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# *Liberty Evangelical Free Church*

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## *Membership Guide*



*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm,  
then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again  
by a yoke of slavery. - Galatians 5:1*

# THIS IS THE EFCA

## EFCA MISSION STATEMENT

The Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) movement exists to glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people.

The EFCA is an association of nearly 1,500 autonomous churches united by a mutual commitment to serve our Lord Jesus Christ with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the Word of God. We are committed to cooperate with one another in ministry and fellowship as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission which Christ has entrusted to His Church. The growing ministry of the EFCA currently extends to some 45 nations of the world.



The term Evangelical refers to our commitment to the proclamation of the gospel and to the authority of Scriptures and the only safe and sufficient guide to faith and practice.

The term Free refers to our form of church government which assures that our local churches are free from a central controlling body. EFCA churches depend up the active participation of pastor and lay people in the decisions and direction of the local church.

## EFCA STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE EFCA

*Adopted by the Conference on June 26, 2008*

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.

## **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 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.

## **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.

## **DISTINCTIVES OF THE EFCA**

*"In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ."*

### **1. The Evangelical Free Church of America is a believers' church—membership consists of those who have a personal faith in Jesus Christ.**

The great heritage of EFCA people around the world includes the fact that fellowship and ministry opportunities in the local church are based solely on one's personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and trusting in Him alone for salvation. Membership requires commitment to sound doctrine as expressed in our Statement of Faith. However, a person is not excluded from membership because he or she does not agree on every fine point of doctrine. Within the EFCA, there is allowance for legitimate differences of understanding in some areas of doctrine.

### **2. The Evangelical Free Church of America is evangelical—we are committed to the inerrancy and authority of the Bible and the essentials of the gospel.**

The EFCA was born out of a heritage of commitment to the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. We have deep convictions based on the authority of God's Word, but we do not draw battle lines over minor points. Nor do we make minor issues of doctrine a test of fellowship in the local church. We are evangelical. We believe in separated living and personal holiness, but we are not separatists.

### **3. The Evangelical Free Church of America embraces a humble orthodoxy in partnership with others of like faith.**

We believe in the spiritual unity of the Church though not necessarily in structural union. We join with other Christians and other denominations of like, precious faith in common goals and ministries to accomplish the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. But we believe that there is strength in diversity and that it is important to preserve our distinctives. We recognize that union in structure does not guarantee unity of spirit. Our foremost concern is unity of spirit with our Lord, with each other and with other Christians.

### **4. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in Christian freedom with responsibility and accountability.**

We believe in Christian liberty, but freedom always has its limitations. Responsible Christians do not abuse freedom. The apostle Paul wrote forcefully about Christian liberty in the Book of Galatians. He shattered the legalists with the doctrine of grace. But in First and Second Corinthians and Romans, the apostle also rebuked believers when liberty was abused. He declared boldly the principles of Christian liberty, but spoke with equal forcefulness about Christian accountability. The EFCA desires to preserve our freedom in Christ. We encourage our people to be responsible, godly men, women and young people who desire to live under the control of the Holy Spirit in obedience to the principles and precepts of God's Word, and in harmony with God's will for life as revealed in the Scriptures.

### **5. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in both the rational and relational, i.e. the head and the heart, dimensions of Christianity.**

We believe the Scriptures must be applied to our individual lives with warmth of heart, warmth of message and warmth of concern. We believe it is essential to have solid, biblical content in our doctrinal understanding of faith, but it is equally important to have a dynamic, vital relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son and to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. Sound Christian doctrine must be coupled with dynamic Christian experience. Ours is a ministry of love and spiritual reconciliation.

## **6. The Evangelical Free Church of America affirms the right of each local church to govern its own affairs with a spirit of interdependency with other churches.**

The EFCA is committed to a congregational form of government as stated in our Articles of Incorporation: *"The Evangelical Free Church of America shall be an association and fellowship of autonomous but interdependent congregations of like faith and congregational government..."* Strong pastoral leadership coupled with discerning and well-equipped Christian lay people can produce spiritual growth as well as significant church growth. While the EFCA affirms the right of each local church to govern its own affairs, we also believe in the biblical values of interdependence and cooperation.

