

# Faith and Practice

The Book of Discipline



The Evangelical Friends Church  
Eastern Region

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2007 Revision

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Section One: Faith**

<b>Historical Background</b>	<b>Pages 4-6</b>
<b>Doctrine</b>	<b>Pages 7-12</b>
<b>Testimonies</b>	<b>Pages 13-22</b>

**Section Two: Practice**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Pages 24-28</b>
<b>The Local Church</b>	<b>Pages 29-51</b>
<b>The Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region</b>	<b>Pages 52-74</b>
<b>The District</b>	<b>Pages 75-76</b>
<b>Associated Organizations</b>	<b>Pages 77-78</b>
<b>The Appendix</b>	<b>Pages 79-103</b>
<b>Alphabetical Index</b>	<b>Pages 104-112</b>

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**Note:** Wherever the term “Yearly Meeting” appears related to the organization of the Church, it refers to the annual business sessions of the delegates of EFC-ER [see #1027].

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All Scripture references are King James Version (KJV) or New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.

**2007 Revision**

## **SECTION ONE**

### **FAITH**

The expression of the Faith upon which The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region is based is presented in this section of the Faith and Practice. It includes a brief historical background, a statement of doctrine [see #100-194], and a statement of testimonies [see #250-381].

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In seventeenth-century England, there arose many groups of seekers who were dissatisfied with the rigid forms of the Church of England and were searching for a more inwardly satisfying way of worship and life. George Fox (1624-1691) went, as a young man, to many priests seeking inner peace and received only irrelevant answers. One day he heard a Voice saying, “There is One, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition.” Joy filled his heart, and from this experience the central conviction of Friends was born – that the living Christ can speak directly to the need of every seeking soul.

In 1652 George Fox climbed Pendle Hill and was deeply moved by what he saw. Later he wrote in his Journal: “The Lord let me see a-top of the hill in what places He had a great people to be gathered.” At Firbank Fell he preached for over three hours to a thousand people, and out of that gathering the Valiant Sixty arose to work with Fox in evangelizing all of England. In spite of severe persecution, Fox went about speaking in churches, homes, and fields with multitudes of people attracted to hear his message. Since religious freedom was as yet unknown in England, these early Quakers were imprisoned in great numbers under the foulest conditions. In spite of these sufferings, the number of Quakers multiplied greatly, and eventually they won – not only for themselves – but also for all, the Act of Tolerance which guaranteed religious freedom (1698).

From 1650 to 1690 Quakerism spread rapidly throughout the British Isles and to other parts of the world, including the English colonies on the western shore of the Atlantic Ocean. Historians have labeled the Quaker Movement during those forty years as the fastest growing movement of the Western world.

At that time no church was permitted to exist except the Church of England; hence the followers of Fox called themselves “Publishers of Truth”, “Children of Light”, and “Friends of Jesus”, and later “Religious Society of Friends.” The origin of the word “Friends” is from John 15:14 when Jesus said: “You are my friends if you do what I command.” The nickname “Quaker” was originally a term of derision and insult, but through the years has become a symbol of integrity. In more recent times, Friends of evangelical persuasion have used the term Evangelical Friends Church.

Restoring primitive Christianity was the goal of early Friends. They defined it as authentic, apostolic Christianity based on New Testament teaching with no frills. In other words, preaching the essentials and omitting the non-essentials. They were a people gathered as followers of Christ, baptized with the Holy Spirit, and communing with God (often in silence) as they waited for guidance of the Holy Spirit to share, whether in prayer, message, or exhortation based on a deep concern.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Friends seemed almost to forget the Biblical basis for their faith, putting a premium on silence as a way of worship. Speaking, reading Scriptures, and praying were considered intrusion. Called the Age of Quietism, unprogrammed meetings declined as they became active in social issues, such as fair treatment for Indians, refusing to participate in war, and responding to John Woolman’s call to simplicity, frugality, and tolerance. As an itinerant preacher bent on abolishing slavery, Woolman carried his message to plantations of the South, boldly preaching equality for all. It is noteworthy that prior to 1800 – more than 60 years before the Emancipation Proclamation – every Quaker in North Carolina had liberated his slaves. During the Civil War Friends assisted runaway slaves by establishing the “underground railroad,” a secret route to freedom in the North.

As the American West opened up after the Civil War, Friends migrated in great numbers. In the latter part of the 1800s, revivals and camp meetings throughout the Midwest were part of what has been called the “Great Revival.” Thousands were converted, and churches, including Friends churches, were crowded with new converts. It was at this time that pastored meetings came into vogue in order to disciple new believers. Also emphasis was placed on ministering to children and youth in Sunday Schools and including music in a programmed worship format.

While the majority of Friends were simple, God-fearing people, there were some who became widely known. These include William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and peaceful negotiator with the Indians; Robert Barclay, Scottish gentleman, scholar, and theologian; John Woolman, best known for his anti-slavery work; John Greenleaf Whittier, poet; Stephen Grellet, French nobleman, who, escaping from the guillotine, became a

vibrant Quaker evangelist in the remote parts of the United States; Elizabeth Fry, noted for prison reform in different parts of the world; and Joseph John Gurney, banker, scholar, theologian, and preacher who called the Society back from quietism to an evangelical position.

London Yearly Meeting, founded by George Fox, is the original organization from which all others have developed. Although boasting of never having had an official division, London Yearly Meeting has nevertheless changed over the years, reflecting some of the tensions which led to divisions in other parts of the Society of Friends. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was strongly evangelical, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it followed the trend of modern liberalism and became closely akin to the General Conference of Friends.

Currently there are five major groups of Friends: Hicksite, Orthodox, Conservative, Independent, and Evangelical Yearly Meetings. In their character they reflect major divisions which have occurred among Friends.

Friends General Conference (Hicksite) is a combination of Yearly Meetings which have their origins in the separation of 1828-29. The followers of Elias Hicks, who had been influenced by rationalism and unitarianism, separated from the Orthodox Friends. Today their meetings are united in keeping the tradition of unprogrammed meetings but are in serious tension between those with a humanistic philosophy and those who are Christo-centric.

Friends United Meeting (Orthodox) came into being at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the Five Years Meeting. With a more appropriate name-change, since they meet every three years, it is currently a federation of Yearly Meetings of diverse character. The majority are predominantly evangelical, but there are a few Yearly Meetings whose liberalism has made them very comfortable in joining both the Hicksite and Orthodox branches of the Church.

Conservative Friends is a term applied to a group which has great cohesion without having a formal organization combining their Yearly Meetings. These have their roots in the teaching of John Wilbur, whose opposition to Joseph John Gurney led to separation in 1854. The difference was not so much doctrinal as it was a matter of older traditions concerning manner of worship in silence, Quaker garb, and other practices. Wilbur so emphasized the "Inner Light" that it sounded almost like infallibility. Gurney, on the other hand, laid great emphasis on the Scriptures as the guide for salvation.

There are several Independent Yearly Meetings which are not affiliated with any larger grouping of Friends. However, they honor their Quaker roots and basically seek to share the message of Friends as they interpret it.

Evangelical Friends believe in the Biblical teaching of entire sanctification (I Thessalonians 5:23) as a second work of grace. This is the position of George Fox, Robert Barclay, and Joseph John Gurney. The emphasis on the Holy Spirit, always characteristic of Friends, made the Wesleyan-Arminian teaching on holiness congenial to these Friends also. The baptism with the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the way God cleanses from the sinful nature and makes believers holy (Matthew 3:11-12). George Fox said, "and Christ did baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire and did thoroughly purge his floor and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Holiness is deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. The experience is called "perfect love". John tells us, "because as he is so are we in the world" (I John 4:17-18).

In 1965, the Evangelical Friends Alliance brought together four independent distinctly Evangelical Yearly Meetings – Ohio (Damascus), Kansas, Rocky Mountain, and Oregon. The roots of this group (as is true of many Yearly Meetings in the Friends United Meeting) are in the Orthodox, Gurneyite trend. In 1987 the International Friends Conference on Evangelism was held in Guatemala with over 250 Friends in attendance from 25 countries. It was decided to internationalize the organization and so the Evangelical Friends International (EFI) was formed [see #4000].

EFI is composed of five geographical regions for member Yearly Meetings and countries of mission endeavors: EFI-North America, EFI-Latin America, EFI-Asia, EFI-Africa, and EFI-Europe. Currently the North America Region includes:

Alaska Yearly Meeting

Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region  
Evangelical Friends Church – Mid-America Yearly Meeting  
Evangelical Friends Church – Southwest  
Northwest Yearly Meeting  
Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting  
Additionally mission endeavors are going on in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and Navajoland.

EFI-Latin America: Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru. EFI-Asia: Bhutan, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Taiwan, and Teachers in China. EFI-Africa: Burundi, Congo, and Rwanda. EFI-Europe: Albania, Croatia, Ireland, Hungary, Romania, and Serbia.

Because of the strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit and the teaching on holiness, EFI/North America Region is a member of the National Association of Evangelicals [see #6000].

