



## **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF BOZEMAN**

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE: Bob Taylor, Les Witmer, Roger Brownson,  
Brett La Shelle, Chris Blackmore

### **PREAMBLE**

Whereas, we, a body of evangelical believers in Jesus Christ, in order to effectively implement the commission of Christ to His Church, and to be legally constituted as a non-profit corporation in the State of Montana, do voluntarily ordain and establish this Constitution and By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE I -- NAME**

The name of the church shall be the **Evangelical Free Church of Bozeman**.

### **ARTICLE II -- PURPOSE**

The purposes of this local church shall be to glorify God and to promote the interests and ministry of the Kingdom of God to the Body of Christ and to the world.

### **ARTICLE III -- STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We Believe:

- 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.**
- 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.**
- 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.**

- 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.**
- 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.**
- 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.**
- 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.**
- 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.**
- 9. We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial 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.**

**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.**

- ~~1. The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the Divine and final authority for all Christian faith and life.~~
- ~~2. In one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.~~
- ~~3. That Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascending into heaven where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Advocate.~~
- ~~4. That the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, and indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service.~~
- ~~5. That man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.~~
- ~~6. That the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit, and thus become children of God.~~
- ~~7. That Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during this present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.~~
- ~~8. That the true Church is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are united together in the body of Christ of which He is the head.~~
- ~~9. That only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.~~

- ~~10. That Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church, and that every local church has the right under Christ, to decide and govern its own affairs.~~
- ~~11. In the personal premillennial and imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.~~
- ~~12. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, of the unbeliever to everlasting conscious punishment.~~

#### **ARTICLE IV -- RELATIONSHIPS**

This congregation affiliates itself with the Evangelical Free Church of America, by representation through delegates at their meetings. The purpose of the affiliation is to unite in any mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ. This church shall encourage cooperation with like minded churches for the work of the kingdom.

This congregation, however, shall remain independent and self-governing. It shall remain its own highest authority under God, and shall conduct its business according to this Constitution and Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE V -- MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this congregation shall consist of individuals who confess faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, whose life bears witness of their confession, who seek membership in this local church, & who will abide by the Constitution and By laws of this congregation.

#### **ARTICLE VI -- CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

The local church shall have final authority to govern church affairs. They shall, in turn, vest such authority in those holding official church offices: elders, male and female deacons, staff, **ministry team leads**, and designated others.

#### **ARTICLE VII -- PROPERTY**

This church shall have the power to buy, own, and sell property in the fulfilling of its purpose. Such property shall be managed by those appointed by the Congregation. In the event of the dissolution of this church, the members shall vote as to the disposition of its property. If division occurs in the congregation, the name and all property shall be retained by those who uphold this constitution.

#### **ARTICLE VIII -- BY-LAWS**

This constitution contains the principles of this church. The By-Laws of this constitution are a separate, supplemental document that contain the policy and procedures of the church.

Amendments to the church By-Laws may be enacted by any of the following methods:

- A. A three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at any Annual or

Special Business Meeting.

- B. A majority vote of the Board of Elders ~~and Council for Administration~~. Those decisions concerning the By-Laws so made, will be temporarily enacted until ratification at the Annual or Special Congregational Meetings.

Proposed amendments to the By-Laws shall be published in the Church Newsletter once and in the Church Bulletin each Sunday for at least two consecutive Sundays. Members shall be solicited for input.

**ARTICLE IX -- AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Amendments to this constitution may be made only at the Annual Business Meeting of the church when said proposed amendments have been presented to the members in written form, at least two months prior to the time of its adoption. Adoption of an amendment shall require a three-fourths majority vote of members present and voting, except for Articles III, IV, and VII, which shall require a 90% vote of all members present and voting.