We are a movement of churches committed to working with one another in order to fulfill the Great Commission in the United States and abroad. This is only possible when there are strong ties with other EFCA churches, with local district organizations and with the national EFCA ministries.

### **THE EFCA AS A MOVEMENT....**

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of local churches joined together in bonds of love for the purpose of developing and carrying on ministries which are most effectively accomplished by mutual cooperation.

The focal point of these ministries is found in our EFCA mission statement: *The Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) movement exists to glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people.* Church planting among all people, both in our nation and around the world, is a priority on our agenda. Both our existing churches as well as those being planted must be healthy churches where people grow in spiritual maturity and are deployed in meaningful ministry.

These ministries are beyond the scope of the most local congregations to carry on individually. EFCA member churches enjoy the strength of being a vital part of the united effort to minister within our local churches and to reach out with the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to those who have never had the joy of being reconciled to God through the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

### **THE GOVERNMENT OF THE EFCA....**

The EFCA holds a national Leadership Conference each June. Each member church is eligible to send official delegates to the conference which provides a significant time for fellowship, spiritual enrichment, and equipping for ministry as well as a time for conducting the official business of the EFCA.

The Conference has the responsibility of electing the president of the EFCA and the president of Trinity International University.

The conference also affirms the members of the EFCA Board of Directors and all departmental executive directors.

The Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing the entire organization of the EFCA between the annual Leadership Conference sessions. The board meets four times each year for regularly scheduled meetings and at additional times when needed.

The ministries of the president, the various ministry departments, the boards and committees of the EFCA, along with the district superintendents and district boards, exist to serve local EFCA churches as they carry on "front line" ministries. The EFCA national office functions as a "service and equipping center" for our districts and local churches.

## **HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF AMERICA**

The Evangelical Free Church of America was formed June 18, 1950 by the merger of two church bodies: the Evangelical Free Church of America (Swedish) and the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Free Church Association. Both groups had been birthed in the revival movements of the late nineteenth century.

The Swedish group had its formal beginnings in Boone, Iowa, at a conference held in October of 1884. In that same year, two Norwegian-Danish groups began to worship and fellowship together in Boston, Massachusetts and Tacoma, Washington. By 1912, both the Swedish Evangelical Free Church and the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Free Church Association had been formed.

Those two associations, representing 275 local congregations, were formally joined together as they gathered for a merger conference in June of 1950 at the Medicine Lake Conference Grounds near Minneapolis, Minnesota. The international and national offices of the EFCA have been located in Minneapolis since the merger took place.

**Dr. E.A. Halleen**, who had served for 28 years as the president of the Swedish association, was elected as the first president of the newly formed Evangelical Free Church of America. His one-year term crowned a brilliant ministry career as a pastor, teacher, evangelist and church leader.

In 1951, **Dr. Arnold T. Olson** was elected president. He had served as the president of the Norwegian-Danish association for six years, as chairman of the merger committee and as the first moderator of the EFCA. Under his leadership, The Evangelical Free Church of America broke the boundaries of its ethnic background and flowed into the mainstream of the evangelical movement. Dr. Olson served with distinction as the president of the EFCA for twenty-five years.

**Dr. Thomas A. McDill** became the third president of the EFCA in 1976. His pastoral and administrative gifts were used by God to strengthen significantly the church during an unsettled and challenging time in American history. The movement grew dramatically under his leadership both in numbers and in its spiritual influence.

**Dr. Paul A. Cedar** served as the fourth president of the EFCA from 1990 until 1996. Dr. Cedar brought a passion for prayer, spiritual dependence, and evangelism to his leadership role. In 1996, Dr. Cedar left the EFCA to become the first full-time president of Mission America, a national networking and evangelism ministry.