## DOCTRINE

The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region presents its Statement of Doctrine in the following Statement of Faith.

### 100 GOD

101 We believe in one<sup>1</sup> eternal,<sup>2</sup> omnipresent,<sup>3</sup> unchanging,<sup>4</sup> personal<sup>5</sup> God; perfect in holiness,<sup>6</sup> wisdom,<sup>7</sup> love,<sup>8</sup> power,<sup>9</sup> and justice<sup>10</sup> without preceding cause or beginning;<sup>11</sup> creator<sup>12</sup> and preserver<sup>13</sup> of all things, visible and invisible.

102 He exists as one divine being and yet as a trinity of three distinct persons, identical, inseparable, and equal in divinity, power and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup>

103 God revealed Himself in the past in many and various ways, though supremely in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>15</sup> He continues to reveal Himself today through His creation,<sup>16</sup> the Holy Scriptures,<sup>17</sup> and the workings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of people.<sup>18</sup>

104 He alone is worthy of our worship, honor, praise and thanksgiving, now and forevermore.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 90:1-2; Romans 1:20

<sup>3</sup>Psalms 139:7-12

<sup>4</sup>James 1:17; Malachi 3:6

<sup>5</sup>John 14:9

<sup>6</sup>Isaiah 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16

<sup>7</sup>Romans 11:33

<sup>8</sup>I John 4:8

<sup>9</sup>I Chronicles 29:11-12; Isaiah 40:26-28; Ephesians 1:18-20

<sup>10</sup>Psalms 89:14; Romans 3:26

<sup>11</sup>Psalms 93:2

<sup>12</sup>Genesis 1:1; Romans 11:36

<sup>13</sup>Psalms 104:27-30; Colossians 1:16-17

<sup>14</sup>Matthew 28:19; John 14:16, 18, 23; II Corinthians 13:14

<sup>15</sup>Hebrews 1:2; John 1:18

<sup>16</sup>Romans 1:19-20

<sup>17</sup>II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21

<sup>18</sup>Acts 8:29; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6-10

<sup>19</sup>Galatians 1:5

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### 110 JESUS CHRIST

111 We believe that Jesus Christ, the Word who was with God and was God,<sup>1</sup> is the only begotten Son of God.<sup>2</sup> He was conceived by the Holy Spirit<sup>3</sup> and born of the Virgin Mary<sup>4</sup> and is the express image of the invisible God.<sup>5</sup> He combines within Himself both the divine nature of God and human nature in one perfect indivisible personality, the God-man.<sup>6</sup>

112 He lived and suffered in the world to show the Way of Life.<sup>7</sup> He was crucified and died as the atonement for the sins of the whole world,<sup>8</sup> making the only provision whereby people can find forgiveness of sins and cleansing from all unrighteousness.<sup>9</sup>

113 He died in our place<sup>10</sup> and was raised the third day for our justification;<sup>11</sup> He ascended into heaven<sup>12</sup> and sits at the right hand of God, ever living as our only Mediator and High Priest making intercession

for us,<sup>13</sup> and from there will return again to receive His church unto Himself<sup>14</sup> and to judge the world in righteousness.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>John 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16-17

<sup>2</sup>John 1:18; I John 4:9

<sup>3</sup>Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35

<sup>4</sup>Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34

<sup>5</sup>Colossians 1:15

<sup>6</sup>John 1:14; Colossians 2:9

<sup>7</sup>John 14:6; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 5:2; I Peter 2:21

<sup>8</sup>Romans 3:23-25; I John 2:2

<sup>9</sup>Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14; Titus 2:14

<sup>10</sup>I Corinthians 15:4; I John 4:10

<sup>11</sup>Romans 4:25; I Corinthians 15:4

<sup>12</sup>Acts 1:9; Ephesians 4:8

<sup>13</sup>Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24

<sup>14</sup>I Thessalonians 4:15-17

<sup>15</sup>Romans 2:16; II Timothy 4:1

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## 120 THE HOLY SPIRIT

121 We believe in the Holy Spirit, not as an impersonal principle or influence, but as a divine person,<sup>1</sup> and though distinct from the Father and Son, proceeding from both,<sup>2</sup> with whom He is equal in authority, power, glory, and titles.<sup>3</sup>

122 He is the divine agent in conviction of sin,<sup>4</sup> regeneration,<sup>5</sup> sanctification,<sup>6</sup> and the believers' assurance.<sup>7</sup>

123 He is given as an indwelling Presence to every believer to be a teacher,<sup>8</sup> guide,<sup>9</sup> and source of comfort.<sup>10</sup> He purifies the heart of the believer<sup>11</sup> and imparts at His own choosing spiritual gifts for service and the building up of the body of Christ.<sup>12</sup> He produces in believers the fruit of the Spirit<sup>13</sup> so that they may conform to the image of Christ.

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<sup>1</sup>John 14:16-17, 26; 16:13-14

<sup>2</sup>John 15:26; 16:7

<sup>3</sup>Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14

<sup>4</sup>John 16:8

<sup>5</sup>John 3:5

<sup>6</sup>I Corinthians 6:11

<sup>7</sup>Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:6

<sup>8</sup>John 14:26

<sup>9</sup>John 16:13

<sup>10</sup>Acts 9:31

<sup>11</sup>Acts 15:9; I John 1:9

<sup>12</sup>I Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:7-13

<sup>13</sup>Galatians 5:22-23

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## 130 HOLY SCRIPTURE

131 As with early Friends, we believe that all Scripture,<sup>1</sup> both of the Old and New Testaments, is given by inspiration of God, without error in all that it affirms,<sup>2</sup> and is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.<sup>3</sup> It is fully authoritative and trustworthy, fully sufficient for all believers now and always,<sup>4</sup> and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.<sup>5</sup>

132 Thus, the declarations contained in it rest on the authority of God Himself,<sup>6</sup> and there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatever. They are the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound as Christians to believe,<sup>7</sup> and of the moral principles which are to regulate our behavior.<sup>8</sup> Only such doctrines as are contained in the Scripture can be regarded as Articles of Faith.<sup>9</sup> The Holy Spirit, who inspired the Scripture, must ever be its true interpreter.<sup>10</sup> Whatever any person says or does which is contrary to the Scripture, though under profession of the guidance of the Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a delusion.<sup>11</sup>

133 The Scripture demands of believers complete obedience<sup>12</sup> and is made increasingly open to those who study and obey it.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>II Timothy 3:16

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 19:7-11

<sup>3</sup>Psalms 119:4, 105

<sup>4</sup>Psalms 119:89; I Peter 1:25

<sup>5</sup>II Timothy 3:16-17

<sup>6</sup>I Thessalonians 2:13

<sup>7</sup>Romans 1:16-17

<sup>8</sup>Psalms 119:9

<sup>9</sup>John 17:17

<sup>10</sup>John 14:26; 16:13; II Peter 1:21

<sup>11</sup>II Peter 1:20; I John 4:1

<sup>12</sup>Psalms 119:4; I Corinthians 4:2

<sup>13</sup>I Corinthians 2:4-5, 12

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## 140 CREATION

141 We believe creation to be that free act of the triune God,<sup>1</sup> the Father,<sup>2</sup> Son,<sup>3</sup> and Holy Spirit,<sup>4</sup> by which in the beginning and for His own glory<sup>5</sup> God made, without use of pre-existing material,<sup>6</sup> the whole visible and invisible universe.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:26-27

<sup>2</sup>Hebrews 1:2

<sup>3</sup>Colossians 1:16

<sup>4</sup>Job 33:4; Psalms 104:30

<sup>5</sup>Psalms 19:1; Colossians 1:16

<sup>6</sup>Hebrews 11:3

<sup>7</sup>Nehemiah 9:6; John 1:3

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## 150 SATAN

151 We believe in the existence of the Evil One, “that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan,”<sup>1</sup> the old deceiver who by his own choice rebelled against God<sup>2</sup> and became evil, who tempted our first parents to sin,<sup>3</sup> and who through their disobedience brought about the fall of the human race,<sup>4</sup> with all its attendant degeneracy, unhappiness, and misery.<sup>5</sup>

152 Satan demonstrated his evil character and purpose in his perpetual opposition to Christ by the temptations in the wilderness,<sup>6</sup> and to His people and to His kingdom.<sup>7</sup> But Satan’s power is limited,<sup>8</sup> and in God’s own time he will be chained and finally cast into the lake of fire.<sup>9</sup>

153 While Satan is active in this world, Christians through the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them are able to resist Satan’s temptations and have victory over him.<sup>10</sup>

- <sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:2  
<sup>2</sup>Revelation 12:7-9  
<sup>3</sup>Genesis 3:1-6; II Corinthians 11:3  
<sup>4</sup>Romans 5:12, 15-19  
<sup>5</sup>Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:18-22  
<sup>6</sup>Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-15  
<sup>7</sup>II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2  
<sup>8</sup>Job 1:12; 2:6; I Corinthians 10:13  
<sup>9</sup>Revelation 20:1-3, 10  
<sup>10</sup>I Corinthians 10:13; I Peter 5:8-11; I John 4:4
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## **160 HUMANITY**

