

Church Constitution and Bylaws

Era Community Church (ECC)

Whereas we, being an incorporate body of people of like precious faith:

1. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life through His death and the power of His resurrection.
2. Believe the Bible to be God's Word and the revelation of his will to man and accept it as our rule for faith and conduct.
3. Believe each church is to assemble together for worship, fellowship, counsel, and instruction in the Word of God and the work of the ministry.
4. Believe each church should exercise the gifts and offices provided for in the New Testament to obtain the Christian goal, "Be ye therefore holy even as your Father in heaven is holy."
5. Believe God has called anointed us to emphasize the fullness of the Gospel through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, we have accepted and adopted the following Statement of Fundamental Truths and Constitution. We shall seek, by the grace of God, to be governed but the Constitution as set forth, and will also seek to teach and propagate the Gospels contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.

Statement of Fundamental Truths

1. **The One True God.** God is the eternally holy, self-existent, self-revealed "I AM," the creator and source of all. The one true God reveals Himself in the three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; each co-equal, co-eternal and consubstantial. (Deuteronomy 6:4, Mark 12:29, Isaiah 43:10, Isaiah 11, Matthew 29:19)
2. **The Scriptures Inerrant.** The Bible is the inspired Word of God, a revelation from God to man, the infallible rule of faith and conduct, and is superior to conscience and reason, but not contrary to reason. (2 Timothy 3:15-16, 1 Peter 2:2)
3. **Man, his Fall and Redemption.** Man was created good and upright for God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." All human life is sacred and of immeasurable worth. But man, by voluntary transgression, fell. His only hope for redemption and salvation is in Jesus Christ the Son of God, through which man may enjoy and glorify God forever. (Genesis 1:26-31, Genesis 3:1-7, Romans 5:12-21)
4. **The Salvation of Man.**
 - a. **Conditions of Salvation.** The grace of God, which brings salvation, has appeared to all men, through the preaching of repentance toward God and one's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, resulting in eternal life. One is saved by grace through faith alone—this faith speaks to the belief in Jesus' virgin birth, crucifixion/death, burial, and resurrection. (Titus 2:11, 3:5-7, Romans 10:13-15, Luke 24:47, Ephesian 2:8)

5. **Evidence of Salvation.** The inward evidence of a believer's salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit. The outward evidence is a life of righteousness and true holiness. (Romans 8:16)
6. **Baptism in Water.** The ordinance of baptism should be observed as commanded in the scriptures by all who have repented and believed in Christ as Savior and Lord. They declare to the world that they have died with Jesus and been raised with Him to walk in newness of life. (Matthew 28:19, Acts 10:47-48, Romans 6:4)
7. **The Lord's Supper.** The ordinance of the Lord's supper consists of the elements: bread (the body of Christ) and fruit of the vine (wine/juice as the blood of Christ). Communion symbolizes the believer partaking in the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, serves as a memorial of His suffering and death and prophecy of His second coming, and is enjoined on all believers until he comes. (2 Peter 1:4, 1 Corinthians 11:26)
8. **The Promise of the Father.** All believers are entitled to the promise of the Father and the baptism of the Holy Spirit according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. With it comes a deeper spiritual life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry. This wonderful experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth. (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4, 10:44-46, 11:14-16, 15:7-9, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31)
9. **Regeneration.** All people who turn from their sins and put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ receive a new birth by which their life is regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit. From that time forth the regenerated person has the Holy Spirit dwelling within them enabling them to live a holy life. Also giving them power to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. (John 3:3-6, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Titus 3:5, 2 Peter 1:3-4)
10. **Sanctification.** The Scriptures teach a life of holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. The process of sanctification, willed by God for all believers, is walked out in obedience to God by His grace and the power of the Holy Spirit. This enables the believer to obey the command, "be holy, for I am holy," and to behold the glory of God while continually being transformed into the image of Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:18, Hebrews 12:14, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:16)
11. **The Church.** The Church is the Body and Bride of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission to equip the saints, and disciple the nations, unto to the glory of God. (Ephesians 1:22-23, Hebrews 12:23)
 - **The Ministry and Evangelism.** A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the evangelization of the world and the edification of the body of Christ. (Mark 16:15-20, Ephesians 4:11-13)
12. **Divine Healing.** Deliverance from sickness is provided for us in the atonement and is the privilege of all believers. (Isaiah 53:4-5, Matthew 8:16-17)
13. **Marriage.** From birth, God has wonderfully and immutably created each person as male or female. The two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. God instituted marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family, the basic structure of human society, and God has ordained sexual activity to occur exclusively within that union. (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:24, 19:5, 26:8-11, Leviticus 18:1-30, Romans 1:26-29, 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, Hebrews 13:4)