**Dr. William J. Hamel** became the fifth president in June of 1997 and serves currently in that role. Dr. Hamel's passion is found in the EFCA mission statement *to glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people*.

## **ABOUT REACHGLOBAL** *(formerly EFCA International Mission)*

*develop. empower. release.*

ReachGlobal focuses on developing, empowering and releasing healthy ReachGlobal staff that help develop, empower and release healthy national movement leaders to plant churches in their own cultural contexts. Partnering with national movement leaders, as well as other mission organizations, allows ReachGlobal to fulfill the mission to *glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people*.

Currently, Reach Global has 550 missionaries living in over 45 countries around the globe. However, with the increased focus on partnering with national leaders and national movements, ReachGlobal's influence reaches of 70 countries.

## **HISTORY AND PROFILE OF LIBERTY EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH**

Based on the desire of five couples to have a church committed to the inerrancy of the Scripture as well as evangelism and discipleship, Liberty Evangelical Free Church began as a church plant of the Central District of the Evangelical Free Church of America. A Bible study began with these couples in January, 1991. The first public worship service was held on the first Sunday of May, 1991 at the local Community Center in Pella under the direction of church planter, Pastor Bob Nieuwendorp, 1980 T.E.D.S. graduate.



After four months, the Central District recommended that Tom Scheck, 1989 T.E.D.S. graduate and missionary appointee to Germany, serve Liberty as an interim pastor. While he raised support and while the church grew and began the process of searching for a full-time pastor, Tom ably served as missionary apprentice pastor.

By the time Pastor Tom concluded his ministry in October, 1992, the congregation had grown to approximately 100 men, women and children. About four months prior to his departure, the congregation moved from the Community Center, which offered no Sunday School space, to the gymnasium of the Pella Christian Grade School. Two months before Pastor Tom moved on to another work, the church was given office space and access to a meeting room at a local businessman's office suite on Liberty Street.

On November 1, 1992, Gregg Miller, 1982 T.E.D.S. graduate, became the first full-time pastor of Liberty. Under his leadership, the Leadership Council developed a philosophy of ministry and two-part vision which focuses on discipleship and worship. Pastor Gregg also worked with the elders to develop a small group ministry, which has involved between 60 and 80% of the adults since its inception in 1993, and continues to be a critical part of Liberty's vision today.

In December, 1993, many members of the leadership entered into a two-year discipleship training process known as T-Net, which is a national training network dedicated to the development of discipling congregations. Through the influence and guidance of this ministry, Liberty now seeks to offer each person three levels of ministry opportunities: CELEBRATION, a Sunday morning worship service which unites the congregation in the celebration of God's love for us and our love for Him; ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS (ABF) which meet the needs of fellowship, outreach, assimilation and teaches the Word of God; SMALL GROUPS, which has been mentioned previously, meeting the needs of deep growth.

After a church-wide evaluation and consultation, which took place during the first 3 months of 1994, the leadership came away encouraged, especially with the very high marks received for small group studies and for worship, the two points emphasized in Liberty's vision! They also came away with several goals. They took a more concerted look at land purchase, the addition of an associate pastor,

the establishment of a more detailed vision statement and philosophy of ministry, and to develop better methods to follow-up and track newcomers, to name a few.

By the fall of 1994 a "Turf Commission" identified a seven-acre parcel of land as a good site for a future building. However, they, along with the elders and deacons, felt a unanimous leading to postpone a search for land and focus more on the building of ministry first.

The congregation readily agreed and it was decided that the issue would be set aside indefinitely but investigated from time-to-time.

In January, 1995, the congregation approved a recommendation by the elders to establish the position and begin the process to obtain an associate pastor. During the spring a task force worked on a job description, presented and discussed it in two congregational meetings and by June, the congregation voted to approve the description. The focus of the position was on helping families disciple their children for Christ and was therefore called "Associate Pastor of Family Ministries."