- 161 The Creation: We believe that by a definite act God created man and woman in His own image, holy and capable of knowing and obeying God's will, in order to glorify God and enjoy His fellowship forever.<sup>1</sup>
- 162 The Fall: We believe that Adam and Eve fell from this original state by a voluntary act of disobedience,<sup>2</sup> thus suffering the immediate loss of a perfect relationship with God<sup>3</sup> and making self the center of their lives. By this act, they suffered spiritual death, and sin entered the world and death by sin, so that death passed upon all.<sup>4</sup>
- 163 We further believe that as a consequence of the Fall, all people are born with a nature which is thoroughly sinful<sup>5</sup> and not subject to the law of God, so that only through the operation of the grace of God can they repent and call upon Him. However, by God's grace infants are not under condemnation but are heirs of salvation.<sup>6</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup>Genesis 1:26-27, 31; 2:7; James 3:9b  
<sup>2</sup>Genesis 3:6-24  
<sup>3</sup>Genesis 2:17  
<sup>4</sup>Ezekiel 18:19-20; Romans 5:12-14, 17-19; 6:23a;  
Psalm 51:5; 58:3  
<sup>5</sup>Isaiah 53:6  
<sup>6</sup>Matthew 18:3
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## **170 SALVATION**

- 171 We believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup> through the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit,<sup>2</sup> persons may be reconciled to God and recovered from their fallen state through justification,<sup>3</sup> regeneration,<sup>4</sup> sanctification,<sup>5</sup> and ultimately the resurrection of the body.<sup>6</sup>
- 172 Justification: In response to sinners' repentance, surrender of themselves, and sincere faith in the power and sufficiency of Jesus' atoning death and shed blood,<sup>7</sup> God pardons them from past sins and declares them righteous, not for anything they have done but because of the obedience and atoning death of Christ.<sup>8</sup>
- 173 Regeneration: In response to sinners' repentance, surrender of themselves, and sincere faith in the power and sufficiency of Jesus' atoning death and shed blood, God also by His gracious power makes them new creatures.<sup>9</sup> By the Holy Spirit they are born again into the family of God<sup>10</sup> to a new life of love to God and to people.<sup>11</sup> Their minds are enlightened to understand His truth,<sup>12</sup> and their wills are renewed to do His will,<sup>13</sup> as He begins to conform them to His image. The evidence of this regeneration of the believer is the fruit of the Spirit.<sup>14</sup>

- 174 Sanctification: We believe that children of God at the moment of their conversion do receive the Holy Spirit.<sup>15</sup> As they trust in Him and obey His will, they manifest more and more of the fruit of the Spirit, conform more and more to the likeness of God, and thus are being continuously sanctified.<sup>16</sup>
- 175 It is also the will of God that believers receive the fullness of the Spirit,<sup>17</sup> which He will graciously grant in response to their full consecration to His will and their faith in Christ's promises and in His atoning death.<sup>18</sup> Sanctification is thus a process in which the Holy Spirit continuously disciplines the believer into paths of holiness and an act in which He cleanses the heart from an imperfect relationship and state.<sup>19</sup>
- 176 We further believe that the fullness of the Holy Spirit does not make believers incapable of choosing to sin, nor even from completely falling away from God, yet it so cleanses and empowers them as to enable them to have victory over sin, to endeavor fully to love God and people, and to witness to the living Christ.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Galatians 1:3-5; Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>2</sup>John 3:5; Romans 5:5

<sup>3</sup>Romans 4:25; 5:1; Titus 3:7

<sup>4</sup>Colossians 3:9-11; Titus 3:5

<sup>5</sup>II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2

<sup>6</sup>I Corinthians 15:20-22 [see #191 and 192]

<sup>7</sup>Ephesians 1:7; I John 1:8-2:2

<sup>8</sup>Romans 3:23-26; II Corinthians 5:20-21

<sup>9</sup>II Corinthians 5:17

<sup>10</sup>Romans 8:14-16

<sup>11</sup>John 3:3; I John 4:7-21

<sup>12</sup>John 16:12-15; Romans 12:1-2

<sup>13</sup>I John 2:17

<sup>14</sup>Galatians 5:22-23

<sup>15</sup>John 3:5-8; Romans 8:14-17; I Corinthians 12:13

<sup>16</sup>Galatians 5:22-25

<sup>17</sup>Acts 2:38-39; Ephesians 3:14-19; 5:18;

I Thessalonians 5:23-24

<sup>18</sup>Romans 8:5; 12:1-2

<sup>19</sup>John 17:17; Romans 6:1-2, 22-23; Acts 15:8-9

<sup>20</sup>II Corinthians 7:1; II Peter 2:20-22; Acts 1:8

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## 180 THE CHURCH

- 181 We believe that the church is made up of all those from the apostles until now,<sup>1</sup> both the triumphant dead and the living,<sup>2</sup> who through response to God's gracious offer of salvation<sup>3</sup> by repentance of their sins<sup>4</sup> and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior<sup>5</sup> have been born again<sup>6</sup> as new creatures in Christ.<sup>7</sup> This church is spiritual in nature,<sup>8</sup> universal in scope,<sup>9</sup> holy in character,<sup>10</sup> and redemptive in its life and purpose.<sup>11</sup>
- 182 Its purposes are to make disciples of all nations by its witness to the grace and love of God<sup>12</sup> and to live as a loving fellowship who build up one another in the grace and knowledge of God.<sup>13</sup>
- 183 The church accomplishes these purposes by its existence as particular local congregations gathered out of the world<sup>14</sup> and as associations of congregations in larger organizations<sup>15</sup> under the leadership and service of those called and gifted to such service.<sup>16</sup> It worships in prayer,<sup>17</sup> thanksgiving,<sup>18</sup> and song;<sup>19</sup> diligently studies the Word of God;<sup>20</sup> witnesses to and proclaims the gospel of God's Son;<sup>21</sup> exercises the gifts of the Spirit;<sup>22</sup> administers discipline;<sup>23</sup> and performs works of blessing and service both physical and spiritual to its members and to all in need.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 16:18  
<sup>2</sup>I Thessalonians 4:14-17  
<sup>3</sup>Ephesians 2:8-9  
<sup>4</sup>II Chronicles 7:14; Mark 1:14-15; Acts 2:38  
<sup>5</sup>John 1:12; Romans 5:1  
<sup>6</sup>John 3:3  
<sup>7</sup>II Corinthians 5:17  
<sup>8</sup>John 4:23-24; I Peter 2:5  
<sup>9</sup>I Corinthians 12:12-27; Hebrews 12:22-24  
<sup>10</sup>Psalms 24:3-4; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-8  
<sup>11</sup>Luke 24:46-48  
<sup>12</sup>Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8  
<sup>13</sup>Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 4:11-16  
<sup>14</sup>I Corinthians 1:2; Acts 11:22; I Thessalonians 1:1  
<sup>15</sup>Romans 16:4, 16; I Corinthians 16:19; II Corinthians 8:1; Galatians 1:2, 22-23  
<sup>16</sup>Ephesians 4:11-13; Hebrews 13:17  
<sup>17</sup>Isaiah 56:7; Luke 19:45-46; I Thessalonians 5:17; James 5:13-16  
<sup>18</sup>Psalms 100:1-4; Philippians 4:6; I Thessalonians 5:18  
<sup>19</sup>Psalms 100:2; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16  
<sup>20</sup>Acts 17:10-11; Colossians 3:16; I Peter 2:2-3  
<sup>21</sup>Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8  
<sup>22</sup>I Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 4:11-13; II Timothy 1:6  
<sup>23</sup>Matthew 18:15-17; II Corinthians 2:5-8; Galatians 6:1  
<sup>24</sup>Matthew 25:34-40; John 13:12-17

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**190 LAST THINGS**

- 191 We believe that upon death the mortal body returns to the dust from which it came.<sup>1</sup> The spirits of the righteous will experience joy and life in the presence of God, but the unrighteous will be separated from His presence in the darkness and torment of their evil.<sup>2</sup>
- 192 We believe in the literal and personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth at a time not revealed.<sup>3</sup> At His return the righteous dead will be raised and the righteous living will be changed to their glorification in bodies like their Lord's glorious resurrected body – bodies which they possessed in earthly life but now with glorified, heavenly qualities. The unrighteous will also be resurrected for the final judgment.<sup>4</sup>
- 193 We believe that Christ will consummate His kingdom over all people and nations by His final triumph over Satan.<sup>5</sup>
- 194 We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will finally judge all persons of their belief in Him as demonstrated by commitment of their lives to the way of the cross; the lost to everlasting punishment and the redeemed to eternal blessing and life.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Genesis 3:19; Psalm 103:14-16; Ecclesiastes 12:6-7  
<sup>2</sup>Luke 16:19-31; 23:39-43  
<sup>3</sup>Matthew 24:42-44; John 14:3; I Thessalonians 4:15-18  
<sup>4</sup>Romans 6:5; Philippians 3:21; John 5:28-29; Revelation 21:1-8  
<sup>5</sup>I Corinthians 15:20-26; Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 20:10-15  
<sup>6</sup>Matthew 25:31-46; II Corinthians 5:10

## TESTIMONIES

Along with the statement of basic doctrines, The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region presents this statement of testimonies as to its understanding of daily Christian life, as taught in the Scriptures. They are arranged in six sections: Sacred Worship, Christian Living, The Christian Family, Christian Service, The Christian Relationship to Government and Society, and Certain Current Issues.