14. **The Blessed Hope.** The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church. (Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 15:51, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Titus 2:12)
15. **The Millennial Reign of Jesus.** The revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, the salvation of national Israel, and the millennial reign of Christ on earth are the scriptural promise and the world's hope. (2 Thessalonians 1:17, Revelation 19:11-14, 20:1-7, Romans 11:26-27)
16. **The Lake of Fire.** The devil and his angels, the beast, and the false prophet, and whoever not found written in the Book of Life, shall be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Revelation 19:20, 20:10-15).
17. **The New Heavens and New Earth.** We, "according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21, 22)

BYLAWS

Era Community Church (ECC)

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of the one true God; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, irrespective of social position or worldly possessions; for the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ both in home and foreign lands, this church shall be governed by the following Constitution:

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENT:

That, we, the undersigned have this day voluntarily associated ourselves together for the purpose of forming a corporation under the Laws of the State of Texas, and we hereby certify:

ARTICLE I

Era Community Church as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, the name of the corporate church shall be Era Community Church (ECC).

ARTICLE II

PURPOSES AND POWERS

THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THIS CORPORATION IS FORMED ARE:

1. To establish a Biblical Christian Church with the teaching of the Bible and with missionary, literature, educational and all other religious areas it may deem useful to propagate and practice the full Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and for its service to the community.
2. It is one purpose of this local church corporation to earnestly seek and promote the unity of God's people in the Scriptural manner of Godly love, respect, and faithful voluntary cooperation

with liberty. To that end it shall associate and cooperate freely with other churches and with church organizations.

3. To act as Trustee under any trust incidental to the principal objects of the corporation and to receive, hold, administer, and expend funds and property subject to such trust.
4. To enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every kind for any lawful purpose without limit as to amount and with any person, firm, association or corporation; to draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, issue and execute promissory notes, warrants and other negotiable or transferable interests.
5. To take, purchase or otherwise acquire; to own, hold, occupy, use and enjoy, manage, improve, develop and work; to grant, sell, exchange, let, demise and otherwise dispose of real estate, buildings; and improvements and every right, interest and estate therein without limit as to the amount thereof and wheresoever the same may be situated; to erect, construct, alter and repair buildings; to assume any and every kind of contract, agreement and obligation by or with any person, firm, corporation or association, or any Federal, State or other Government for the erection, construction, alteration, repair, renewal, equipment, improvement, development, use, enjoyment, leasing, management or control of any buildings, improvements or structures of any kind wherever the same may be situated.
6. To purchase or otherwise acquire, to own, hold, use and enjoy, to sell, assign and transfer, exchange or otherwise dispose of, deal in or deal with personal property of every kind and description without limit as to the amount thereof and wheresoever the same may be situated.
7. To borrow and to loan money and to give and to receive evidence of indebtedness and security thereof; to draw, make accept, endorse, execute, and issue promissory notes, warrants, and other debentures of the corporation, or otherwise to make guarantees of every kind and secure any or all obligations of the corporation by mortgage, trust deed or otherwise.
8. To do all other acts necessary or expedient for the administration of the affairs and attainment of the purposes of the corporation and to have and exercise all the powers now or hereafter conferred by the Laws of the State of Texas, upon non-profit corporations.

ARTICLE III

A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

This corporation is organized pursuant to the General Non-Profit Corporation Law of the State of Texas; the property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes, and upon liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment, shall not inure to the benefit of any private person except a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for religious or charitable purposes and as designated in Article X of this Constitution.

ARTICLE IV

ORDINANCES

(A) The ordinance of Baptism should be observed as commanded in the Scriptures and shall be administered to all those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19, Colossians 2:12)

(B) The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as a part of public worship, as commanded by the Lord (Luke 22:19, 20; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

PRIVILEGES

(C) Infants and small children may be dedicated to the Lord in the church upon the request of the parents or guardians (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15, 16).

(D) The ministrations of laying on of hands accompanied with the anointing with oil, for the healing of the sick, shall be granted as requested. (Mark 16:18, James 5:14)

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in ECC shall be eligible to all who give evidence to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who voluntarily hold to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith.