The Search Team began their work in August of 1995 and by December had narrowed it down to one man, who they presented to the leadership and then to the congregation in that same month. While the candidate, his wife and children were well-received, he did not receive the approval percentage of 85% required for a call. It became obvious that the leadership and congregation were not yet in full agreement on the position and the package and several months were taken to be sure there was harmony before the search process would resume.

The deacons and elders unanimously recommended, and the congregation approved, the resumption of the associate pastor search May 30, 1996. The search team was reassembled and in July they began their work to find God's man by meeting with District Superintendent Dave Martin. Larry Yeoman came on staff as Associate Pastor of Family Ministries in November, 1996, after serving for 12 years as Associate Pastor at the Evangelical Free Church in Clear Lake, Iowa. His wife, Nanci, also served as Church Secretary.

During this same time period, after renting a home for office space for two years, the congregation voted to purchase and move into a house adjacent to the Christian Grade School property for an office in March, 1996. This facility has been serving the needs of the fellowship in many ways, including office space for the secretaries (1 full-time financial and general office, and 1 part-time publications secretary), the pastor's offices and our church library.

In June, 1998 Pastor Gregg Miller resigned to take a position elsewhere in the Evangelical Free Church of America. Liberty extended a call to Larry Yeoman to assume the duties of Senior Pastor and, after unofficially filling the pulpit from June to August, he was officially voted in as Senior Pastor. Liberty's leadership purposely delayed its search for additional staff, even though it meant going from two pastors to one for a period of time. The purpose for the delay was, since Pastor Larry had not previously served in a Senior Pastor role, we wanted to give some time for him to adjust to that role and then pursue staff to complement his gifts.

We experienced significant growth, with an average attendance of just over 300. We are a very young church, with the majority of those attending having young children. Nursery and ministry to children and families is a high priority for Liberty.

Pastor Greg Renaud was added to our staff in the fall of 2000. Our student ministries (Junior High, Senior High and College) are increasing rapidly.

Pastor Tony Mennenga was added to our staff as Associate Pastor in August of 2002. Tony worked with Adult Ministries, Assimilation Ministries and Small Groups. He served in this position until

November of 2004.

Within our body is a good representation of families whose children attend public school or private school or are home-schooled. It provides for some unique diversity, but our emphasis is upon the responsibility that parents have to provide spiritual training for their children. "In diversity there is strength." That's true. This particular "diversity" has caused us to seek a healthy balance of inward and outward focus.

After meeting together for several months, a specifically commissioned Facilities Task Force made some recommendations to the Elders and Deacons regarding ways we could enhance our ministry in our existing rental facility, but also recommended that we need to be pursuing our own facility. So a Ministry Center Team was appointed to pursue land opportunities and do some research into options for building. In June, 2000, we purchased approximately 12 acres, located 1 mile NW of Pella.

In January and February of 2003, we held a capital campaign to raise monies for the building of a Ministry Center on that property. We broke ground in June, 2003 and are in the process of completing this facility.

God answers prayer! We believe that! And we know that when we are persistent in prayer, He can help us ascertain His will and pray according to His will. And so we pray about everything! Our children's ministry, our search for land and erecting a building, our search for additional staff, our preaching, our Christian Education ministries – every facet of Liberty is undergirded by prayer. We encourage the Liberty family to be involved in the Lighthouse of Prayer emphasis – praying for, caring for, and sharing with neighbors. We pray over agendas. We pray in the services. We pray in the halls. We pray in our homes. We pray everywhere! Prayer is a prominent aspect of Liberty's ministries.

In January, 2005 Pastor Larry Yeoman resigned to take a position elsewhere in the Evangelical Free Church of America. Two Interim Pastors, John Hibbard and Jack Smith served our body from February 2005 until May 2006.

The Search Team began their work in 2005 and had narrowed it down to one man, who they presented to the leadership and then to the congregation. Dane Schaudt came on staff as Senior Pastor in July, 2006, after serving for 14 years as Senior Pastor at the Evangelical Free Church in Story City, Iowa.