### **250 SACRED WORSHIP**

#### **251 Prayer and Praise**

252 No practice in Christian living is more often spoken of in the Scripture than prayer and praise both as duty and as privilege (Psalm 122:1; I Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:18-19; I Thessalonians 5:16-18). The Bible gives examples of and instruction in these practices. In the Old Testament, Daniel is an outstanding example in that, despite the king's decree to the contrary, he faithfully and openly prayed to God three times a day (Daniel 6:10b). The Psalms are filled with prayer and praise to God (Psalm 95:1-3). Reading them, the Christian learns of the rich rewards from such practices. Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our sure example in holy living, often gave Himself to prayer and praise (Mark 1:35; 6:46; 14:26; Luke 4:16; 5:16; 6:12). He also often instructed His disciples, and thus Christians of all generations, to pray faithfully and to expect God's answer (Matthew 7:7-8; John 16:23-24; James 5:16b).

253 A sense of need is a sufficient call to prayer (Psalm 4:1; 32:6-7; 54:1-4). Burdened sinners may come boldly to the throne of grace and find a welcoming Father from whom they can obtain forgiveness (Hebrews 4:16). Similarly burdened Christians can find in prayer the assurance of God's love and relief from their burdens as they cast all their cares on the Lord (I Peter 5:7).

254 Prayer is the life-breath of Christian living and gives the Christian unbroken access to the Heavenly Father (Hebrews 4:16). It is thus essential for the maintenance and development of the Christian life. We believe that families within our fellowship should set apart a time for collective prayer each day, Bible reading and praise (Deuteronomy 6:4-9); and that in our public services of worship, we should give importance to prayer and praise (I Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:19-20; Hebrews 13:15).

#### **255 Christian Worship**

256 Worship is a privilege of the Christian. It is a spiritual experience in which believers give themselves to communion and fellowship with the Heavenly Father, a time when they consciously feel and give adoration, love and gratitude to God. It is a time of reverent coming before the Almighty God as children of His by grace (John 4:21-24; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:1).

257 The first preparation for profitable worship is a humble spirit, which recognizes the grace of God in giving us this privilege. Equally important is a contrite spirit, which is submissive to His lordship, and superior will for our daily living. When these attitudes prevail, worship is full of meaning and reward (Psalm 51:17; James 4:10).

258 The service of worship will usually include times of prayer, praise, and preaching. During public worship services we should also allow frequent times for reflection, meditation, and decision (Psalm 22:22-23; 95:6; 100:2; I Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:19-21).

259 Inasmuch as public worship aids Christians to grow in grace, it is the focal point of the church's local ministry. Since it is a testimony to the surrounding community of the importance of worshipping God, members should attend the services of their congregation regularly and faithfully. They should impress upon their children the same religious practice, believing that thus they will aid in leading their children to salvation and to the worship of God (Proverbs 22:6; Hebrews 10:23-25).

260 From the beginning of His earthly life (Matthew 2:1-2) and throughout the ages of time (Revelation 4:10-11), the Lord Jesus Christ has been, is, and will be the object of worship (Revelation 5:9-13). We make Him the center of our worship and delight in collectively and personally giving Him praise and adoration as God. Without His presence, through the Holy Spirit, our worship would have neither meaning nor depth.

## **261 The Ordinances**

262 Evangelical Friends, concerned with the abuses which had grown up about the serving of communion and the use of water in Christian baptism, and which substituted the outward for the inner spiritual reality (an abuse which persists to this day Matthew 15:8-9) placed their emphasis upon the spiritual content and let the outward symbols fall into disuse. However, in 1886 Ohio Yearly Meeting (EFC-ER) felt constrained to grant liberty concerning the use or non-use of the outward elements of bread and wine in communion as well as of water in Christian baptism, cautioning against any failure to achieve real spiritual sharing in the death of Christ and in the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

263 When Jesus had His last supper with His disciples He made statements which have at times been interpreted (1) as calling for a perpetual New Testament observance or (2) as a new meaning for the Passover meal which they were partaking of together (Luke 22:19). The unleavened bread was to represent His body about to be broken for them and the wine, the blood that He was about to shed (John 6:53-63). The early church and most Christians to this day have taken the first interpretation. While many find that communion with cup and bread can be a very meaningful outward testimony of what God has done spiritually within, we do not believe that communion is necessary for salvation nor an absolute requirement for all Christians. It is, rather, a public witness to the saving power of Jesus and a public witness of one's faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord (Ephesians 2:8-10).

264 Jesus modeled participation in water baptism as a public identification with the prophetic ministry and message of His cousin, John the Baptizer (Matthew 3:1-17). Throughout the New Testament we see a common practice of new believers in Jesus Christ being water baptized as a testimony to their faith in Jesus as Savior. While we as Friends believe the water in Christian baptism can be a very meaningful outward testimony of what God has done spiritually within, we do not believe that water baptism is necessary for salvation nor an absolute requirement for all Christians. It is, rather, a public witness to the saving power of Jesus and a public witness of one's faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord (Ephesians 2:8-10).

265 Each of our congregations may arrange services, perhaps in special meetings rather than in the regular worship service, for baptism and communion upon the request of members, while treating tenderly the consciences of those who protest the use of outward symbols. If a pastor feels a conviction against administering the ordinances, the services of another pastor may be enlisted in the observance. In all such services it should be abundantly clear to the entire congregation that Friends have the right to abstain from as well as to participate in the observance. In these services it should also be clear that the observances are only symbols of an inward spiritual experience. Evangelical Friends caution against the too-frequent use of the symbols lest familiarity breed contempt and diminish their spiritual significance.

## **266 Harmony in the Church**

267 Harmony in the church family is essential to its good witness in the community and to its worship of and service to its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:6-26). Watchful care should therefore be taken to maintain that harmony (Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:2-3, 29-32; Colossians 3:12-17; Hebrews 12:14). The congregation, and especially the senior pastor and officers, should be concerned that nothing be permitted to bring disruption to the peace and unity of their fellowship. They should be quick to discern differences of opinion so as to prevent degeneration into serious conflicts among the members of the congregation. In the event that dissension or resentment does arise, the senior pastor and officers should admonish all parties of the serious threat involved in their attitudes and make every effort, especially following the pattern laid down by our Lord Himself in Matthew 18:15-20, to reach a speedy reconciliation (I Peter 1:22-23; Matthew 5:23-25) [see #523 & 1256].

**270 CHRISTIAN LIVING**

271 Early in their religious lives, Christians learn that it is necessary to make many decisions about their behavior. They discover some practices, which, though common to society about them, will seriously hinder their Christian growth and witness. Hence making right decisions about such matters will determine their growth in life and witness. Knowing that it is growing Christians who have the greater effectiveness in witness and service, and greater delight in their own lives, Evangelical Friends hold the following testimonies as guidelines towards Christian growth which we understand to be taught in the Bible (I Thessalonians 5:22). It is our desire that Christians within our fellowship experience speedy and rich progress toward the attainment of fullness in Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13; I Peter 2:2-3; II Peter 3:18).

**272 Moderation and Modesty**

273 Because the pressures to follow a style of life like that of the non-Christian society are so great upon Christians, Evangelical Friends insist that our citizenship is not of this world (Philippians 3:20-21). The New Testament command, “Be not conformed to this world,” (Romans 12:2) reminds us that in our living we must take care that our dress be modest and decent in every way (I Timothy 2:9a). We must also take care that we not be seduced by the attractions and abundance of earthly goods and thus fall into covetousness. In the furnishing of our homes, in the providing for our tables, in the accumulation of material things – in every way we should show our conviction that the fashion of life of this world is not that of the Christian (Philippians 3:17-19; Colossians 3:1-4; I John 2:15-16).

**274 Weddings, Funerals, Memorials**

275 Weddings: Since the wedding ceremony is solemn and holy, Evangelical Friends feel that it should be simple and reverent. While wishing it to be an occasion to be remembered for its beauty, we should nevertheless avoid ostentation and extravagance. We should take care to make the entire ceremony one of Christian celebration, watching in the choice of music and all other parts of the service that it be an occasion of seeking God’s blessing on the union and His guidance in the establishment of the home.

276 Funerals: Knowing that our bodies have been made of dust (Genesis 3:19) and shall return to dust, Friends ought to avoid extravagant and expensive funerals and memorial stones.

