

# Constitution & bylaws



***emmanuel faith***  
*community church*  
*honoring God by living like Jesus*

# **Introduction to the EFCC Constitution & Bylaws**

Thank you for your interest in Emmanuel Faith Community Church (EFCC)! This document was created to establish the essential biblical doctrines and principles which guide the organizational structure and membership responsibilities of our church body. It does not contain every biblical principle related to these issues, but those most crucial for the church's leadership to make orderly godly and biblical decisions to properly guide this local body. This document also will assist those seeking EFCC membership to make an informed decision and give their full agreement by joining.

At the heart of these biblical principles are our Mission, Vision and Core Values.

## **Our Mission:**

We exist as part of the larger Body of Christ for the purpose of "honoring God by living like Jesus". We believe that God the Father is most honored when believers everywhere reflect the character and behavior of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 3:20,21; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:36, 8:29; Colossians 3:10; Galatians 4:19).

## **Our Vision:**

### Prologue

Emmanuel Faith Community Church is a community of people learning together how to love and honor God with our lives. We are not a building or a name, but individuals who have come together as followers of Jesus Christ.

We are also a people with a history. Therefore, we gratefully recognize His grace and mercy shown to us in the past and the biblical foundation upon which we stand.

Our hope for the future is to build upon that Scriptural foundation with new ways of ministering that will bring God greater honor and advance His Kingdom's influence in the world. In order to do that, we must be willing to take new steps of faith under the leading of the Holy Spirit, knowing well that only by Jesus' power and enabling grace will we accomplish anything of eternal value.

With that understanding, He has entrusted us with a vision for what He wants to do through Emmanuel Faith Community Church.

### A Preferred Future:

EFCC will be a church that risks using all means to invite people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds into a life-transforming relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We will seek to engage and impact our culture by being pure-hearted, fully devoted followers of Jesus. We will train and be trained to know and live out biblical truth by compassionately caring for each other and the needy and broken in our communities. We will sacrificially invest our time, resources and abilities to proclaim the good news of forgiveness and hope throughout Escondido, North County and the world.

To that end we will endeavor:

1. To be passionately committed to a personal relationship with the one true God through depending on Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection. We will love Him, talk with Him, obey Him, yield to His Holy Spirit and live a life of joyful worship.
2. To be a connected and loving family, united and interdependent, honest and grace filled, helping each other become more like Jesus. We will take care of each other's needs and welcome into our midst those who are broken and vulnerable so that they can find support, encouragement, healing and contribution.
3. To intentionally go into our neighborhoods, communities and the world to serve with compassion and graciously proclaim the hope we have in Christ. We will work with others, especially fellow believers in Christ, to actively and innovatively cross ethnic and socio-economic boundaries to help those in need.
4. To be characterized by transformed and maturing lives, rooted in biblical truth and dominated by grace. We will train all generations in our church family to know, explain and defend what we believe in order to engage and impact our culture for Christ.

### **Our Core Values:**

We hold these values at the core of what we do and believe in our ministry:

1. The Bible is God's word, relevant and sufficient for every generation. Therefore, we will follow the Scriptures as our only rule for faith and practice. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12)
2. Worship is God's desire from all people. Therefore, we will respond to God's presence with us in all of life's circumstances. (Exodus 20:4-6; 1 Peter 2:9; John 4:23; Colossians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 10:31)
3. Fellowship is God's method for connecting His family. Therefore, we will participate in "life sharing" groups in which spiritual growth is nurtured, loving care is practiced and godly relationships are developed. (Acts 2:42, 44-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; John 13:34-35; and Ephesians 1:5)
4. Spiritual maturity is God's design for every believer. Therefore, we will strive to grow in Christlike love and care for each other, serving in our area of spiritual giftedness. (Ephesians 4:13-16; Colossians 1:28-29)
5. Evangelism is God's heartbeat. Therefore, we will passionately proclaim the gospel message locally and internationally. (1 Timothy 2:4; Luke 19:10; John 3:17; 2 Peter 3:9)
6. Prayer releases God's power for ministry. Therefore, we will pray regularly for the ministry effectiveness of Emmanuel Faith Community Church. (Colossians 1:11; Ephesians 3:16; Exodus 17: 8-13; Ephesians 6:18-20)

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## **Article I: Our Biblical Foundation & Purpose**

Emmanuel Faith Community Church (“EFCC” or “Church”) is a family of individuals who voluntarily join together to live life in pursuit of spiritual fulfillment based on the Bible. Toward this goal, Bible references are provided in our Constitution to help the reader understand the biblical basis supporting the Bible-based truths we embrace and follow at EFCC. These Bible-based truths are central to the understanding of our nature and calling. They are the foundation and the building blocks of all of our Church ministries and the guiding principles for all of our Church policies and decisions. If secular teaching conflicts with Bible-based truth and principle, this Church shall follow the Bible-based truth, as determined by its Elders.

