

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

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THE **COMPASS** CHURCH

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CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of The Compass Evangelical Free Church, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be The Compass Evangelical Free Church. For the sake of this constitution, The Compass Evangelical Free Church will hereinafter be referred to as The Compass Church or "The CHURCH".

ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY AND AFFILIATION

Authority: The members of the congregation, at its regular and special business meetings, are the legislative and governing body of this organization.

Affiliation: This Church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) through its Great Lakes District Conference and shall send delegates to their conferences, support their Home and Foreign Missions, and unite in all mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ in the measure that The CHURCH itself may officially decide.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every way prescribed or approved by the Holy Scriptures, to engage in such religious, educational, charitable, and benevolent work as the Constitution and By-Laws of this organization may determine.

ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith for The Compass Church shall be the current statement of the Evangelical Free Church of America. 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.

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.

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.

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.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this CHURCH shall be composed of individuals who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who give evidence by their confession and their conduct that they are living in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and subscribe to the Statement of Faith of the EFCA and the Constitution and By-Laws of The CHURCH.

ARTICLE VI - PROPERTY

Section 1: The CHURCH shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Illinois and as is deemed necessary for the business of The CHURCH, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of The CHURCH.

Section 2: In cases where there is an irreconcilable division within The CHURCH which threatens its unity and existence, the name and property of The CHURCH shall belong to those who abide by its Constitution and By-Laws as determined by the National Board of the Evangelical Free Church of America or its designees.

Section 3: In case of dissolution of The CHURCH organization, the property shall be assigned to the Evangelical Free Church of America to enable said association to renew the work or use the values thereof for further Gospel enterprises. The CHURCH shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the membership, or when the remaining membership cannot financially support the necessary expenses of The CHURCH or when they cannot carry out the purpose of The CHURCH, or when The CHURCH has not held an Annual Meeting for three years, or when less than six members remain.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution must be submitted to the members in writing and adopted as a preliminary step at a regular business meeting, of The CHURCH at least three months prior to the Annual Meeting. At the succeeding Annual Meeting, they can be acted upon and must then receive the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership present and voting for adoption.

ARTICLE VIII - PROVISION FOR BY-LAWS

The Constitution recognizes the existence and force of its By-Laws, a supplemental document providing specific rules, procedures and requirements for membership, government and meetings of The CHURCH.

Rules and procedures for amendments or additions to the By-Laws shall be as provided for in the By-Laws.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Qualifications

Any person, 16 years or older, who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the assurance of salvation, and whose character, conduct, and reputation is in accord with his or her confession, who subscribes to the Statement of Faith set forth in the Constitution, who accepts the Constitution and By-Laws of this organization, and who is willing to support The Compass Evangelical Free Church in doctrine, participation, mission, prayer, and giving may become a member of this organization, hereinafter referred to as "The CHURCH".

Membership in good standing is required for voting, serving in an elected position, serving in a staff leadership position, and for serving on a committee. Membership is strongly recommended for serving in lay leadership positions. Qualifications for all elected, staff, and lay leadership positions are determined by the Elder Board or their designees.

Section 2 - Admission

Membership is strongly recommended for those who regularly participate in the worship services and other ministries of The Church, who are committed to the mission of The CHURCH, and who qualify for membership.

Admission to membership in The CHURCH shall be as follows:

- A. Application for membership shall be according to the procedures set forth by the Elder Board and carried out by the appropriate Staff. Applicants shall be given a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of The CHURCH, a copy of The EFCA Statement of Faith and shall attend a membership class that provides instruction in CHURCH doctrine, mission, and goals under the supervision of the Elder Board or their designees.
- B. Following such instruction, applicants shall meet with members of the Elder Board, or their designated representatives, to give personal testimony of their salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give evidence of their understanding of and willingness to submit to the Statement of Faith, the Constitution, the By-Laws, the Elders, and their designees, in matters related to The CHURCH.
- C. Upon recommendation of the Elder Board, the names of the applicants shall be published for two consecutive weeks. This published communication will request members in the congregation to comment on the candidates offering scriptural basis for which any candidate should not become a member. Based upon the response to this communication, the Elder Board will vote qualified candidates into membership at an Elder Board meeting.
- D. Inactive, former members who wish to be reinstated as active, voting members must do so in writing to the Elders, or their designees. Based on the length of inactivity, resubmission of application and/or class attendance could be necessary.