277 Memorials: When a congregation feels that it would be a fitting tribute and possible testimony to others, Friends may prepare a memorial statement of the exemplary life of the deceased member. The statement should be forwarded to the EFC-ER Office for possible presentation at the next Yearly Meeting. These memorials shall be for pastors (spouses), missionaries, Yearly Meeting clerks/board/committee chairpersons, or any individual who has made a significant contribution to the Yearly Meeting as a whole. An ongoing publication of all the memorials is kept for historical purposes in the Malone College Archives. It is the practice, however, to print in the Minutes only memorials of recorded ministers, missionaries, and recognized Friends in EFC-ER leadership positions.

**278 Unwholesome Habits**

279 Evangelical Friends should be especially watchful against being involved in the unwholesome habits characteristic of this evil world (Galatians 5:16-21; Colossians 3:5-10). Both I Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20 and II Corinthians 7:1 serve as a basis for our testimony against such habits.

280 Unwholesome habits include the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs. Abundant suffering has resulted for those who have been ensnared by these practices, not to mention the tragic effect on health, mind, money, and relationships. In indulging in such habits, one’s example as a Christian is also damaged. Friends are warned also to avoid gluttony in any form or practice, considering the harm done to one’s self and to one’s influence on others (Proverbs 23:20-21).

281 Because of these grave considerations Evangelical Friends should avoid such habits and refrain from assisting in the manufacture or promotion of the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs. If new Christians find it difficult to break these habits [see #283], loving care should be extended to them so that they may come to freedom from them (Ephesians 5:18).

## **282 Amusements and Recreation**

283 With the increase of leisure and the wide availability of entertainment of every kind, Evangelical Friends should consider most carefully the recreation and amusements to which we give ourselves, our interest, our time, and our money. Amusements can and do have a large influence upon character and life (I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; James 1:21-22).

284 Our members should avoid attending or being involved in movies, dances, and theatrical performances of a demoralizing nature, as well as in other activities that may be injurious to Christian growth. Members are not to be involved in lotteries, wagering, or any other kind of gambling. Evangelical Friends should take care to avoid publications tending to undermine their faith in the authority of the Scriptures and to hinder their Christian growth (Ephesians 5:8, 15-16).

285 Though acknowledging certain benefits and the potential for Christian ministry in radio and television, Evangelical Friends must also recognize and avoid programs that are unwholesome or demoralizing in music, language, or action portrayed (Philippians 4:8).

286 Evangelical Friends participating in summer and weekend camping and recreation which take them away from their congregation should remember their own spiritual needs, the concerns of the church, and their responsibilities to the church as they plan such activities.

## **287 Secret Societies**

288 Many organizations make attractive appeals for membership and involvement. Evangelical Friends must study carefully such organizations – the time, commitment, money required, as well as the likely influence of the organization upon them. We will especially avoid affiliation with secret societies which base their rituals on a distorted understanding of the Bible and directly or indirectly give Jesus Christ less than divine nature, even though they may appear to have spiritual value. The oath-bound character of such societies seems not only unnecessary, but also likely to prove harmful to honesty (John 3:16-21; Romans 14:10b-12; II John 9).

## **300 THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY**

### **301 The Family**

302 The family is the basic unit of human relationship, and as such is also the foundational unit of society and of the church. The many Biblical references to the family assure us of its divine origin and of God's concern for the family and the home (Genesis 1:27-31; Psalm 68:6a; 127:3-5; II Timothy 1:5).

### **303 Marriage and Sexual Relations**

304 A union so solemn as marriage is to be entered into only after much forethought, planning and prayer, and "in the fear of the Lord." Evangelical Friends should seek earnestly the will of our Lord concerning their choice of a mate, remembering the apostolic injunction, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Corinthians 6:14a). Parents should use watchful care to help their children find mates of Christian character and commitment (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, 10-15).

305 Marriage is the union of one man and one woman into a oneness that no other human relationship can provide. Evangelical Friends affirm that the Scriptures make abundantly clear that God's intention is for sexual relations to occur exclusively within the marriage covenant between one man (husband) and one woman (wife), and that homosexual marriages and/or unions are contrary to Scripture (Genesis

2:18-24; Leviticus 18; Romans 1:26-27; I Corinthians 6:9-20). Made before divine and human witnesses, the marriage vow unites a couple so fully that they “become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31). Marriage also, even more importantly, involves mental, emotional, and spiritual union. Evangelical Friends should therefore enter into marriage under the full persuasion that it is a life-long commitment and union.

306 Evangelical Friends believe that sex is a beautiful gift of God when it joins a man and a woman together in self-giving love (Hebrews 13:4). We hold that this depth of relationship is appropriate only in marriage and that sexual relations should be abstained from outside the marriage bond. Evangelical Friends believe that same sex marriages violate God’s Word. Temptation to sexual relations outside the marriage covenant of man and woman – husband and wife – may be overcome by the grace of God. Evangelical Friends cooperate with ministries and recommend resources – Biblically-based books, clinics and counselors – which offer counseling for sexual addictions and moral failures of any kind. Those who minister to individuals in the areas of heterosexual and homosexual sin [see #368-369] are strongly encouraged by Evangelical Friends to respond to them with clarity and compassion. The basis for a good marriage is not sexual alone, but true love that is developed through communication, mutual respect, deep friendship and a lifetime of self-giving, as the Apostle Paul admonished (Ephesians 5:21-33). Evangelical Friends who find severe difficulty in their marriage relationship are urged to prayerfully seek counsel from a pastor or a Christian counselor who can mediate those problems in order that the marriage be restored to the state God desires.

### **307 Divorce**

308 Since the only explicit Biblical allowances for divorce are adultery (Matthew 5:32) and abandonment (I Corinthians 7:1-16), Evangelical Friends discourage seeking a divorce on any other grounds (Mark 10:2-9). The sanctity of the marriage vows requires Friends to seek earnestly to prevent serious marital discord, perhaps through counseling, and to make every effort toward a happy, harmonious, and holy marriage.

309 The break-up of many marriages in our day lays great responsibility upon the congregation to be sensitive to the needs of those becoming involved in such crises and to be quick in showing loving concern for them (Galatians 6:1-2).

310 Evangelical Friends ought not to marry divorced persons, except where divorce was granted on grounds of adultery and abandonment. We ask our ministers to consider the circumstances carefully, perhaps in consultation with the leaders of their congregations, before deciding whether to perform the ceremony (I Corinthians 7:10-11).

### **311 Parents and Children**

312 The responsibility of parenthood is given by God (Psalm 127:3). The Scriptures often speak of this responsibility and give guidance for bearing it. Parents should early and continually turn to God for wisdom and guidance in the rearing of their children (Genesis 18:18-19; I Timothy 5:8).

313 The Bible commands: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord” (Ephesians 6:1), and throughout its pages, examples clearly support its teaching that obedience is the right attitude of children to parents. Obedience goes hand in hand with respect, honor, and love for parents. On their part, parents should be sensitive to the concerns and needs of their children so that they can freely speak their hearts to each other (Ephesians 6:1-4).

314 Parents have great spiritual, as well as physical, material, and educational responsibility for their children. Knowing that their children face the pressures of temptation from all sides, particularly in their schools, Christian parents have a great responsibility to guide them into a real understanding of what they believe and what they should do in the face of such temptation. Parents should from the beginning have a concern that their children come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. This concern will move them to pray faithfully with and for their children, to try to build a home

atmosphere that will draw them to God, to encourage them in regular attendance of services of worship and in Christian service, and to provide them with Christian instruction in the home (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 22:6).

### **320 CHRISTIAN SERVICE**

#### **321 The Public Ministry**

322 Evangelical Friends believe that God provides for the Church by calling men and women to be ministers of the Gospel. For the edifying and equipping of the Church, the Holy Spirit confers on them the gifts of pastoring and evangelizing (Ephesians 4:11-16). This calling to the ministry will be evidenced in the life and work of the public minister. While there will be those who also have administrative ability or unusual insight into the Scriptures, it is this distinctive call of God which sets apart a person to serve in the Gospel ministry. Freely received, this call and gift should be freely and devotedly given in service to God and the Church.

#### **323 Stewardship**

324 Evangelical Friends believe that they are required to be conscientious and wise stewards of every part of life (I Corinthians 4:1-2; I Peter 4:10). At least four areas of life deserve special consideration.

325 **The Lord's Day:** In celebration of our Lord's rising on the first day of the week (Matthew 28:1-7; Mark 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-6a; John 20:1), Sunday, the early church established it as the day for Christian worship and rest from secular activities. Evangelical Friends honor this day in accordance with the commandment: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). Evangelical Friends should consider carefully how to make the most of the day for the Lord's service and worship and for rest of body and mind from the week's labors. On this day, Evangelical Friends should refrain from involvement in any business, in shopping, or in unnecessary supplying of temporal, secular needs (Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Isaiah 58:13-14).