We believe that EFCC exists as an assembly of believers to bring honor to God. (1 Peter 2:9-10; Ephesians 3:20-21)

The purpose of this church shall be to seek by every possible scriptural means to carry out the commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as set forth in Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:8.

- A. By providing gatherings for public worship, prayer, discipleship and sharing the Good News of Jesus.
- B. By making opportunities and equipping the saints for good works to glorify our Father in heaven.
- C. By creating and cultivating an interest in and devotion to outreach locally and globally.

## **Article II: Our Statement of Faith**

### **Preamble to the Statement of Faith**

We are grateful to God for revealing Himself to us through the Scriptures and trust Him to continually show us His will through His Word. Under the headship of Jesus Christ, the Board of Elders is responsible to guard, guide, and govern His church. Therefore, the Board is the church’s authority regarding the religious beliefs and practices in the EFCC Constitution, including the Statement of Faith. This Statement of Faith defines the biblically-based, core beliefs of our church family. (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:23; 1 Timothy 3:3-5; Titus 1:9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

### **Section 1: The Bible**

We believe the Scripture, both the Old and New Testaments, to be God’s written word. The Bible’s human authors, with their distinct personalities and styles, were inspired by God and carried along by the Holy Spirit to choose the exact words God intended to communicate to humankind. Scripture was without error in the original writings and is completely truthful in all that it addresses; therefore, it is to be believed as God’s instruction in all that it affirms. It is to be obeyed as God’s command in all that it requires and embraced in all that it promises. The Bible is the only rule for faith and practice. We affirm that the person and work of Jesus Christ is the central focus of the entire Bible.

(Numbers 23:19; Joshua 1:8-9; 23:14; Psalm 19:7-9, 119:42; Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 24:27; John 5:39-40; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

### **Section 2: The Trinity**

We believe there is only one God, Creator of all things, eternally existing in three equal but separate persons, revealed to us in the Bible as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one possesses the same divine nature and attributes, and is worthy of worship, confidence, and obedience. The triune God is glorious, infinite and personal, perfect in holiness, wisdom, unity, foreknowledge, power, and love.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 90:2, 139:1-18; Isaiah 6:3; 66:1-2; Daniel 4:35; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 1:1-4, 4:24; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 11:33-36; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:3-6; 1 John 4:16)

### **Section 3: The Person and Work of God the Father**

We believe that God the Father is Lord of heaven and earth and is working all things according to His sovereign will and purpose. He hears and answers prayer while graciously providing for all His creation and blessing those who follow His plan. Because of His great love, He sent Jesus to die for the forgiveness of sin and then raised Him from the dead. He sends the Holy Spirit to all those whom He adopts into His family. He reigns supreme from heaven.

(Matthew 23:9; Luke 10:21-22; John 3:16, 6:27, 16:23; Acts 13:29-30; Romans 1:7, 6:4; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:3-12, 4:6; 1 Timothy 1:1-2, 2:5-6; James 1:17-18; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6)

### **Section 4: The Person and Work of Jesus**

We believe that God the Son, without ceasing to be God, became fully man as Jesus Christ after being miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, and through His death on the cross, paid our penalty for sin which is death. Thus, He satisfied God's righteous judgment and revealed His merciful love by offering Himself as an atoning sacrifice providing forgiveness to all who trust Him. He defeated the powers of evil, was raised bodily from the dead, and ascended to the Father's right hand where He reigns as Lord and intercedes on the believer's behalf.

(Leviticus 16:5-10; Luke 1:34-35; John 1:1-2, 14, 18; Romans 3:23-26, 5:8, 6:23, 8:34; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:10-13; Colossians 2:13-15; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 John 2:2)

### **Section 5: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is a person, possessing all the divine attributes. The Holy Spirit convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment, and gives new spiritual life to those who trust in Jesus Christ. As the Helper, He indwells believers permanently at the moment of salvation, guides them in the truth, empowers them to bear fruit, and enables them to walk in holiness. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to every believer according to His divine will and plan. These gifts are to be biblically exercised for the glory of Jesus Christ and the building up of His church.

(John 3:5-8, 16:7-14; Acts 1:8, 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:7, 14:12; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10-11)

### **Section 6: The Human Condition**

We believe that Adam and Eve were originally created in the image and likeness of God, free from sin. They sinned by a voluntary act of personal disobedience to the revealed will of God and were thereby subject to spiritual, physical, and eternal death which is separation from God. While every human being is made in the image of God, the consequences of sin have affected every aspect of human nature. All people, except Jesus, are born with a sinful nature and are sinners by choice; therefore, they are under condemnation and are incapable of reconciling with God apart from divine grace.

(Genesis 1:26, 3:1-24, 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-23, 5:12, 8:7-8; Ephesians 2:1-3, 4:17-18; James 1:13-15, 3:9)

### **Section 7: The Gift of Salvation**

We believe that God, because of His great love, offers salvation as a free gift to be received by faith alone in Jesus Christ. This gift was purchased through Jesus' life, death, burial, and resurrection. By faith, we are justified before God apart from any human merit or work and are reconciled to Him by His saving grace through the regenerating work of the Spirit and the word of God. He makes us alive with Christ, gives us a new heart, forgives our sins, clothes us in

righteousness, adopts us into His family, transfers us into His Kingdom, and guarantees us eternal life.

(Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 3:16, 5:24, 14:6; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:3, 5:18; Ephesians 1:6-7, 2:4-9; Colossians 1:12-14; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23-25)

## **Section 8: The Life of the Disciple**

We believe that all who receive God's grace by faith in Jesus Christ are given new spiritual life by the Holy Spirit; are completely forgiven of their sins; and are eternally secure, persevering by His grace. The Spirit empowers believers to love God and people, be disciples who learn to obey Jesus, deny themselves, and abide in Christ. As disciples learn to live sacrificially in God's Kingdom, they become more like Jesus, proclaiming the gospel and making disciples of all nations.

(Matthew 4:17-19, 7:20-27, 16:24-25, 22:36-40, 24:13, 28:19-20; John 3:3-8, 10:27-29, 13:34-35; Acts 1:8, 10:43; Romans 8:11, 28-39; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 5:17; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:7,13-14; 2:10; Hebrews 3:14; James 1:2-3, 2:14-26; 1 John 2:19, 5:11-13)

## **Section 9: The Church**

We believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are united by the Holy Spirit into one Church of which Christ is the Head. Following Jesus' ascension to heaven, believers of all ethnicities and backgrounds have become one body, meeting together regularly in local assemblies which are led by appointed leaders. Churches gather for teaching, worship, prayer, fellowship, service, and the practices of baptism and the Lord's Supper, while maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

(Acts 1:9-11, 2:42-47, 8:12; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:1-6,15-16; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 10:24-25, 13:17)

## **Section 10: The Second Coming of Christ**

We believe in the personal, bodily, and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ to gather up His Church, exercise judgment, and establish His Kingdom reign on earth. The anticipation of Christ's return, along with the rewards we will receive, joyfully motivate us to live in the way of Jesus.

(Isaiah 9:6-8; Matthew 6:1-6, 24:31, 42-44, 25:1-13; John 14:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:9-13; Revelation 3:10, 19:11-16, 20:1-21:4)

## **Section 11: The Eternal State**

We believe that at death, the souls of believers pass immediately into the joyful presence of Jesus Christ while the souls of unbelievers experience anguish apart from God. All who have died will be bodily resurrected, at which point unbelievers will be judged, eternally punished and shut out from the presence of the Lord. Believers in Jesus will enjoy eternal life and reign with God in the new heaven and new earth.

(Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Corinthians 5:8-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:9-10; Revelation 20:1-22:21)

*Adopted on October 25, 2020.*

## **Article III: Ordinances**

We believe that Christ has commanded us to observe the two New Testament ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion). These two ordinances are observed in obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ as acts of love and devotion, and are not set forth in Scripture as a condition of salvation. We teach and practice immersion as the form of baptism for believers. We view the Lord's Supper (Communion) as a memorial of our Lord's death, and the elements as symbols of His body and blood (Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

## **Article IV: Accountability Within Our Church**

### **Section 1: Scriptural Foundation / Authority / Purpose**

We believe the holiness of God demands accountability, also called discipline, within the church. We further believe that accountability within the church is commanded by God in Scripture and is one of the most important responsibilities of the church.

(Matthew 18:12-20; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; Galatians 2:11-14; 6:1; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:20; 5:19-20; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 3:10; Hebrews 10:24-30; 12:5-17; 2 John 7-11; Revelation 3:19).

We believe that accountability within the church brings honor to God by:

- a. Leading to the repentance, spiritual growth and restoration of the individual to usefulness to God and fellowship with the church;
- b. Guarding and preserving the welfare, purity, and edification of the church; and,
- c. Guarding other believers from being tempted, misled, divided, or otherwise harmed.

(Romans 2:24; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 1 Corinthians 10:21; Ephesians 4:13; 1 Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 12:11; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:12).

### **Section 2: Oversight and Implementation**

The accountability and restoration principles that this Church follows are outlined in various parts of the Bible, see Matthew 5:23,24; 18:15-18. The procedures for restoration and discipline are also to be based on biblical principles including those outlined in this Constitution. The Board of Elders is responsible for the oversight and implementation of all Church discipline. By becoming a member of the Church, the member agrees to submit and be subject to Church accountability as established and implemented by the Board of Elders.

### **Section 3: Continuation of Discipline**

We believe that the Elders of this Church have the biblical right and responsibility to restore to the Lord a member who is living in disobedience to the Bible. Accountability procedures may be instituted at any time and may continue after a member seeks to withdraw from membership if the Board of Elders determines that such discipline may serve to guard and preserve the honor of God, protect the purity of the Church, or restore the disobedient member to the Lord. While the Church cannot force a withdrawing person to remain in this congregation, the Church has the biblical right and the responsibility to encourage restoration, to bring the disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion, to make determinations as to the person's membership status, and to follow accountability principles and processes the Board deems biblically appropriate. (Matthew 18:12-14; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-14; 2 Timothy 1:15; 2:16-18; 4:9, 14-15; 3 John 9-10).

