

**The By-Laws of
Carlisle Community Church D/B/A Lighthouse Community Church
(An Evangelical Free Church)
Of Des Moines, Iowa
(Revised October 20, 2024)**

Article I

Church Government:

- A. This church chooses to be congregational in its government. Congregationalism is defined to mean that:
1. This local church has the right to determine its own mission and decisions under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the guidance of God's Word.
 2. The highest authoritative body for this local church is the membership as they voice their decisions through the appropriate majority vote (as defined in these By-Laws).
 3. The responsibility for church government belongs to the entire membership and each member is encouraged to participate in the decision-making process. Each member should participate with spiritual maturity and with a desire to build up the body of Christ.
- B. Congregationalism is also understood to mean that:
1. Ministry is the responsibility of all believers. While government is restricted to the members of Lighthouse Community Church, congregationalism invites believers who have been gifted by the Holy Spirit to do ministry. All believers who regularly participate in the life of the local church are encouraged to find a place of service and are welcomed as co-laborers for our Lord Jesus Christ.
 2. Recognized spiritually gifted leaders are a part of God's plan for the local Church. While the congregation determines the general direction of the local church and holds final authority, carrying out specific directions and ministries is delegated to specific officers and leaders in the church. Authority is vested by the congregation in these individuals or groups to operate under the guidelines established by the congregation. Honor is shown to those serving in a specific leadership or ministry role by not unduly interfering in the fulfillment of their position. These servants also understand the responsibility and accountability that has been given to them. Mutual submission, love, and respect must govern all of the structural relationships of authority within the church. If there is a question about any decision or action of an individual or group, the congregation can review the issue and may affirm or overrule the decision at a duly called congregational meeting.
 3. The church recognizes the need for interdependence with the churches and government structures of the Evangelical Free Church of America. The authority of the congregation is not an excuse for isolation. Rather, it is an encouragement to mutually give and receive help for the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Article 2

Membership Requirements:

A. Membership Defined. Requirements for membership are as follows: Any person age eighteen or older, and

1. Who has:
 - a. completed an application for membership
 - b. attended a membership instruction class
 - c. given testimony of his/her faith in Jesus Christ according to Article 5(C) of the Statement of Faith and
2. Who desires to actively support the ministry of Lighthouse Community Church
3. Who has met with at least two members of the Elder Board to:
 - a. review the application form
 - b. give verbal testimony of his/her faith in Jesus Christ
 - c. Is considered by the Elder Board as part of Gods body of believers
4. Who is approved during a meeting of the current members for inclusion in the membership as follows:
 - a. After meeting with the applicant, if the Elder Board is in agreement of the applicant's qualifications, they will recommend that person to the congregation for membership
 - b. An 80% majority of the members by show of hands at a congregational meeting confirms the applicant as a member.
5. Lighthouse Community Church will grant and accept membership transfers that are in good standing to and from other EFCA affiliated churches. Potential members will still have to fill out a member application and covenant, do an Elder interview, and be voted in by the congregation.
6. Baptism by immersion is encouraged as an outward symbol of obedience to Christ. However, it is not a requirement for membership.

B. Membership Voting Privileges:

1. A member has voting privileges at all congregational meetings.
2. A member may be elected to any office for which he/she meets Biblical qualifications.

C. Termination of Membership Procedures:

1. The Elder Board will grant a letter of transfer upon receiving a written request from that member.
2. The Elder Board will drop a person's name from the membership role upon receiving a written request from that member.
3. A person's membership may be terminated for disciplinary reasons according to Article 4 of these By-Laws.
4. A person whose membership is terminated must complete the application procedures of Article 2, Section A for reinstatement.

5. A member who has not had contact with the church for one year may be removed from the membership list by the Elder Board. The Elder Board may make final attempts to communicate with that member before the action is final.
6. The Elder Board will communicate all membership activity defined above to the congregation at the next congregational meeting.
7. No present or former member has any right or claim to any church property.

Article 3

Leadership:

A. Church Officers:

1. The Church Officers will be Chairman of the Elder Board, Vice Chairman of the Elder Board, and Elder Secretary. Other officers may be added as deemed good and acceptable to the Elder Board.
2. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, or Lead Pastor along with one other member of the Elder Board shall, by virtue of a resolution by the Elder Board and pursuant to any other restrictions contained herein, have the authority to contract on behalf of the church. This authority includes, but is not limited to contracts, promissory notes, leases, or any other obligations. Lease, sale, or purchase of real property must have affirmation by the members.

B. Member Secretary

1. The Member Secretary will be responsible for taking minutes at all Congregational Meetings and will serve a one-year term. The current Elder Board will prepare a non-competitive ballot for the Member Secretary. This person must be a member. An 80% majority of the members voting at a Congregational Meeting is required for affirmation.