326 **Tithing:** The practice of tithing our income to the Lord began in the Old Testament (Genesis 14:17-20; 28:20-22; Leviticus 6:20; 27:30; Deuteronomy 16:17; Malachi 3:6-12). Later our Lord Jesus Christ approved this practice, and Evangelical Friends believe it is still the minimum to be given and the best means of providing for the financial needs of the church (Matthew 23:23). But Christians do well to let generosity beyond the tithe characterize all their giving to God. As this method of giving is followed, there will be no need to resort to other methods of fund-raising.

327 Since the Bible in both precept (Malachi 3:10) and practice (I Corinthians 16:2) identifies the place for the giving of tithes and offerings as the church, Evangelical Friends believe that the church is the place for one's giving and the church then must earnestly seek divine wisdom in its use of the gifts for the Lord's work (I Corinthians 16:1-4; II Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:7).

328 **Wills:** Evangelical Friends should prepare legal wills and testaments while in health and judgment and thus express their wishes regarding their possessions and families. In the distribution of their estates, Evangelical Friends should consider contributions to the work of God in the local congregation and in the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region.

329 **Talents:** Evangelical Friends believe that all persons have natural abilities and spiritual gifts from God with which they are to make contributions to the work of God (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:42-48; Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-13). It is therefore our duty to use our particular gifts liberally in the ministry of the church.

#### **330 Use of Church Buildings and Facilities**

331 Because church buildings and facilities have been dedicated to the service of God, and especially as places for His worship, Evangelical Friends believe that they should be treated with care and respect.

At times parts of these buildings and facilities may be used as meeting places for fellowship, but even at these times the buildings and facilities should be remembered as dedicated to the service of God. The primary purpose of the buildings and facilities should always be the worship of God, instruction in the Christian faith, development of Christian fellowship, and Christian service to the community. We encourage Evangelical Friends to construct and maintain their worship buildings and facilities with prayerful consideration of their function, remembering the moderation and simplicity which is becoming to the testimony of Evangelical Friends and to the Church of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 56:1-8; Mark 11:17a; I Corinthians 3:10-11).

**332 Business Practices**

333 Evangelical Friends should seek divine direction in all their business affairs. They should undertake endeavors only after prayer and seeking God's guidance. While it is to be hoped that we will have adequate income, we must nevertheless remember that the search for riches is a threat to the Christian life. Careful attention should be given to all our dealings in order not to bring dishonor to our testimony or to the church. Evangelical Friends should be especially careful to pay debts and to fulfill all commitments. If business failures occur, we must do everything possible to fulfill all obligations (Proverbs 10:4; 13:4; Matthew 6:19-24, 33-34; Luke 20:21-25; Romans 13:7; I Corinthians 10:31).

**340 THE CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY**

**341 The Poor**

342 The Christian virtue of love should characterize Evangelical Friends in caring for the material needs of the poor, underprivileged, neglected, or victimized within our membership. Also, as means are available, such care should be extended to others' needs, remembering that we are admonished to do good to all, especially those of the household of faith (Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Proverbs 14:31; Galatians 6:10; I John 3:16-18).

**343 Schools**

344 Evangelical Friends should take real interest in the educational programs affecting their children and all children of our communities. We should work for the election of suitable members of the boards of education, the employment of teachers of Christian character and example, and the development of educational programs while considering the influence of their contents and activities on the children involved (Proverbs 16:20; Luke 6:40).

**345 Civil Government**

346 Evangelical Friends are convinced that the New Testament requires the Christian to hold the government and its leaders in respect, and that the basic principles of government can be directly traced to the Scriptures. Therefore, it is necessary that we obey the laws of the nation insofar as they are not in conflict with our obedience to God. When it becomes necessary for Evangelical Friends to disagree with the practices and requirements of government, we should do so out of concern for the promotion of righteousness and not out of delight in controversy or strife (Matthew 22:21b; Romans 13:1-7; I Timothy 2:1-2).

347 Evangelical Friends should use the ballot, with prayer for guidance (I Thessalonians 5:17; James 1:5), to vote for candidates and measures which will promote righteousness, giving much consideration to the personal and spiritual qualifications of candidates regardless of political affiliation.

**348 War and Peace**

349 During the first 300 years of the Christian church its members abstained from military service as being a violation of the teachings of Christ. This attitude changed only when Constantine made Christianity the state religion and introduced the notion that it was right to fight in support of an officially-Christian

government. Since that time there has been division in the practice of Christians as to the support of war.

350 Evangelical Friends renewed the testimony of the primitive church against war. George Fox said that he “lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars” and with eleven other Friends in 1660 declared publicly to King Charles II that “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever; and this is our testimony to the whole world – that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war, neither for the Kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world – therefore, we cannot learn war anymore.” Standing upon this conviction, many Friends suffered imprisonment, cruelty, and death rather than violate their conscience.

351 In the matter of war, as in many other areas, the Christian is caught in a tension between the Scriptural command to “be subject to the governing authorities” (Romans 13:1) on the one hand and the conviction on the other hand that “we must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Even among Friends this has led to differing convictions as to how these commands shall be applied in specific situations. We respect individual conscience and surround our members with loving care whether they for Christ’s sake refuse military service or feel obligated to serve in some capacity in the armed forces.

352 This liberty is not to be interpreted as any softening of our firm conviction that war is wrong as a method of settling disputes, being unchristian, destructive of our highest values, and productive of the seeds of future wars. We therefore, as a church, unequivocally support young Evangelical Friends who choose conscientious objection to war rather than active military service. We are concerned to find alternative solutions based upon justice and righteousness for all peoples and are deeply moved to participate in the new calls to peacemaking which are being sounded in our day (Psalm 34:14; Proverbs 12:20; Ecclesiastes 3:8).

### **353 Oaths**

354 The New Testament (Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12) teaches that for Christians, there is no need to swear to tell the truth but rather that speaking the truth should be their normal, continuing practice. For this reason Evangelical Friends have rejected the often-required swearing to tell the truth and have insisted that merely affirming the intention to tell the truth is sufficient to verify what we are about to state. We are grateful that the civil authorities have long granted us, and all others of like mind, the right to this practice.

### **355 Equality of Persons**

356 Evangelical Friends believe that all people are equal in the sight of God and all are loved by God. All believers, regardless of their race, nationality, sex, social status, or affluence, are encouraged to worship and participate in the life of Evangelical Friends Churches (Genesis 1:27; I Corinthians 12:21-26; Galatians 3:26-29).

### **360 CERTAIN CURRENT ISSUES**

361 Evangelical Friends desire to state their beliefs with regard to certain issues, beliefs, and practices that are currently of concern to the church.

### **362 Stewardship of the Earth and its Resources**

363 Evangelical Friends believe that God in the beginning gave people dominion over the earth and expected them to be wise stewards. Wasteful and destructive use of the earth’s resources is contrary to God’s purposes (Genesis 1:28-30).

**364 Abortion**

365 Evangelical Friends believe that all life is a gift of God (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:13-16); therefore when the matter of an abortion is being considered, neither the life of the mother nor of the unborn child is to be treated lightly. We hold that abortion on demand or for reasons of personal convenience, social adjustment, or economic advantage is morally wrong (Exodus 20:13).

**366 Euthanasia**

367 We also believe that Scripture maintains that we are created in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27); therefore, we do not belong to ourselves but to God. God is the giver and sustainer of life (Job 14:5; Ecclesiastes 3:2; James 4:13-15). Evangelical Friends believe euthanasia to be in direct violation of Exodus 20:13 and therefore reject it as a means of relieving suffering. We encourage any person contemplating euthanasia to seek divine guidance (Proverbs 3:5-6) and to consult any pro-life medical professional and/or pastor for further counsel.

**368 Homosexuality**

369 Evangelical Friends are firm in the conviction that the Scriptures make abundantly clear the sinfulness of all homosexual and deviant sexual acts (Leviticus 18; Romans 1:18-32; I Corinthians 6:9-20). We believe that homosexual tendencies may be overcome by the grace of God. We also believe that forgiveness for deviant acts may be obtained by sincere repentance and faith in Christ (Romans 3:22-24; Titus 3:4-7; I John 1:9).

**370 Pornography**

371 Since pornographic materials promote and propagate a lifestyle that includes activities which are condemned by God's Word and tempt viewers to commit the sin of lust (Matthew 5:27-28; Romans 13:12-14; II Peter 2:14, 18-19), Evangelical Friends therefore are urged to carefully avoid exposure to such materials (Philippians 4:8).

372 Because of our responsibility as Christian citizens (Matthew 5:13-16; Proverbs 14:34) and in view of the evil, exploitative, and destructive effects of pornography on individuals, families, and our society, Evangelical Friends are encouraged to prayerfully and boldly oppose the production and distribution of pornographic materials in their local communities, as well as at the state and national levels (Ephesians 5:11) [see #6002].