## **Article V: Our Commitment to Marriage, Families and Individuals**

We believe that God designed marriage to reflect the beauty and permanence of Christ's loving relationship with his bride, the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 19:7). We also believe God established marriage to be a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman (Matthew 19:4-6). Therefore, we are deeply committed to preserving and strengthening marriages, families and all individuals attending our Church.

We believe that God designed and limited the expression of sexual intimacy to the exclusive boundaries of a one-man and one-woman marriage covenant (Genesis 2:24-25; 1Corinthians 7:3-5). We also believe that God commands that each individual abstain from any form of sexual impurity including adultery, fornication, pornography, incest, molestation, any expression of same sex relationships or the altering of ones gender by surgery or appearance, and all other biblically immoral behavior (Genesis 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26 -29; 7:2; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-10; 7:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4). Therefore, we are deeply committed to enabling individuals to live a life of biblically moral behavior.

We believe that life begins at conception (Psalm 139:13-16), that every child is created by God for a purpose (Jeremiah 1:4-5; Galatians 1:15), and is a gift from God (Psalm 127:3). We also believe that God gives the primary responsibility of training children to the parent(s), being charged with giving discipline and instruction of the Lord according to biblical principles (Ephesians 6:4). Therefore, we are deeply committed to helping all families by providing biblical resources and encouragement so that all can grow to be like Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

We believe and understand that every person, including Christians, struggle living biblically pure lives. We also believe and understand that every person also struggles with the negative effect his or her failure to live a biblically pure life has on his or her life and relationships. We believe that God understands this struggle and calls believers to seek assistance from other believers and especially from Church leaders.

We believe that our pastoral and lay Church leaders have the responsibility of providing Bible-based counseling and oversight (Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:10; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:16). We believe that the Bible is God's manual providing guidance and instruction for faith and for life for every person (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Therefore, we are deeply committed to enabling individuals to live life according to God's will as revealed in the Bible. Toward this goal, our counseling and spiritual guidance are based on biblical principles, which in some instances may differ from current secular principles, in which instances biblical principles are followed.

## **Article VI: Joining Us (Membership)**

### **Section 1: Classes and Requirements For Membership**

Our two categories or classes of membership are "Active Membership" and "Associate Membership". To qualify for either class of membership an individual must:

- A. be at least sixteen years old;
- B. attend our services regularly for a period of at least six months within the immediate eight month period prior to being granted membership;
- C. attend our new member's class;

- D. make a credible profession of faith in Christ when personally sharing his or her story of faith in Christ with a member of, or a duly appointed representative of our Board of Elders;
- E. read and agree to abide by the EFCC Constitution and Bylaws;
- F. and sign the EFCC Covenant of Membership.

The Board of Elders may recommend individual exceptions to items B and C of these requirements, but in these exceptional cases will clearly explain the reason(s) for any such exception when it submits the recommendation of that individual to the Church at the regular business meeting.

The individual becomes a member only after he or she:

- 1. has fulfilled all of the Membership requirements outlined above; and,
- 2. has been approved by the Membership at a regular business meeting, after having been recommended for membership by the Board of Elders.

## **Section 2: Membership Roll and Category Changes**

Members of this Church are enrolled in one of the following two categories:

- A. Active Member Roll: This roll consists of all Members who show consistent commitment to the Covenant of Membership and attend Church on a regular basis; or,
- B. Associate Member Roll: This roll consists of those who take up temporary residence in another locality and enter into membership in another church as part of their training or in order to serve.

Changes between Active and Associate categories of Membership and reinstatement to one of these categories are actions that must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Lay Elders but do not require approval of the Church Membership. Recommendations to receive new applicants and to terminate Active or Associate Members are to be made by the Board of Elders to the Church Membership at a regular or special business meeting. The recommendation is not effective until it is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of Active Members voting at that meeting.

## **Section 3: Voting**

- A. Eligibility: Only persons in 'good standing' (i.e. not under Church discipline) on the Active Member Roll are eligible to vote. Associate Members are not eligible to vote.
- B. Issues requiring vote of Active Members:
  - 1. Except as provided for in Section 4 below, approval of new Members and Member terminations requires a two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast at a regular or special meeting of the Membership for business. (Vote may be by voice or show of hands rather than secret ballot.)
  - 2. This Constitution and Bylaws may only be amended, modified, or rescinded by a two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast at a regular or special meeting of the Membership for business.
  - 3. Affirmations of the Lead Pastor and Associate Pastors require approval by a two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast at a regular or

special meeting of the Membership for business.

4. Election of Lay Elders and elected members of the Nominating Committee.

C. Absentee Ballots: Absentee ballots are furnished to eligible voters upon written request to the Church Secretary, provided that such request allows sufficient time for the ballot to be returned to Church Secretary prior to counting the votes.