1. ECC Membership Requirements
 - a. Profession of faith and baptism
 - b. Complete Membership Information Form

2. Termination of Membership
 - a. Death – the name of a member shall be removed from the church roster upon notification of their death.
 - b. Transfer – any active member may request that a letter of membership be transferred to another fellowship of like faith. No letter will be granted to a member who is in an “inactive” status.
 - c. Removal – any member upon verification, will be removed from the membership roll if they have:
 - Been in an inactive membership status for a consecutive 2-year period.
 - Provide express written request or verbal communication to a Trustee of the Board.

ARTICLE VI

TRUSTEES (Elders)

The trustees (elders) of ECC shall consist of a Chair, Co-Chair, Pastor, and 4 additional ECC members. The Board of Trustees shall consist of no more than nine (7) members who will serve a term of two years. Members can succeed themselves in office for one additional term and shall be eligible for re-election only after the expiration of a two-year interim period. The Board of Trustees shall be a highly motivated, trained, diverse, and intergenerational group of people that will work collaboratively with the Pastor to establish policy and approve the budget for ECC and perform other duties as required.

Trustee Duties & Responsibility:

1. Be responsible to maintain financial records and ensure all financial transactions are recorded.
2. To report its activities to the church at all annual business meetings.
3. Shall hold in trust all property belonging to the church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, maintenance, and upkeep.
4. Ensure all church properties are adequately and fully covered at all times with the proper insurance.

PASTOR

1. The Pastor shall have oversight of all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the church.
2. The Pastor shall be a voting member of all boards and ministries. He may, however, absent himself from any meeting.

The Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church by giving at least two months (60 days) notice if both parties agree.

A call to a prospective Pastor shall be voted on at a church meeting called for that purpose only and a notice from the pulpit shall have been given two (2) consecutive Sundays. At least seventy five percent (75%) of those present shall vote in favor of the call before it can become effective.

3. The Pastor shall be accountable to the Board of Trustees (Elders).

The Pastor's responsibilities:

- a. His primary focus shall be preaching, teaching, counseling, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
- b. He shall lead the church and all its leaders in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
- c. He must prepare a contingency plan to ensure church services will continue in his absence.
- d. He shall ensure that all members, and particularly those in need of spiritual uplift, are cared for.

ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS

1. The annual church business meeting shall be held on any date in January as determined by the Pastor and Board of Trustees (Elders).
2. Special business meetings may be called at any time upon recommendation of the board of trustees. The motive and purpose of such meetings shall be read from the pulpit two (2) previous consecutive Sundays.
3. Notice of all business meetings and the annual business meeting shall be announced two (2) Sundays in advance from the pulpit and placed in the church bulletin.
4. The Treasurer and Secretary will be present at all business meetings.
5. The regular order of business for the Annual Business Meeting of ECC shall be as follows:
 - a. Devotional.
 - b. Reading of previous minutes.
 - c. Report of the treasurer.
 - d. Report of committees.
 - e. Unfinished business.
 - f. Installation of trustees.
 - g. New business.
 - h. Adjournment.

This order of business may be altered or suspended at any meeting by a majority vote of the members present. The usual parliamentary rules as laid down in "Robert's Rules of Order" shall govern all debates when not in conflict with this Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII

FINANCES

1. The fiscal year of the ECC shall begin the first day of January and close the last day of December.
2. All funds needed for the maintenance of ECC shall be provided by voluntary contributions, tithes and offerings. Every member shall decide before God what he or she can cheerfully give to the support of the Lord's work at home and in the foreign field. (Malachi 3:10, I Corinthians 16:1-2; Romans 12:8)
3. Deposits must be made by ECC promptly in a local bank.
4. Annual reports will be furnished to the trustees and made available to the membership.
5. The treasurer must be a member of the church and appointed by the trustees.
6. The treasurer will attend monthly scheduled business meetings and shall present financial updates.

ARTICLE IX

PROPERTY

The Trustees (Elders) of ECC shall have power to carry out all the purposes and powers set forth in Article II. The Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer's signature shall be sufficient certificate for negotiating any and all of the provided powers in said Articles.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENT

This Constitution may be amended or changed by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the trustees at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made.

ARTICLE XI

ORGANIZATION

Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, including the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE XII

CONDUCT OF ORGANIZATION

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE XIII

DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of common pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.