**373 Cults and Related Practices**

374 Evangelical Friends believe that the numerous cults, such as Transcendental Meditation, the Hare Krishna movement, and the Unification Church led by Sun Myung Moon, preach other gospels than that of Jesus Christ and offer other "saviors" than He. Some are based more or less openly on non-Christian religions such as Hinduism. We also repudiate the false interpretation of Scriptures put forth by such groups as Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints), Unity, and Christian Science. We, therefore, upon authority of Scripture (Matthew 24:4-5; Galatians 1:8-9; II Peter 2:1-2) take our stand against all such false teachings (II John 9-11).

375 Evangelical Friends believe that all access to God is through Jesus Christ (Romans 8:34; I Timothy 2:5) and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26-27), and that therefore the use of mediums, clairvoyants, fortune tellers, astrologers, and any other alleged means of extraordinary knowledge or help is contrary to the will of God (Acts 4:12).

376 We oppose all dabbling in spiritism, spirit possession and worship, and Satanism, as well as the denial of the reality of Satan. Rather, we believe in the existence of the Evil One, "that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan," (Revelation 20:2) [see #150-153] who tempted our first parents to sin, and through their disobedience brought about the fall of our race, with all its attendant degeneracy,

unhappiness, and misery (Genesis 3). We believe that Satan has revealed his evil character and purpose in his mighty opposition to Christ in the temptations in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1) and to His reign in all ages. But we also believe that Satan's power is limited, and that in God's own time he will be chained and finally cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

**377 Doctrinal Differences with Other Christians**

378 Evangelical Friends have warm fellowship with groups of Christians with whom we must nevertheless differ in the following matters:

379 Security of the Believer: Evangelical Friends believe that the security of the believer, even for eternity, is indicated in God's Word and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit to the individual, but we do not hold this security to be unconditional. As repentance and faith are the human conditions of acceptance of God's free offer of salvation, so faith manifested by obedience is necessary to continuance in that salvation (Hebrews 5:9; I John 2:4).

380 Healing: Evangelical Friends believe that healing is the gracious work of God given in Christ Jesus. We also believe that, as in the past, He still hears and answers prayers of faith for healing in several ways such as: (a) He may intervene miraculously, over and beyond medical achievement; (b) He may heal through skills given to medical practitioners, who do well to recognize that our Creator God alone is the ultimate healer; or (c) He will heal eternally those who suffered in this life while still trusting in prayer and resting in the merits of Christ, assured by the same words Paul received, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:8). God's substitutionary atonement in His Son assures us of immediate forgiveness of sins (I John 1:9); it does not necessarily promise us immediate or miraculous physical healing. Healing viewed this way, spares us from an extreme which demands that God must heal everyone for whom we pray, just as it keeps us from heaping unnecessary guilt upon those who are not healed. Still, we may continue with confident faith, praying over the sick according to the guidance given in James 5:14-16, believing our Lord remains as able as when He walked on earth to heal spiritually, morally, and mentally, as well as physically (Psalm 103:1-6; Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16-17; 14:13-14, 32-36; Mark 1:14-15, 32-33; Luke 5:17-26; 9:1-6; 10:1-20; Acts 4:29-31).

381 Glossalalia (Speaking in tongues): While there are differences of interpretation among our members of the Scriptures which speak of glossalalia, as there are among other Christians, both as to whether the term refers to actual languages or to ecstatic utterances, and as to whether this is a valid gift for our time, we are nevertheless agreed as to the following points:

- a. The will of God as revealed in the Scriptures is our conformity to His holy character as manifested in a holy life. All spiritual experiences, gifts and fruit of the Spirit are means to that end (Galatians 5:22-23).
- b. "Speaking in tongues" should not be regarded as a necessary sign of the fullness or baptism with the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:7-11).
- c. "Speaking in tongues" should not be made an occasion of division or strife among us (I Corinthians 13; 14:6-9; Hebrews 12:14).
- d. In order to maintain unity in spite of our differences, we must practice mutual submission. We must be willing to voluntarily give up certain freedoms in order to avoid becoming a stumbling block to those for whom Christ died, as the Apostle Paul demonstrated in I Corinthians 8. We therefore agree for the present for all our churches that on the one hand we should not forbid the use of tongues in private devotion, but that on the other hand we should voluntarily forego the use of tongues in our public services.

We are waiting in submission to the leading of the Spirit Himself and in love toward one another for that time when under His leading we can speak unitedly on this matter.

## **SECTION TWO**

### **PRACTICE**

The Practice of The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region as to its organization and operation is found in this section of the Faith and Practice. It includes procedures on Membership [see #500-523], The Local Church [see #600-884], The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region [see #1000-1295], The District [see #1500-1515], and Associated Organizations [see #1750-1756].

## MEMBERSHIP

### 500 ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

#### 501 Test for Membership

502 The basic test for membership is conversion. Nothing can constitute one a member of Christ's Church but the power of the Holy Spirit, working "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). Therefore, let the words of our Divine Master have their due place with us all, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). May all our members be such on the ground of true conversion and be prepared to bring forth fruit unto holiness (John 15:4-5, 8; Hebrews 12:14b).

503 The Overseers and Spiritual Life Commission (or Administrative Council in smaller churches) must exercise spiritual discernment as to when a candidate is ready for acceptance into membership [see #271].

504 Membership in EFC-ER is held in the local church. [see #518b regarding dual membership.]

#### 505 Membership Covenant

506 To become a member of a church in The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region involves a covenant relationship. In signing the application form, one covenants with the church in the following ways:

- a. To bear testimony to a real conversion experience, based on the Word of God and assurance from the Holy Spirit of sins forgiven and commitment to Christian discipleship (Psalm 51:13; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:11-12);
- b. To continuously seek spiritual growth, according to the Scriptures (Ephesians 4:15-16; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18);
- c. To attend faithfully the services of the Church and accept responsibilities in its work (Acts 2:42-47; I Corinthians 12; I Timothy 4:14-15; Hebrews 10:25);
- d. To give cheerfully for the financial support of the Church and its approved ministries (Deuteronomy 16:17; Malachi 3:10; Acts 11:29; II Corinthians 9:7);
- e. To listen to and respect the counsel of the duly affirmed leaders of the Church (Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 13:17);
- f. To acquaint oneself with the Faith and Practice of the Church and to support its doctrinal positions as well as seek personal conformity to its testimonies [see pages 7-22].

#### 507 Church Covenant

508 With its members, the Church makes a covenant in the following ways:

- a. To provide opportunity for and assistance in worship and in spiritual growth (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:15-16; I Timothy 4:11, 13; Hebrews 10:25);
- b. To provide help in discovering the member's talents and gifts, and opportunities to express these gifts in service (I Corinthians 12; I Timothy 4:14-15);
- c. To seek to fulfill the discipleship of its members (Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 2:6-7);

- d. To provide counsel and accountability when members are neglecting faithful fulfillment of their covenant (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2, 10) [see #523];
- e. To receive and respect the input of its members (Ephesians 5:21);
- f. To provide the availability of a current edition of the Faith and Practice to every household in which there is a member.

**509 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OVERSEERS**

510 It is the obligation of the Overseers to give attention constantly to the spiritual care of its members and to take the initiative in seeing that the Church as well as individual members fulfill their mutual covenants (Galatians 6:1; James 1:27) [see #523b-c & 652].

**511 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**512 Processing Applications for New Members**

513 Adult Membership

514 It is the special responsibility of the Overseers and the Commission on Spiritual Life (or Elder of Spiritual Life) in cooperation with the senior pastor:

- a. To approach (visit) prospective members;
- b. To discuss the responsibilities of church membership;
- c. To assure themselves of the true conversion of the prospect (Romans 10:9-10; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:11-12);
- d. To provide a membership class led by the Senior Pastor or a person of the Senior Pastor's choosing [see #754c1 & #760b];
- e. To provide a copy of Faith and Practice and an application form approved by the Yearly Meeting [see #8000] for all prospective members, including transfers from churches other than those of EFC-ER. When submitting the application, the applicant should fully understand the covenant being made [see #505-506];
- f. To report their findings to the Administrative Council, who, after due consideration, may recommend to the Congregational Meeting the acceptance of the applicant. The action taken should be recorded in the minutes of the Congregational Meeting.

As soon after acceptance by the Congregational Meeting as feasible, the senior pastor should arrange a public welcome service.

515 Youth Membership

516 Youth may, when giving evidence of conversion (II Corinthians 5:17, I John 5:11-12), be accepted into membership without the right to vote until age 18, using the same application form and process as for adult membership.