Section 3 - Conduct

All members are to pursue spiritual growth evidenced by increasing love for God and love for others (Matthew 22:37-40). All members should be committed to the study and application of Scripture (Ezra 7:10). Members should participate in the ministries of The CHURCH by regularly attending worship services (Hebrews 10:25), giving financially in proportion to God-given resources being stewarded (Malachi 3:10, 1 Corinthians 16:2), serving (1 Peter 4:10), praying for The CHURCH (Ephesians 6:18), and engaging in personal evangelism (1 Peter 3:15).

Section 4 - Absence and Termination

The CHURCH membership roster shall be reviewed annually by the Elder Board or their designees prior to the Annual Meeting. Members who have not participated in the worship services or other ministries of The CHURCH for at least one year in ways determined by the Elder Board or their designees shall be contacted to understand their intention to retain their CHURCH membership.

Unless The CHURCH receives acknowledgement stating they wish to retain their membership, their names will be removed from membership roster by the Elder Board.

Section 5 - Withdrawal

Any member who wishes to withdraw their membership from The CHURCH shall make that request for withdrawal in writing to the Elder Board or their designees.

Section 6 - Discipline

A. If a member conducts himself or herself in a manner which, in the discernment of the Elder Board, is not in harmony with Scriptural principles and for which he or she does not show evidence of repentance, he or she shall be interviewed and counseled by the Elder Board or their designees. (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1). Repentance and spiritual restoration should be the motivating force in these conversations.

B. If, however, the member should choose to continue in his or her unrepentant behavior, his or her membership in The CHURCH can be terminated by the Elder Board.

ARTICLE II - STATEMENT OF MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

Scripture, our ultimate authority, sets forth a Christian vision of human sexuality as a gift of God. Since the beginning of creation, God has revealed His intention for human identity, sexual identity, and sexual intimacy. The goodness and beauty of God's created order is affirmed by Jesus Christ and is foundational for the biblical view of human sexuality (Genesis 1:31; Matthew 19:4-5; Mark 10:6; Romans 1:26-17).

God created humanity in His image as male and female, thus giving all humanity value, dignity, and eternal significance (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9:6; James 3:9). The distinction God created between male and female is the foundation for all subsequent human life and is reflected in a person's biological birth sex. Embracing one's birth sex honors this distinction as designed by God. However, misrepresenting one's birth sex violates God's generous intention for human identity and relationships.

We believe that marriage between a man and a woman reflects the relationship between Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5: 22-32). We believe the term 'marriage' has only one meaning – marriage sanctioned by God joins one biological man and one biological woman in a single, exclusive union and covenant (Genesis 2:15-25; Matthew 19:4-6). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Hebrews 13:4).

We believe that any form of sexually immoral conduct, such as adultery, fornication, homosexual or bisexual behavior, bestiality, incest, or pornography, is sinful and offensive to God (Romans 1:18-32). We fully acknowledge that every human being struggles to some extent with issues related to human sexuality because of the fall of humanity into sin. We also affirm that the grace and love of God in Christ extends to every human being without exception. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity because they are made in the image of God (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of The CHURCH and to provide a biblical role model to the members of The CHURCH and our local communities, it is imperative that only marriages that fit this biblical definition may be officiated by pastors of The CHURCH or conducted on The CHURCH's property. All persons who represent The CHURCH in any staff leadership or lay leadership capacity shall agree and abide by this Statement on Marriage and Human Sexuality (Matthew 5:16, Philippians 2:14-16, 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

ARTICLE III - GOVERNMENT

The officers of The CHURCH shall be the Senior Pastor, Chairman, Elders, and such other officers as shall be deemed necessary by the Elder Board. Officers are authorized to act on behalf of The CHURCH when in their designated area of responsibility. All officers of The CHURCH must be of strong Christian character, tithers, having a "good report" as consistent with biblical principles as found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Their election or appointment and duties are set forth in the continuation of this section. The Elder Board will annually approve a policy to delegate authority to act on behalf of The CHURCH for the various officer positions.

A. Senior Pastor

1. The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, lead the public services of The CHURCH and watch over the spiritual welfare of The CHURCH. His purpose among the believers is to lead them to a life of discipleship by instruction from the Word of God and by an example of faith and good works. He is also responsible for leading and nurturing the staff and initiating leadership of vision and planning in conjunction with the Elder Board.

He or his designees shall report the work and condition of the CHURCH at the Annual Meeting. By virtue of his position, he shall have power to address and vote in all committees of The CHURCH, except a Senior Pastor Search Committee.