Pastor Jon Pausley was added to our staff as our Student Ministries Pastor in August of 2010. Our student ministries are strength and a valued part of Liberty.

We are driven by the [Great Commandment](#)- "Love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." (Matthew 22:37-38) - and the [Great Commission](#) – "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20)

We are carefully positioning ourselves to be a church that helps people grow in their relationship with Christ so they are able to utilize their spiritual gifts and to be intentional about sharing the "good news" of the love of Christ with unbelievers. In addition to increasing our efforts toward outreach opportunities – both corporately and individually – we have a strong emphasis on missions. Liberty has an expanding budget of missionary support that includes: home missions – Pathways of Pella, Central College InterVarsity, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Awana and Child Evangelism Fellowship; foreign missions – works in, Philippines, Venezuela, India, Haiti, Czech Republic, China and Turkey; church planting – our own Central District; and short-term mission opportunities for our Liberty family.

God has richly blessed Liberty in its brief history and we anticipate His continued blessing as we are obedient to His call upon us!

## **LIBERTY'S STRUCTURE**

**Elders:** The role of our *elders* is to give supervision and spiritual leadership to the entire church. The elders regularly review, evaluate and set policy for the ministries and direction of the church insuring the congregation's labors are directed toward the fulfillment of the purpose, vision and philosophy of ministry of the church. They are to spend priority time in prayer and the ministry of the Word while being models in the discipleship process.

**Deacons:** The role of the deacons is to lovingly ascertain and oversee the meeting of the physical needs of the congregation.

**Deaconesses:** The *deaconesses* oversee women's ministries, hospitality needs of the congregation, and any other special needs the elders may designate as outlined in they bylaws, Aricle VI

**Leadership Council:** The primary role of our Leadership Council, which is composed of elders, deacons and deaconesses, and others in leadership roles will be to freely discuss the direction , vision, and other affairs of the Church. They will be responsible for overseeing the ministries necessary to meet the daily spiritual and physical needs of the church. Committees deemed necessary will be accountable to this council and the Leadership Council, in turn, will be accountable to and overseen by the elders.

**Christian Education Ministries:** The goal of our Christian Education Ministries is to guide each individual to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to encourage each one to grow spiritually by clearly and creatively communicating the Bible and its Gospel message at every level.

**Mission Commission:** The goal of our missions effort is to win individuals to the Lord, equip them in the faith and establish churches that have the same aim in every tribe, tongue, people and nation.

## **WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?**

### **THE EFCA STATEMENT OF FAITH ADOPTED BY LEFC**

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.

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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.

## **CORE VALUES OF LEFC**

1. **The Bible is our final authority.** All of Liberty's vision and decisions must be thoroughly biblical in both belief and practice. We trust God to guide us through His written Word. We choose to trust in God and in God alone. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; Psalm 20:7)
2. **We will pray about everything!** Every decision that is made, every ministry that is raised up, every staff member hired, every dollar that is spent, etc. will be done only after having "inquired of the Lord." Jesus said, "I will build My church" and "apart from Me you can do nothing." We cannot

accomplish the task before us in our own strength, our own wisdom or our own will. Recognizing our absolute dependence on Jesus, we are committed to abide as His disciples in prayer and in His Word. We will seek the strength, the wisdom and the will of God. (John 15:1-17; Ephesians 6:10-20)

