date of adoption shall be made available upon request to any member.

ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

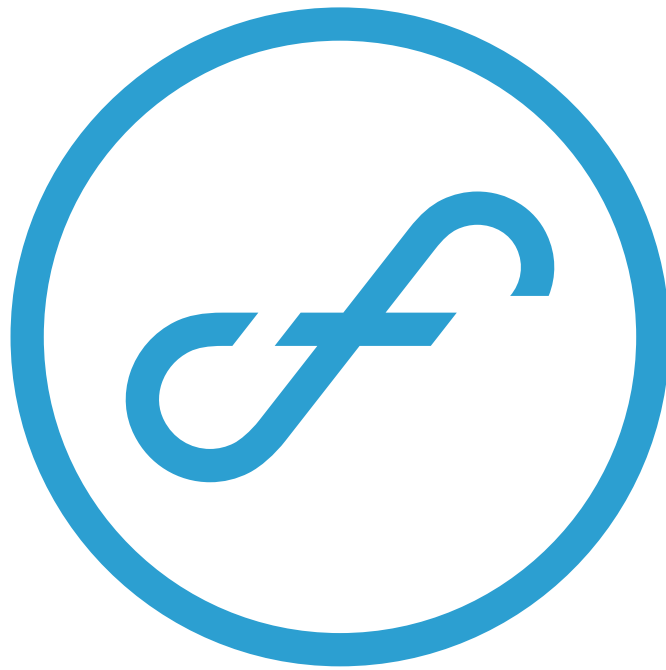
These Bylaws may be amended at a business meeting of the Church providing proposed amendments have been sent to members twenty days in advance and notice given from the pulpit on the Sunday previous to such meeting. Amendments must be passed by a three-fourths vote of the membership present and voting.

APPENDIX CHURCH COVENANT

Having been, as we trust, brought by Divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves wholly to Him; we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other to walk together in Him with brotherly love, to His glory as our Lord. We do, therefore, in His strength engage:

1. That we will exercise a mutual care, as members of one of another, to promote the growth of the whole body in Christian knowledge, holiness and comfort; to the end that we may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God;
2. That to promote and secure this object, we will endeavor to uphold the public worship of God, and the ordinances of His house; and to hold constant communion with each other therein, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, that we will cheerfully contribute of our property for the support of the poor, for the support of home and foreign missions, and for the maintenance of the faithful ministry of the Gospel among us;
3. That we will not neglect private and family devotions at home or the great duty of religiously training our children and those under our care with a view to the service of Christ and the enjoyment of everlasting life;
4. That we will walk circumspectly in the world, to the end that we may win souls for the Lord Jesus Christ. We will endeavor to be a Christian example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity of life. We will remember that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind; that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, and that a city set on a hill cannot be hid;
5. That we will frequently exhort, and if occasion shall require, admonish one another according to Matthew 18, in the spirit of meekness considering ourselves lest we also be tempted.
6. That we will, upon moving to another locality, seek to associate ourselves with a church of like faith and practice at the earliest opportunity.

And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory, forever and ever. Amen.



FAITH CHURCH

9125 N. COLLEGE AVENUE
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46240

317.848.1541 | FAITHCHURCHINDY.ORG