

CONSTITUTION
La Crescent Evangelical Free Church

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the La Crescent 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 La Crescent Evangelical Free Church of La Crescent, Minnesota.

ARTICLE II – AUTHORITY AND AFFILIATION

Section 1. The Active Membership at its annual, quarterly and special business meetings is the governing body of this church.

Section 2. While this church shall be a self-governing body responsible only to Jesus Christ as its Head, yet it recognizes the advantages of mutual counsel and cooperation with other Evangelical Free Churches and voluntarily agrees to affiliate with and support the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Section 3. This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America through the North Central District Conference and shall send delegates to their conferences, support their Home and Overseas 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 STATEMENT

Under the authority of Christ, the mission of this local body of believers, is to fulfill our Lord's Great Commission to..."Go and make disciples of all nations." (Matt. 28:19-20).

We seek to bring glory to our Triune God as we, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are obedient in the following areas of Christian service:

1. Prayer
2. Study of God's holy word... the Bible
3. Worship and Fellowship
4. Sharing the Gospel of Christ with others so that they can have an on-going personal relationship with Him.

ARTICLE IV – STATEMENT OF FAITH:

The Statement of Faith of this organization shall be the same as that of the North Central District Conference and The Evangelical Free Church of America which reads as follows:

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

God

1. 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

2. 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

3. 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.

In keeping with our commitment to the truth of the Scriptures and their application to all areas of faith and practice, we explain and affirm from the truth stated above "that God created Adam and Eve in his image" the following:

3a. The Dignity of Humanity. When God created Adam and Eve, He said, “‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them” (Genesis 1:26-28a). We believe that love and respect are due, and to be offered, to all people, as we are all created in the image of God. However, when the Scriptures speak against other philosophies, belief systems, and behaviors, we will be true to the Scriptures and will speak the truth, but will do so in love.

3b. The Distinction of Gender. God has created human beings uniquely as biologically male and biologically female as part of the divinely created order. This biologically sexed difference is foundational for human identity and ought to be recognized and valued (Genesis 1:27). We hold that this distinction exists at the chromosomal level and cannot be altered. Therefore, we do not condone or support any attempt at other forms of sexual or gender identity, including but not limited to homosexuality, lesbianism, transgenderism or bisexuality.

3c. The Design and Definition of Marriage. Ordained by God from creation, Jesus refers to this gender difference in describing God’s design for marriage by declaring, “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh” (Mark 10:6-8; cf. Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:31). Therefore, we believe God has instituted and designed marriage to be an exclusive covenantal relationship between one biological man and one biological woman in which union is intended to be a lifetime commitment. A civil government’s sanction of a union will be recognized as legitimate marriage by the church only to the extent that it is consistent with the definition of marriage found in this Statement of Faith.

3d. The Defining of Sexuality God’s creation of human beings as male and female provides a biologically sexed identity is grounded in God’s good design. We believe that legitimate sexual relations are exercised solely within this biblical defining of gender and marriage. Therefore we will not support or condone any form of sexual union outside of marriage as God designed it. (1Co 6:9-10, Mat 5:28, 1Ti 1:9-10, Rom 1:24-27, Heb 13:4, Gen 2:24 Mat 19:4-6) Therefore any form of sexual conduct or activity which is outside that design is sexual immorality. This includes, but is not limited to fornication, adultery, marital rape, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, pornography, bigamy and polygamy.

Jesus Christ

4. 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

5. 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

6. 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

7. 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

8. 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

9. 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

10. 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

Any person who confesses personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the assurance of salvation, whose conduct is in accord with his confession who subscribes to the above Statement of Faith, and who is willing to participate in the life of the Church with faithful attendance, prayer and material means may apply to become a member of this corporation hereafter referred to as the Church. (See Membership Application Form.)

ARTICLE VI – POWER (PROPERTY)

Section 1. This 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 Minnesota and as

is deemed necessary to fulfill the purposes of the Church as defined in Article II, and shall have the power to dispose of such property of mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of the Church. The General Board shall have the power to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, lease, convey mortgage, deed, or otherwise transfer property of the Church, but only after having been duly authorized by the Church membership. All contracts, notes, mortgages, conveyances, assignments, leases, and other documents and papers in behalf of the Church shall be executed by the General Board.

Section 2. In case of dissolution of the Church corporation, the title to all property, real and personal, shall be assigned to the North Central District Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America. The Church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the corporation, or when the Church has not held an annual meeting for three years, or when less than six active members remain.

Section 3. During the existence of this Church, the ownership and control of all property shall remain in that part of the active membership which adheres to the tenets and doctrines set forth in this Constitution.

Section 4. If a minority of the Active Membership of this Church shall ever secede, ownership and control of the property shall remain with the majority, subject only to the provisions of Section 3 of this Article.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These Articles may be changed and altered by the Church membership when deemed necessary. Any proposed amendments of the Articles must be submitted by the Elder Board to the Active Membership, in writing, at least three successive Sundays prior to a regular or special business meeting. In addition, notice shall be given of such proposed amendments from the pulpit on those three successive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 2. A quorum of 51% of the Active Membership must be present to amend the Articles.

At least a 75% majority vote of the Active Membership present is necessary to change the Constitution.

Constitution Revised 10/27/2019