3. We want every believer to develop and experience an intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ. It is impossible to have an intimate relationship with someone on an irregular basis. Jesus calls us to a "daily walk" with Him. In fact, it is a moment by moment relationship. Our intimacy with Christ is at the root of all we are and do. Although we are called to "do" certain things, including utilizing our spiritual gifts in service to one another, we are first called to "be" like Christ. We will seek to encourage each other to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. Out of this intimate relationship with Jesus Christ will flow a desire to love others, both believers and unbelievers. (Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 25:34-46; 1 Corinthians 1:9; John 15:1-17; Colossians 1:9-14)
4. Disciple making is a mandate for the church. The intentional strategy of disciple making includes biblical teaching, practical training, and personal accountability. Disciples are people who abide in Christ through the Word and prayer, are obedient, bear fruit, glorify God, have joy and love others. A community of disciples is marked by a commitment to worship, to Scripture, to one another, to prayer, and to reaching out to unbelievers with the truth and hope of the gospel. Our disciple making methods will be modeled after Jesus' method for making disciples, which includes teaching in larger groups and apprenticeship training within a small group. The goal is to nurture and equip believers from the point of conversion toward an ever-increasing spiritual maturity. (Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 1:28-29; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; John 15:7-17; Acts 2:42-47; John 1:38-39; Mark 3:13-14)
5. We are called to bear witness to unbelievers of our own changed life. Outreach is a critical component of disciple making. We desire to reach as many as possible with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We must always be balanced with an inward and an outward focus. It is our goal to penetrate the community by presenting the good news of Jesus Christ and by demonstrating Christian love to the needs of the whole person (spiritual, physical, emotional, relational, material, etc.). The integrity and love of Christians opens the door for authentic communication of the good news to those who do not yet know Christ. We will encourage and train believers to be ready to "give a defense for the hope that is within them." (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20; Colossians 1:28-29; Matthew 9:35-38; 1 Peter 3:15-16)
6. Every believer is spiritually gifted and has a vital role and ministry in the church – local and beyond. That role begins with a commitment to personal growth as a disciple, which leads to contributing to the rest of the body through our spiritual giftedness. We want people to discover their spiritual gifts and utilize those gifts within the body of Christ as the Holy Spirit intends, recognizing the contribution of each individual's gifts as of equal importance. (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12)
7. We desire to be a "sending" church, seeking to raise up missionaries and Christian workers from within the Liberty Body, as well as establishing new church plants as God directs. We are committed to establishing Liberty as a strong "home base" church that will, in God's timing, help to plant other disciple making churches and train and develop leaders and workers who will "go" wherever and whenever God desires. We desire to have an impact, not only in the Pella area, but in surrounding communities and, ultimately, around the world. We pray that God will send out workers from our own Body into the harvest field. (Matthew 9:35-38; Acts 1:8; Acts 13:1-4; Matthew 9:35-38)
8. Leaders of God's people are to shepherd God's people and are accountable to God for the leadership they give. They are to be chosen on the basis of character, gifts of leadership,

commitment to the church's philosophy of ministry and, of course, their personal commitment to the Word of God, prayer, and an intimate walk with Christ. They should lead as servants by example. They will give vision, encourage, train, promote teamwork, and motivate. God's people are to lovingly pray for, support, and follow the leadership of the church, under the authority of the Scriptures. (1 Timothy 3: Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

9. **The family is a God-ordained institution.** Although we recognize that, in our society, there are single parent families (whether because of divorce or death of a spouse) and singles who are not married (by choice, divorce, or death of a spouse), we also recognize that God ordained the institutions of marriage and family. And so we hold them in high regard. We believe that husbands and wives are to love each other and model before their children and a watching world the unconditional love that Christ displayed for the church. We believe that parents, fathers in particular, have a responsibility before God for the spiritual (not necessarily academic) training of their children, recognizing that the Church family's role is to support the parents in this endeavor. (Genesis 2:19-25; Ephesians 5:21-33; Psalm 78:5-7; Deuteronomy 6:1-7; Ephesians 6:1-4)
10. **Liberty is committed to change in particular methods.** We will use legitimate and effective methods, creatively changing them over time and circumstances, in order to reach others in a relevant and sensitive way. Without compromising our message, we will make great efforts to make all our ministries relevant, practical, and contemporary to the culture in which we live. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)
11. **Unity in the body of Christ is of utmost importance.** Without compromising Scriptural truth, we seek to keep unity of the Liberty Body at the forefront in all of our decisions and activities. It is clear from our understanding of human nature that not everyone will agree on everything. However, God commands us to move forward in unity, so we can be sure that we are moving according to His direction and in a manner and attitude that brings honor and glory to Him. (Acts 1:4-8; Psalm 133:1; John 17:23; John 13:34-35 ; Ephesians 4:3, 13; Colossians 3:14)

## **WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER**

God desires everyone to be a member of the Body of Christ, the church universal. A person becomes a member of the Body of Christ through personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. No local church can confer or withdraw this type of membership. To be faithful to this relationship, however, and to best nurture spiritual maturity and understanding, each Christian needs to give his love, loyalty, and commitment to a local group of believers.