#### **Section 4: Termination**

An individual's membership in this Church may be terminated:

- A. By request: A written request of a Member in good standing, i.e. not under our Church discipline.
- B. By removal: Any Member out of harmony with the doctrine and practices of this Church as set forth in this Constitution, or whose conduct has been determined by the Board of Elders to be harmful to the health and unity of our Church family, may be recommended for removal from Church membership by the Board. In this event, pending the vote by Church Membership on the Board's recommendation for a Member's removal, the privileges and rights of an individual's membership may be temporarily suspended by the Board.
- C. For inactivity: Any Member who has been inactive for a period of twelve months and has been non-responsive to contact efforts, may be recommended by the Board to the Active Members to be dropped from the rolls.
- D. By death: The names of deceased Members are removed from our Membership rolls.

#### **Section 5: Covenant of Membership**

The principles in the Covenant of Membership are fundamental principles of the Church. The Covenant of Membership is:

"My purpose in applying for Membership in Emmanuel Faith Community Church is to fully cooperate and participate with the Church in promoting the Church Mission, Vision and Core values, and the 5 Key Functions.

I have read and I agree to abide by the EFCC Constitution and Bylaws.

In joining with fellow EFCC Members in this commitment and in entering into this Covenant of Membership. I affirm that I am trusting solely in the merits of Jesus Christ for my salvation from sin.

In addition, I gladly and freely covenant with God and the Church that by God's enabling grace, as a Member I will endeavor to conduct my life in accordance with the Scripture including but not limited to the biblical principles noted in the Constitution and in the following principles:

- 1. I will sincerely pray that Christ be exalted and that lives be blessed through the ministries of this Church (2 Thessalonians 3:1).
- 2. I will endeavor to live in a way that consistently honors Jesus Christ, whom I acknowledge as the Lord of my whole life (Ephesians 4:1).
- 3. I will participate as regularly as possible in worship, and fellowship with this

congregation (Hebrews 10:25).

4. I will seek to discover my spiritual gifts and abilities and use them in some form of service that brings honor to God (Ephesians 4:11-13).
5. I will endeavor to participate faithfully in the financial support of this Church and its ministries. (2 Corinthians 9:6-11).
6. I will refrain from promoting any Scriptural interpretations that are out of harmony with those set forth by this Church (1 Corinthians 1:10).
7. I will refrain from sexual impurity (Genesis 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26 -29; 7:2; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-10; 7:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

If my adherence to the foundational biblical principles of this Church is called into question, I agree to submit to the authority and judgment of the Board of Elders (1 Corinthians 6:1-4; Hebrews 13:17) including their accountability and restoration principles such as those found in Matthew 18:15-18. If I remain unwilling to settle any differences under the authority of the Board of Elders, then I agree that in addition to other accountability steps the Board of Elders may administer, the Church should drop my name from its membership roll.

I enter into this Covenant joyfully, knowingly, freely, and not subject to any duress.”

## **Article VII: Church Organization and Administration**

### **Section 1: Church Organization**

- A. The Church organization is outlined in Attachment No. 1. Changes in elements of this organization are considered amendments to this Constitution and are made only with the approval of the Church Membership.
- B. Current organization charts showing sub-elements of the Church organization are maintained by the Church staff.
- C. Only such men and women are recommended for elective or appointed office as can and will conscientiously affirm the Constitution including the Statement of Faith without reservation.

### **Section 2: Elders**

- A. In accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and the Articles of Incorporation, and subject to the provisions and limitations of the California Nonprofit Religious Corporation Law and any other applicable laws, the temporal activities, business, and affairs of the Church are governed, and all corporate powers are exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, composed of both Lay and Pastoral Elders. For the purpose of this Constitution, the directors of this Church are referred to as “Elders” and the Board of Directors is referred to as the “Board of Elders” or the “Board.”
- B. Lay Elders
  1. Lay Elders are volunteer Church Members, i.e. not paid by the Church.
  2. Lay Elders are elected by the Church Membership for three-year terms at the annual

congregational business meetings. The terms of office expire so that approximately one third of the offices become vacant each year.

3. Lay Elders are not eligible to serve in elective office for at least one year after completion of two consecutive full terms.
4. The number of Lay Elders must always be at least one more than the total number of Pastoral Elders.
5. A vacancy among the Lay Elders because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause is filled by appointment by the Board of Elders upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. Such appointment continues in force for the balance of the vacated term or until the next election as determined by the Board.