B. Elder Board:

1. The Elder Board is composed of the Lead Pastor and three to ten men affirmed by the membership. The required qualifications are listed in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
2. Elders are to serve two-year terms and not more than three consecutive terms
3. The current Elder Board will prepare a non-competitive ballot of men based upon scriptural qualifications as per the articles of incorporation to serve on the Elder Board. An 80% majority of the members voting at a Congregational Meeting is required for Elder affirmation.
4. The Elder Board elects its own officers including the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Elder Secretary at its first meeting of the New Year. The Lead Pastor cannot serve as an officer.
5. The Vice Chairman assists the Chairman of the Elder Board. In the event that the Chairman is unable to complete his term, the Vice Chairman assumes the role of Chairman and serves in that capacity until the next annual meeting.
6. The Elder Secretary is responsible for all minutes of the Elder Board meetings.
7. The Elder Board will meet as needed but generally not less than once per month to organize and carry out the responsibilities delegated to them by the congregation.
8. The Elder Board will carefully and prayerfully consider qualified people and prepare a non-competitive ballot listing qualified nominees for each of the following offices and leadership positions:

- a. Elder
- b. Member Secretary

Article 4

Discipline:

- A. The purpose of discipline is to restore a person to faith and fellowship.
- B. The Elder Board will confront persons who digress from the Scripture or from the church's Constitution or who disrupt the fellowship (including personality disputes) according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-5.
- C. No charges against any person will be brought before the church by any individual or group until such charges shall first have been given in writing with a personal signature before the Elder Board. The Elder Board will look into the matter and confer with the accused.
 - 1. If the Elder Board is satisfied that the charges made are true, and if the accused shows no sign of repentance, the Elder Board may take action.
 - 2. Should the Elder Board's action be felt unfair, the accused may have the option of direct appeal to the congregation.
- D. No member will be expelled until every effort has been made to reclaim him/her for Christ and the church in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17, II Thessalonians 3:13-15 and Galatians 6:1-2. If these efforts fail, that person will be expelled from the membership by a simple majority vote (51%) of the members voting at a congregational meeting.

Article 5

Congregational Meetings:

- A. Congregational meetings will be scheduled quarterly in the months of January, April, July and October on a date set by the Elder Board.
- B. The July meeting will be the Annual Meeting. At this meeting the approval of the budget for the coming fiscal year will be voted on. If not held in July the annual meeting will be held as soon as feasible after July.
- C. Affirmation of Elders and Secretary will be made at any congregational meeting by written ballot.
- D. The newly affirmed Elders and Church Officers begin their terms immediately.
- E. At the July meeting, annual reports for the previous year will be presented and a spiritual vision prayerfully projected for the new year.
- F. The fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following year.
- G. A quorum for congregational meetings shall be 25% of the members voting. If a quorum is not achieved, a second congregational meeting will be called for a date not less than two weeks later and the quorum shall be the members present.
- H. Special Congregational Meetings will be called at the request of the Lead Pastor, Chairman, or Elder Board or when five eligible members representing different households submit a written request for a special meeting to the Elder Board.

1. The date will be set within 30 days by the Elder Board and announced with its purpose(s) at two consecutive Sunday worship services or by written notice to the members and announced at one Sunday worship service.
2. Official actions of the meeting will be limited to the stated purpose(s).

I. All congregational Meetings will be conducted in a Christlike spirit and according to Scriptural principles. Roberts Rules of Order is an appropriate guide for the protocol of the Congregational Meetings.

J. Members must be present at the member meeting to vote on any topics that require congregational approval/affirmation. Absentee ballots are not available.

Article 6

Lead Pastor:

A. Responsibilities:

1. The Lead Pastor shall perform all the Scriptural duties of the office under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with freedom of the pulpit. (Ephesians 4:11-16). The specific responsibilities of the Lead Pastor are listed in the Leadership Handbook.
2. He will be a voting member of the Elder Board and an ex-officio member of all other boards, ministry teams, task forces, or committees.
3. He is not eligible to serve in any officer position.
4. He will be accountable to the Elder Board.

B. Qualifications:

1. The qualifications for Pastor will be as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
2. He will exhibit the spiritual gift of the pastor/teacher (Ephesians 4:11-12).
3. He will hold to the Evangelical Free Church of America ("EFCA") Doctrinal Statement of Faith without reservation.
4. He must be ordained by or actively pursuing ordination with the Evangelical Free Church of America.

C. Calling a Lead Pastor:

1. The Lead Pastor Search Team is composed of 3 to 7 church members. The Chairman will serve as an ex-officio member. The Elder Board will openly seek nominations from the Church membership to serve on this Team. The Elder Board will select the members of the proposed Team and present the proposed Team to the congregation for affirmation. The Elder Board will select the Chairperson of the Lead Pastoral Search Team from the affirmed list of Team members.
2. Search Team duties will be (without unnecessary delay) to seek advice from the staff of the EFCA National and District offices, investigate, interview and invite to candidate a man of good report who meets the qualifications stated in 6B above
3. After the process of narrowing the potential candidates to one, the Lead Pastor Search Team will introduce this candidate to the church, arrange a time to candidate, and then give

their recommendation to the congregation at a congregational meeting. At this time, a call to join staff may be extended to the candidate by an 80% majority vote of the members voting at that congregational meeting. After the process of narrowing the potential candidates to one, the Lead Pastor Search

4. A second candidate will be called only after the above process has run its course and the first candidate will not be filling the position. A candidate will be expected to accept or reject a call within 2 weeks.