2. The Senior Pastor shall be selected by a two-thirds affirmative vote, taken by private ballot of the members of The CHURCH present and voting at any Annual or Special Business Meeting of The CHURCH. Twenty percent (20%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the vote regarding the call of the Senior Pastor.
3. The resignation / termination of the Senior Pastor can be a very sensitive matter. It is essential that the Pastor and his family be protected from personal and professional harm and that The CHURCH body be protected from divisive situations. These matters must be handled with wisdom, mature love, and a desire for unity.

The full Elder Board, except the Senior Pastor, will be responsible for investigating and reviewing termination matters regarding the Senior Pastor and for recommending an appropriate course of action, by a two-thirds majority of the full Elder Board, except the Senior Pastor, to the members of The CHURCH. Final approval of termination action shall require a majority vote, taken by private ballot of the members of The CHURCH present and voting at any Annual or Special Business Meeting of The CHURCH. Twenty percent (20%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the vote regarding retention of the Senior Pastor.

4. Resignation of the Senior Pastor's employment requires three months' notice by the Senior Pastor to the Elder Board, unless otherwise by mutual consent with the Senior Pastor and the Elder Board.
5. The Senior Pastor is an Elder.

B. Elders

1. Election and Qualifications

The Elder Board shall be elected and form a governing body of The CHURCH as the principal leadership and decision making body of The CHURCH, subject to the final authority of the membership.

The number of Elders is to be a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twelve (12) (including the Senior Pastor), with individual Elders to be elected considering a balance of spiritual gifts, talents and experience as far as possible to provide the most effective and broad oversight by this leadership group. Vacant or new Elder positions shall be appointed and filled by the Elder Board until the next Annual Meeting of The CHURCH. Candidates are to be men with at least two years current, active membership in The CHURCH and are serving in some other demonstrated leadership capacity in The CHURCH. Elders may be dismissed from office by action of two-thirds majority of total remaining Elders, or for reasons of major CHURCH discipline by the majority of the members of The CHURCH present at any Annual or Special Business Meeting of The CHURCH counted for the meeting and eligible to vote.

Individual Elders shall be elected for three-year terms. Each Elder shall be limited to three consecutive elected terms. As far as possible, terms will be set so that no more than one third of the Elders shall be elected in any year. After having served as an Elder for three successive terms, the individual is ineligible to serve on the Elder Board for one year.

2. Responsibilities

The Elder Board shall meet monthly or whenever called together by the Chairman or the Senior Pastor.

The Elder Board shall oversee all functions of The CHURCH to promote the highest level of spiritual health and vision in order to fulfill the mission and goals of The CHURCH.

The Elder Board, or their designees, shall interview all applicants for membership in The CHURCH and recommend appropriate candidates to the congregation for membership.

The Elder Board, or their designees, shall deal privately with church members in matters of CHURCH discipline. If disciplinary matters remain unresolved, such matters may be taken by the Elder Board before the membership of The CHURCH.

The Elder Board shall submit the annual budget to the membership for approval through voting, bring other necessary decisions to the members for voting, carry out voted decisions of the membership, and keep the membership informed of all appropriate matters. The Elder Board shall be informed of the activities of The CHURCH staff as necessary.

The Elders, or their designees, will determine the financial structures and methods of The CHURCH, to include all funds, investments, budgets, and spending. The Elders, or their designees, will set all policies of The CHURCH, to include policies related to finances, property, staff, and ministries.

The Elder Board shall be recognized as the legally constituted board to meet State and other regulatory requirements and be authorized to sign documents on behalf of The CHURCH. The Elder Board may authorize others to sign documents committing The CHURCH.

3. Officers

a. Chairman

The Chairman shall be elected from within The Elder Board by the Elders.

He shall preside at all Annual and Special Business Meetings and Elder Board meetings of The CHURCH. In his absence, he shall appoint another Elder to preside at the meeting. The Chairman shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

b. Secretary

The Secretary shall be elected from within the Elder Board by the Elders. The Secretary shall be responsible for the official record keeping of the Elder Board and The CHURCH.

C. Staff

Staff shall be responsible for ministries in support of The CHURCH mission and goals. Staff members may be added when the need is determined.

Staff serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor and may be dismissed according to The CHURCH personnel policies and procedures.

D. Committees

The Elder Board may direct the formation of ongoing or temporary Committees as it sees fit to accomplish the work of The CHURCH. At The CHURCH, a Committee is defined as a select group commissioned by the Elder Board to accomplish a mandate assigned to the Committee by the Elder Board. The Elder Board will set the work parameters for any Committee formed. The Elder Board will define terms for the leadership and the selection of participants for any Committee formed. An example of an ongoing Committee is the Finance Committee. An example of a temporary Committee is a Senior Pastor Search Committee.