#### C. Pastoral Elders

1. Pastoral Elders consist of the Lead Pastor and all Associate Pastor(s). Pastoral Elders may also include Assistant Pastor(s) and other key staff as appointed by the Board of Elders upon recommendation of the Lead Pastor.
2. The Lead Pastor and Associate Pastor(s) are approved by a two-thirds majority of the Lay Elders and recommended to Church Members for affirmation at a regularly scheduled or specially called business meeting. Notice of such meeting must be given at regular weekly meetings of the Church two consecutive weekends immediately preceding the affirmation meeting. Affirmation is by secret ballot. A majority of at least two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast is necessary to affirm the Board's recommendation.
3. The Lead Pastor serves as the executive officer of the Church to implement the policies as established by the Board of Elders. He has the general oversight of all Church ministries and provides the leadership necessary to assure effective management and administration of the total Church program.
4. The Lead Pastor has the primary responsibility for the public pulpit ministry.
5. The Lay Elders, together with the Lead Pastor, are responsible for selecting Assistant Pastors. Upon recommendation of the Lead Pastor, new Assistant Pastors are affirmed as Matters of Special Significance as defined in Article VII Section 2. G. 5A.

D. Qualifications: All Elders must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

E. Purposes and duties: The purposes and duties of the Board of Elders include the following Scriptural responsibilities:

1. To guard the truth of the Scriptures and apply them to life situations (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9).
2. To care for the spiritual welfare of the Members of the Church (Hebrews 13:17).
3. To provide leadership and exercise authority over the Church. (1 Timothy 3:4-5; 5:17).

4. To shepherd the Members of the Church. To pray for the sick and to minister the Word of God (Acts 20:28; James 5:14-15).
5. To serve willingly (1 Peter 5:2).
6. To oversee discipline and restoration of Church Members and those who voluntarily agree to submit to the authority and judgment of the Board of Elders and to the discipline, restoration, and conflict resolution policies of this Church (Titus 1:13).

#### F. Termination of Office

1. Lay Elders, the Lead Pastor, and Associate Pastor(s) are subject to a vote of confidence by the Church Membership at any time by written request to the Board of Elders of ten percent of the total active Church Membership or by recommendation of two-thirds of the Lay Elders. Involuntary termination requires a two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast at a meeting called for that purpose. Prior to such a vote, the Lay Elder, Pastor, or Associate Pastor must be advised of the nature and substance of any relevant charges and afforded opportunity to defend against such charges before the Lay Elders and the Church Membership.
2. Assistant Pastors may be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the Lay Elders. Prior to such a vote, the Assistant Pastor must be advised of the nature and substance of any relevant charges and afforded opportunity to defend against such charges before the Lay Elders.

#### G. Board of Elders Organization and Meetings

1. At the first Board meeting after the annual congregational business meeting, the Lay Elders elect from among their members a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary, and an alternate secretary.
2. In the absence of the chairman and vice-chairman, the Lead Pastor moderates meetings of the Board of Elders.
3. Regular meetings of the Board of Elders are held at least monthly. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Lead Pastor, the Chairman of the Board, or a majority of the Lay Elders.
4. A quorum for the conduct of normal business consists of at least a majority of the Lay Elders, together with a representation from the Pastoral Elders.

#### 5. Matters of Special Significance

- a. Certain kinds of issues are listed in this Constitution as being matters of special significance, e.g. approval of new Assistant Pastors, and recommendation of amendments to this Constitution. Except as this Constitution may prohibit, any matter may be deemed a Matter of Special Significance at the request of any five Elders.
- b. Matters of Special Significance are decided by a two-thirds majority of the Lay Elders together with the Lead Pastor or, in his absence, his designated pastoral representative.

- c. Only the Lay Elders vote on matters where there may be a personal conflict of interest for the Lead Pastor.
- 6. The Secretary of the Board of Elders maintains Board policies and procedures that describe Board operating processes, procedures, and organization as needed within the bounds of this Constitution.

### **Section 3: Officers**

- A. The Officers of the Church include a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Chief Financial Officer, all of whom must be Church Members. The Church may also have, at the Board of Elders' discretion, one or more additional Vice Presidents and one or more Assistant Secretaries. Except for the President, any other Officer may or may not be employed by the Church. The Lead Pastor serves as President of the Church. The other Officers of the Church are appointed by the Board of Elders and each serves at the pleasure of the Board, subject to the rights, if any, of the Officer under any agreement of employment.
- B. The Lead Pastor may only be terminated as provided in Section 2 of this Article. Any other Officer's term may only be terminated by the Board as a Matter of Special Significance.
- C. Resignation of Officers: Any Officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Church. The resignation takes effect as of the date the notice is received or at any later time specified in the notice and, unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation need not be accepted to be effective. Any resignation is without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Church under any agreement to which the Officer is a party.
- D. Vacancies in Offices: A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause is filled by appointment by the Board of Elders. Such appointment continues in force for the balance of the vacated term or until the next election as determined by the Board.
- F. President: The President is, subject to the control of the Board, the general manager of the Church and he supervises, directs, and controls the business and the Officers of the Church. The President has such other powers and duties as are prescribed by this Constitution or by the Board of Elders.
- G. Vice President: The Vice President is appointed by the Board of Elders. In the absence or disability of the President, the Vice President performs all duties of the President. When so acting, the Vice President has all powers of and is subject to all restrictions on the President.
- H. Secretary: The Secretary is appointed by the Board of Elders at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting of the Church Membership. The term of office is for a period of one year beginning the first day of the month following the meeting. The Secretary keeps a record of all business transacted at meetings of the Church Membership and also secures, after each annual meeting, the signature of each Church Elder and Officer on a document reaffirming their affirmation of the Constitution of the Church. The Secretary ensures that an accurate record of the Church Membership rolls is maintained, showing all Members' names, addresses, and categories of Membership, and also performs any other duties

normally required of such an Officer.