D. Calling Associate Pastors:

1. An Associate Pastor Search Team will be composed of the Lead Pastor, Chairman of the Elder Board, or his designee, and one other Elder. The Elder Board may also seek nominations from the Church membership to serve on this team if desired.

2. Associate Pastors are not required to be ordained or actively seeking ordination but may be required to have giftedness in the specific ministry area for which they are hired rather than or in addition to teaching/leading.

3. After the process of narrowing the potential candidates to one, the Associate Pastor Search Team will introduce this candidate to the church, arrange a time to candidate, and then give their recommendation to the congregation at a congregational meeting. At this time, a call to become the Associate Pastor may be extended to the candidate by a 80% majority vote of the members voting at that congregational meeting.

4. A second candidate will be called only after the above process has run its course and the first candidate will not be filling the position.

5. A candidate will be expected to accept or reject a call within 2 weeks.

E. Sabbatical Policy:

Rationale

Members of the pastoral staff serve in a unique position in their full-time ministry. The demands of pastoral ministry are great and often draining physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Despite the use of accumulated vacation time, pastors often find themselves stressed and spiritually depleted over time.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining strong, effective, and long-term pastoral leadership, it is the desire of Lighthouse Community Church to provide a time of personal and spiritual refreshment and professional growth for their pastors.

1. The term sabbatical means the pastor is relieved of all routine and emergency duties during the time granted. Prior to the sabbatical the pastoral and church leadership will develop a plan for covering the pastor's duties during the absence. Sabbatical is separate and distinct from accrued vacation. No vacation time should be used within four weeks before or after sabbatical.

2. All pastoral staff shall be eligible for two months sabbatical upon completion of five years of full-time service at Lighthouse Community Church.

They shall receive two months of sabbatical leave for every five years of service to the local church he currently serves. Length of sabbatical not to exceed one year.

Eligibility shall be reached following the staff members anniversary date. The Elder Board at its discretion, can give credit for the pastor's years of service at a prior church, especially if no sabbatical time was given.

3. Scheduling shall be based on seniority at Lighthouse Community Church. No two pastors may be on sabbatical at the same time. Leave must be taken within one year of eligibility.
4. The senior pastor shall submit a sabbatical proposal in writing to the Elder Board for approval. Other pastoral staff shall present a written request to the senior pastor first for his approval and he will then present it to the Elder Board for final approval.
5. The proposal should include the following:
 - a. Type of ministry related activity planned for the sabbatical;
 - b. Other plans for physical rest, personal recreation, family responsibilities, intellectual stimulation, and spiritual renewal;
 - c. Strategy for coverage during the sabbatical;
6. A written report shall be presented to the Elder Board at the conclusion of the sabbatical. It should include how the time was invested and what benefits were realized.
7. The pastor's full wages and benefits shall continue during the sabbatical. No compensation shall be given for unused sabbatical time.
8. Sabbatical requests need to be requested and approved before the beginning of the fiscal year in which the sabbatical will take place so that the church budget can be adjusted accordingly.
9. The pastor is not to use the sabbatical for candidating or preparation for departure from the church. In taking the sabbatical the pastor commits to remaining at the church for at least one year following the sabbatical.

F. Resignation/Termination:

1. The Lead Pastor will serve until he resigns or is dismissed by the Elder Board. Thirty days will be considered proper notice from the Lead Pastor or the Elder Board unless both parties mutually agree to a different period of time.

2. If the Lead Pastor should depart from the Word of God in conduct or doctrine as defined in the Constitution or these By-Laws, or if he has lost the confidence of the congregation, he will be counseled in love by the Elder Board. Should this not have the desired result, he may be dismissed by the Elder Board

Article 7

LCC Policies:

A. Marriage Policy:

1. We, Lighthouse Community Church, believe that marriage is the exclusive, covenantal union of one man and one woman, which union was designed by God. Genesis 2:24 states, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh." Jesus Christ affirmed this in Matthew 19:4-6: "And He answered and said, 'Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let no man separate.'" We will faithfully follow this scriptural definition of marriage in the teachings and practices of this church, and therefore, for example only, this church will not officiate, solemnize, perform or host a marriage or marriage-like ceremony involving anything other than the union of one biological man with one biological woman as instituted by God.

Article 8

Amendments:

Amendments to these By-Laws must be approved by the Elder Board or be submitted in writing by five members from different households to the Elder Board who will inform the members in writing at least two weeks before a Congregational Meeting and be announced at least once from the pulpit on a Sunday morning. At the Congregational Meeting the amendment will be discussed and may be passed as written by a 66% vote of the members voting.