No organization shall be permitted to function under the auspices of The CHURCH without approval of the Elder Board, or their designees. This includes, but is not limited to, activities such as using parachurch programs, hosting Bible studies with leaders not members of The CHURCH and similar situations including rental of The CHURCH facilities by others.

E. Standing Committees

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is commissioned by the Elder Board to serve as ongoing advisors to the Elder Board and The CHURCH staff management on financial matters such as accounting, finance, and other related banking and business operations of The CHURCH. The Finance Committee is designed to add a layer of wisdom and protection to The CHURCH's financial dealings.

The Senior Pastor will choose a Chairperson to lead the Finance Committee, with the advice and approval of the Elder Board. The Chairperson of the Finance Committee may be removed from leadership of the Finance Committee by the Elder Board. The designated Chairperson of the Finance Committee will appoint members to join the Finance Committee for whatever period of time the Finance Committee Chairperson determines, subject to removal by the Elder Board. The Finance Committee must include at least two (2) Elders, as appointed by the Chairman of the Elder Board.

The Finance Committee shall also serve as an internal audit and financial review group; in case there ever arises a concern regarding financial mismanagement by the management staff of The CHURCH. Finance Committee members will be given reasonable access to all financial information of The CHURCH. If any Finance Committee members ever encounter evidence of unexplainable financial abnormality, financial mismanagement, potential fraud, or other concerns of a similar nature, Finance Committee members shall promptly report said concern to the Finance Committee Chairman, Senior Pastor, and Chairman of the Elder Board, as appropriate.

The Elder Board shall engage a reputable independent Certified Public Accounting firm to perform an annual audit/review of the financial accounting and statements of The CHURCH. Annually, at least two Elders shall meet with the auditors without staff present to consider if there are any accounting or financial reporting issues. The audit/review report shall be given to the Chairman of the Elder Board, reviewed with the Elder Board, and made available to the membership in a timely manner.

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS

Section 1 - Scheduling of Meetings

A. The Annual Meeting of The CHURCH shall be held by the first Sunday of October each year at such time as may be decided by the Elder Board. At this meeting an annual report shall be shared, Elders elected, and other necessary business transacted. The fiscal year of The CHURCH shall end August 31.

B. Special Business Meetings, in addition to the Annual Meeting, of The CHURCH shall be held in order to conduct the business of The CHURCH in a timely manner. Such special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor, Chairman of the Elder Board, the Elder Board, or by petition of 20% of active members of the congregation. Prior to any consideration of a member initiated Special Business Meeting, the representatives of the group calling for a special meeting will present their concerns to the Elder Board. If the issues are not resolved, a Special Business Meeting will be called.

C. Notice of all Annual or Special Business Meetings shall be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting either by announcement at the regular worship services of The CHURCH or by written notice. The announcement shall state the significant purposes of the meeting.

Section 2 - Rules of Order

A. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall preside over all Annual and Special Business Meetings of The CHURCH. The meetings should include, but not be limited to, the following segments:

1. Reading of God's Word and prayer
2. Minutes of the previous meeting to be approved
3. Reports from the Senior Pastor and/or other leaders of The CHURCH
4. Voting on new and/or old business of The CHURCH
5. Undecided, unfinished or tabled business
6. Election of Elders

B. The latest version of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all Annual and Special Business Meetings when not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of The CHURCH.

Section 3 - Quorums

A. Ten percent (10%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of The CHURCH, unless otherwise stated in these By-Laws. Quorum may be established by in-person attendance and/or remote online participation.

B. A majority number of the serving Elders shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the Elder Board.

Section 4 - Voting

A. All members shall have the right to vote in all matters coming before the members for voting at all Annual and Special Business Meetings.

Approval Requirements:

Membership approval, in addition to those previously described, is required for:

1. Annual operating budget
2. Expenditures exceeding 10% of the Operating Budget except for emergency situations.
3. Borrowing funds above 10% of the Operating Budget or encumbering any church assets.
4. Acquisition or disposal of all real property.

B. All matters will be determined by majority vote (one more than one-half of all votes cast), except when otherwise specified in these By-Laws, of active voting members present and voting at an Annual or Special Business Meeting.

C. It is intended that the business of The CHURCH be conducted without absentee ballots. Exceptions will be made to allow absentee ballots at the discretion of the Elder Board where situations merit it.

D. Proxy voting by members at an Annual or Special Business Meetings is prohibited unless required by law.

ARTICLE V - AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended or altered by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at any Annual or Special Business Meeting of The CHURCH, providing notice of the proposed alteration or amendment has been given to the members at least two weeks prior to such meeting.