- I. Chief Financial Officer: The Chief Financial Officer is appointed by the Board of Elders at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting of the Church Membership. The term of office is for a period of one year beginning the first day of the month following the meeting. The duties of the Chief Financial Officer are:
  1. To oversee the collection, safeguarding, and disbursement of the funds of the Church under the direction of the Board of Elders.
  2. To ensure the maintenance of adequate financial records in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, make quarterly and annual reports to the Church, and provide such other reports as prescribed by the Board of Elders.
  3. To submit the Church's financial records for independent review in such manner and at such times as prescribed by the Board of Elders.
  4. To perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board of Elders.

#### **Section 4: Nominating Committee**

- A. Membership: The Nominating Committee consists of five Members of the Church who are in good standing. The Board of Elders appoints two members to this Committee from its own Lay members. At the annual Church business meeting the Church Membership elects the remaining three, none of whom can be Elders.
- B. Meetings: The Committee elects a chairman at its first meeting, and meets thereafter at the call of the Chairman as often as required to fulfill its duties. A quorum consists of a minimum of four members. At least seventy-five percent majority vote of those present is required to approve actions of the Committee.
- C. Duties:
  1. The Committee receives and considers all suggestions for nominations received from any Church Member in good standing. The Committee prepares a list of suggested nominee and submits this list to the Board of Elders for their consideration.
  2. The Board of Elders reviews the list of suggested nominees and announces the approved nominees to the Church on the two consecutive weekends immediately prior to the day of the election.
  3. To fill any vacated elective offices, the Committee recommends the names of individuals to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders fills such vacancies by appointment, the appointment to continue in force for the balance of the term of office or until the next election, at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

### **Article VIII: Church Records**

#### **Section 1: Maintenance of Records**

- A. General Records: An accurate, complete, and permanent record is kept of the decisions of all regular and special business meetings of the Church Membership, the Board of Elders, the Nominating Committee, and all the other councils,

committees, and subcommittees reporting to the Board of Elders. The Church Secretary is responsible for the official Church records, and the respective secretaries are responsible for the records of other Church activities.

- B. Confidential Records: Discussions by the Board of Elders of items of a personal nature which do not result in a recommendation to the Church Membership are not entered in the minutes of the Board of Elders' meetings. Such matters may be included as attachments to the minutes and may include but not be limited to:
  - 1. Pastoral and staff counseling of individuals.
  - 2. Discussion of proposed disciplinary actions that do not result in recommendation to the Membership.
  - 3. Other items of a personal nature, revelation of which would result in unnecessary embarrassment to the parties involved.

### **Section 2: Documentation of Policies and Procedures**

Documentation of Church policies, positions, organization, and practices is maintained current by the Church staff. Revisions to Church policies and positions must be approved by the Board of Elders. The purposes of these documents are:

- A. To define Church policies and positions not included in this Constitution.
- B. To define Church organization, lines of authority, and responsibility.
- C. To outline the purposes, composition, responsibilities, and duties of appointed committees and Officers.
- D. To detail the purposes and functions of the various ministries.
- E. To outline the duties of the paid staff of the Church.
- F. To establish specific procedures for the conduct of Church ministries and business.
- G. To regulate other matters, as necessary, to insure effectiveness of ministries and efficiency of operations.

### **Section 3: Inspection of Records**

- A. The following records are open to inspection by the Members at all reasonable times during office hours:
  - 1. A current copy of this Constitution.
  - 2. Minutes of regular and special meetings of the Church Membership maintained by the Church Secretary.
  - 3. Minutes of the regular and special meetings of the Board of Elders.
  - 4. Documentation of the Church's policies, positions, operations and practices.

- B. Confidential records as described in Section 1.B of this Article are not open to inspection by the Church Members other than the members of the Board of Elders.
- C. Individual giving records are only available to the Chief Financial Officer and accounting staff specifically authorized by the Chief Financial Officer. All other financial records are made available to all Elders and Officers.
- D. Audited annual financial statements are made available to Members.

## **Article IX: Meetings**

### **Section 1: Regular**

The annual meeting of the Church Membership to hear reports, elect Elders and Nominating Committee members, and conduct such other business as would naturally come before it is held in April of each year. Quarterly business meetings are held in July, October, and January. The date of a business meeting is announced from the pulpit and a copy of the agenda prepared by the Board of Elders is posted in a prominent location, for two consecutive weekends immediately preceding the day of the meeting. Business to be conducted is confined to matters contained in the agenda.