There is a lifetime of spiritual growth to be found in developing the friendships and ministry opportunities God has for us within such a fellowship. Therefore, we believe that regular participation in the life of a local church is vitally important for every Christian. We encourage everyone who has a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and who identifies with Liberty to publicly acknowledge this commitment.

### **As a member of Liberty Evangelical Free Church, I commit myself to:**

#### **1. Loving God**

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38

#### **2. Growing in a Loving Community**

“And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:39

Just like the early New Testament church, the nature of our journey is one of relationship. Adult Bible Fellowships are a place to learn, connect, and minister. Small groups, ministry teams and events are just a few of the places where community is built.

### **3. Reaching Out in Love to the World**

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19-20a

At every step in our journey, we want to be involved in lives, both in our community and in our world.

#### **I am also committed to...**

1. Following our church leadership
2. Developing relationships in the church community
3. Upholding our Statement of Faith
4. Participating in giving of my time, talents and treasures
5. Allowing God to use me and the particular way in which He has imparted spiritual gifts to me for the building up of the body and to reach out to the unsaved.

#### **As leaders of Liberty Evangelical Free Church, we commit to you...**

1. To be faithful stewards of the resources you give
2. To minister with excellence
3. To provide Godly leadership and accountability
4. To provide pastoral support to you, your family, and your ministry
5. To shepherd the flock

#### **THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A MEMBER:**

1. Although not a requirement, taking this membership class is strongly encouraged
2. Making written application (give it to Elder Chairman or the church office)
3. Sharing with the Elders your testimony of how you became a Christian
4. Elders give approval of membership
5. Although you are already officially a member once the elders give approval, we still welcome every new member on a Sunday morning during the worship service (simply an announcement, having you come to the front to be recognized, and a handshake from your elders)

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Liberty Evangelical Free Church – Pella IA 50219

**I am persuaded that as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, having put my trust in Him and receiving Him as my personal Savior, I should be a member of this local church body. I hereby make application for membership in the Liberty Evangelical Free Church of Pella, Iowa.**

- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(M/D/Y)
- Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_
- Check: ( ) Single ( ) Married (M/D/Y) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Divorced ( ) Remarried ( ) Widowed
- Briefly state your testimony of conversion on the reverse side of this application (please include approximate date or age at time of salvation).
- The Evangelical Free Church practices believer’s baptism by immersion. Do you desire to be baptized? ( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Have been baptized (If yes, approximate date)
- Have you read the Liberty EFC Membership booklet? ( ) Yes ( ) No
- Are you in agreement with our 10 point Evangelical Free Church Statement of Faith?  
( ) Yes ( ) No (If no, then what is your point of disagreement?) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Briefly state your reasons for desiring to join this congregation on the reverse side of this application.

I BELIEVE the Bible to be the inspired and inerrant Word of God and that Jesus Christ is my personal Savior, having received Him by faith into my life (John 1:12). As a member of the Liberty Evangelical Free Church, I shall, by the grace of God, do my utmost to live a life pleasing to my Lord. I will, by His grace, wholeheartedly support the programs of this church by my prayers, my giving, my service and my attendance. I do hereby accept the Constitution of this church and shall, as long as I remain a member, seek to pursue the purposes for which this Church was formed, providing it remains true to it original purposes and doctrine.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Date Of Elder Board Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION - include approximate date or age at time of salvation:  
(If you need more room, you may add an additional page)

REASONS FOR DESIRING TO JOIN THIS CONGREGATION:

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