### **Section 2: Special**

The Church Membership may be called together for the transaction of any legitimate business (excepting amendments to this Constitution) by a majority of the Lay Elders. Notice of such meeting is given on the two consecutive weekends immediately preceding the day appointed, and the nature of the business to be conducted is stated.

### **Section 3: Procedures**

The Lead Pastor or an Associate Pastor moderates all meetings of the Church Membership for business. In their absence, or in matters of conflict of interest, the Chairman of the Board of Elders moderates. The Members present at any annual, quarterly, or special business meeting constitute a quorum for the conduct of business. Except as otherwise stipulated herein, a two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast at any regular or special meeting is required to approve action on matters of business.

## **Article X: Election of Elders and Nominating Committee**

### **Section 1: The Process**

The Church Members elect all Lay members of the Board of Elders and elective members of the Nominating Committee by secret ballot. The nominees receiving the highest number of votes are elected. In the event that there is only one nominee for a vacancy, a two-thirds affirmative vote of Active Members' ballots cast is required to elect. All elected Elders and members of the Nominating Committee must be on the Active Member Roll of the Church.

### **Section 2: Starting Date of Newly Elected Persons**

The terms of newly elected Elders and members of the Nominating Committee begin immediately upon election.

## **Article XI: Dissolution**

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

No part of the net earnings of the Church shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, Member, director, Officer of the Church, or any private individual; and no donor, director, Member, Officer of the Church, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the Church assets.

### **Section 2: Distribution of Assets**

Upon dissolution, any assets of the Church must be distributed to one or more organizations to be named by the Board of Elders of the Church. These organizations must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as being organized exclusively for religious purposes and must have doctrinal beliefs and purposes similar to those of this Church.

## **Article XII: License For Ministerial Duties and Ordination to The Gospel Ministry**

### **Section 1: License for Ministerial Duties**

The Board of Elders may license individuals to perform ministerial duties for specified periods of time. Applicants for such licensing must meet requirements as specified in the Church's policies and procedures.

### **Section 2: Ordination to the Gospel Ministry**

The Board of Elders seeks out and encourages individuals who have given evidence of God's call to be ordained to the Gospel ministry. The Church may publicly ordain such candidates and may present them with an ordination certificate after they have met requirements specified in the Church's policies and procedures.

## **Article XIII: Amendments**

### **Section 1: Procedures**

This Constitution and Bylaws may only be amended, modified, or rescinded by a two-thirds majority vote of Active Members' ballots cast at any regular or special meeting of the Membership for business. Such amendments must be submitted to the Church Membership by the Board of Elders by posting three weeks prior to the meeting, and public and written announcements must be made for each of at least three weekends preceding the day of the meeting.

### **Section 2: Proposed Amendments**

A Constitution Committee appointed by the Board of Elders prepares proposed amendments to the Constitution. The Board considers the proposed amendments as Matters of Special Significance, and, if so approved, recommends them to the Church Membership.

## **Article XIV: Miscellaneous**

### **Section 1: Execution of Documents**

The Board of Elders, serving as Trustees, may authorize any Officer or Officers, agent or agents to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Church, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances; and, unless so authorized by a two-thirds majority of the Lay Elders, no Officer, agent, or other person has any power or authority to bind the Church by any contract or engagement or to pledge its credit or to render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

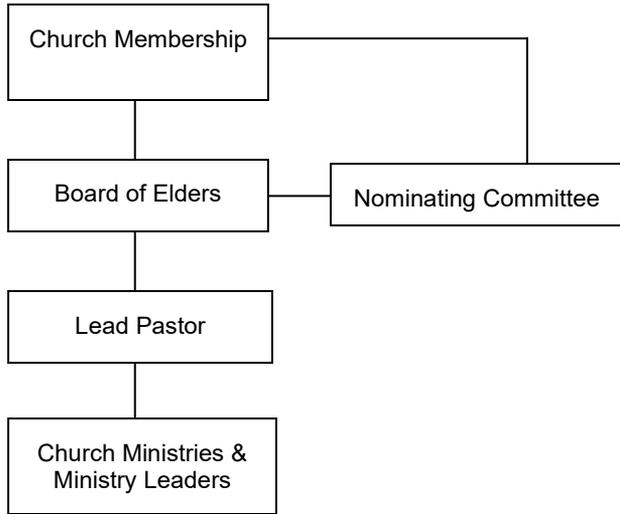
### **Section 2: Construction and Definitions**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the general provisions, rules of construction, and definitions contained in the California General Nonprofit Corporation Law govern the construction of this Constitution.

### **Section 3: Rules of Order**

The rules contained in the current version of Robert's Rules of Order govern all business meetings of the Church Membership and the Board of Elders, except in instances of conflict between these Rules of Order and the Church Constitution or provisions of law.

Organizational Chart for Emmanuel Faith  
Community Church  
2020



Attachment No. 1 Changes in elements of this organization constitute amendments to the Constitution and are made only with the approval of the Church Membership.