517 Membership by Parental Request

a. Birthright Membership

Children born of parents who are both members of a local church may be received as birthright members without the right of voting provided the parents sign a request which also embodies a parental pledge for the child's spiritual nurture (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4b); otherwise their names shall not be entered as members.

b. Childhood Membership

Young children may also be received into membership without right of voting, upon application of their parents, one or both of whom are members, on the same terms as for birthright membership [see #517a]. A recommendation for childhood membership may be presented to the Congregational Meeting for action. The action taken should be recorded in the minutes of the Congregational Meeting.

c. Different than Associate Membership

Children who acquire membership by parental request shall be considered members without the right to vote. Apportionment is paid on all who receive membership by parental request.

d. Transition From Membership by Parental Request to Adult Membership

The parents, supported by prayer, words of encouragement, ministries, and the Church as a whole, share in the responsibility to lead these children as early as possible into a saving relationship with Christ (Proverbs 22:6; Matthew 19:13-15, Ephesians 6:4b). At the age of 18, all persons holding membership by parental request should be considered for full membership by the Church. At least six (6) months prior to the member's eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) birthday, the Overseers shall contact the member regarding his/her membership status. It is necessary for young persons to make application for regular adult membership by meeting the tests required for all other admissions to membership [see #513-514]. The fact regarding their membership status should, as soon as known, be reported to the next Congregational Meeting to be made a matter of record.

518 Associate Membership

a. Applicants may be received into Associate Membership by recommendation of the Administrative Council to the Congregational Meeting. The action taken should be recorded in the minutes of the Congregational Meeting. This may cover two types of cases.

b. One is the case of temporary residents, such as students and retirees. These Evangelical Friends may affiliate as associate members at their temporary church without disturbing their permanent membership at their home church. By presenting a letter confirming their good standing, they may have the privilege of holding office and voting.

c. The other case is that of persons to whom the giving of more training (II Corinthians 13:5) is desirable in preparation for full membership. In this case, Associate Membership does not carry the prerogative of voting or holding office.

d. In both cases, Associate Membership admits one to the fellowship of the church.

e. This membership is not to be reported on the statistical forms, and no apportionment is to be paid on associate members.

**519 Membership: Transfer, Maintenance, and Conciliation**

520 Providing Certificates of Transfer

- a. When a request for providing a transfer of membership is received, the Presiding Clerk may immediately issue a letter of transfer, provided the Senior Pastor and Elder of Spiritual Life fully concur.
- b. In the event that there is not unanimity of opinion among the three officers named, the transfer shall not be given until the Administrative Council can act on the matter. If, in the opinion of the church leadership, the request is to avoid conciliation/church accountability, the transfer should not be granted until the conciliation process is concluded (Matthew 18:15-17) [see #523c-d].
- c. To issue a certificate of membership in good standing implies that the Church endorses the Christian experience (I John 5:11-12) [see #506a] of the member for whom the certificate is issued. Such action should be reported to and recorded in the Minutes of the next Congregational Meeting.

521 Receipt of Certificate of Transfer From EFC-ER Churches

- a. Churches of the EFC-ER are to receive such certificates from other churches of EFC-ER at face value and accept such persons into membership. It is highly recommended that individuals who transfer from other churches of EFC-ER take the membership class prior to acceptance of transfer for several reasons such as the understanding of the local church's organizational structure and policies [see #514d, #754c1, & 760b]. Such action of acceptance for transfer of membership should be reported to and recorded in the Minutes of the next Congregational Meeting.

522 Membership Maintenance

- a. Congregational Meetings may also, upon recommendation of the Spiritual Life Commission, through the Administrative Council, maintain a list of current church members. The Spiritual Life Commission, through the Administrative Council, may recommend removal of names of members who are unfaithful to the Church or indifferent to the covenant [see #505-506] made when they applied for membership. Any action taken should be recorded in the minutes of the Congregational Meeting.
- b. When a member dies, this person's passing should be made a matter of record at the next Congregational Meeting.
- c. If one of our members should become a full member of another church or accept ordination as a minister of another church, the membership with us automatically ceases as of that date. The fact should, as soon as known, be reported to the next Congregational Meeting to be made a matter of record.
- d. If a member requests in writing to be released from membership with us, that request should be granted based upon as much mutual blessing as possible (Matthew 18:15-17) [see #523c-d]. The fact should, as soon as known, be reported to the next Congregational Meeting to be made a matter of record.

523 Principles of Christian Conciliation: The relationship between the Church and its members shall be guided by the principles consistent with Matthew 18:15-17 and I Corinthians 6:1-8 with the Biblical purpose of experiencing the redemptive heart of reconciliation [see #1256].

- a. Members will make every effort to keep clear relationships between themselves and other members of the Church (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15; Hebrews 12:14).

- b. When any member is guilty of conduct inconsistent with our Christian profession, has a broken relationship with another church member, or transgresses the rules of the Faith and Practice, that member should be admonished in the spirit of restoring love. The Overseers (Elder of Spiritual Life) have a special responsibility in this area to try to deal with the situation within the church family (Galatians 6:1-2).
- c. Should the efforts by the Overseers (Elder of Spiritual Life) to bring reconciliation and restore love in the church family be resisted, they shall present the matter before the Spiritual Life Commission (Elder Body) who may recommend that the member(s) agree to Biblically based coaching/mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with Biblical principles offered by a Christian Conciliation ministry (Matthew 18:16). The EFC-ER Office will keep a list of several available ministries and attorneys.
- d. Should the efforts at reconciliation and restoration of members still be resisted, and should the violations be of such character as to bring reproach or scandal to the name of Christ and of the Church, the Spiritual Life Commission (Elder Body) may report the matter to the Administrative Council. If the member(s) so desires, a full hearing of the case may be held (Matthew 18:17).
- e. The Administrative Council, upon due consideration of the matter, may recommend to the next Congregational Meeting, that such a member(s) be removed from membership (Matthew 18:17). The action taken should be recorded in the minutes of the Congregational Meeting.

## THE LOCAL CHURCH

### 600 PURPOSE AND MINISTRIES

601 The purpose of a local church is to fulfill The Great Commission given by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20 RSV)

602 The basic ministries of the local church grow out of this Commission and may be summarized under four headings, referring to the underlined words above:

603 Christ’s authority requires worship. When Jesus says He will be with us always, He shows His constancy, reminding us of our frequent inconstancy which requires much renewal. Spiritual worship and renewal call for a program of Spiritual Life.

604 Christ’s challenge to make disciples calls for a program of Outreach.

605 Christ’s emphasis upon teaching His commandments calls for a program of nurture, Education, and training.

606 Christ’s order to observe all that He commanded calls for a program of Stewardship among His disciples.

607 Thus every church, regardless of size, is required to have programs concerned with Spiritual Life, Outreach, Education, and Stewardship, although the extent of the organizational structure required to carry this out will vary with the size of the church.

### 610 STAGES IN CHURCH GROWTH

#### 611 Beginning

612 Churches commence in many ways. The initiative may come from an individual, a small group, or an established church that wishes to mother a daughter church. To be affiliated with the EFC-ER, such work must be under the supervision of the General Superintendent and those to whom the responsibility is delegated. As such, it is called an Extension Church.

#### 613 Intermediate

614 As soon as practical, the work is taken under the care of the Evangelistic, Pastoral and Extension Board, (EP&E) and at an appropriate time a congregational organization is effected. The care of the EP&E Board is extended through the General Superintendent and/or one of the Area Superintendents who will appoint an officer (frequently the District Superintendent) to meet with the Administrative Council and the Congregational Meeting as an advisor. As such, it is called an Extension Church. It is advised in all cases, and required where the EFC-ER has invested gift or loan funds, that property deeds be vested in the Property Trustees of EFC-ER.

#### 615 Full Local Friends Church

616 When in the judgment of the General Superintendent and the EP&E Board that an Extension Church has sufficiently matured, showing spiritual, fiscal, and administrative stability, the EP&E Board may change the status of the Church. The new status would be that of a full local Friends Church, managing its own affairs, as do other local Friends Churches in fellowship with and under the Faith and Practice of the EFC-ER.

617 At this stage a church may legally incorporate, with the consent and advice of the EP&E Board, with the Articles of Incorporation clearly indicating that the new church is a member and subject to the Faith and Practice of the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region. Where large financial investment has been made in this church by the EFC-ER, the EP&E Board shall make recommendation to the Executive Board as to when the property shall be deeded to the local church by the EFC-ER Property Trustees. The EP&E Board shall continue to make all legal decisions for any full local churches who choose not to incorporate.

### **618 Declining Churches**

619 Where local churches decline to less than 25 members, they should be taken under the care of the EP&E Board, with a view to the revival of growth. Where these efforts are ineffective, the Board, after careful consultation with the remaining members about their wishes, has the authority to disband the church, distributing its assets and membership as seems best to the Board. Such action is to be reported to the delegates at the next Yearly Meeting of EFC-ER.

### **620 ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL CHURCHES**

621 Although churches are of varying sizes, each church needs to carry on a program of Spiritual Life, Outreach, Education, and Stewardship. The organizational structure of the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region allows for at least four organizational developments within the same framework. These are located in the following paragraphs:

- 701-715 – Churches having 50 members or fewer
- 720-726 – Churches with 51 to 100 members
- 730-764 – Churches with 101 to 150 members
- 780-784 – Churches with 151 members or more

622 There are two fundamental entities in the organizational structure of the local church: the congregation as a body with its officers, and the Administrative Council of the church.

### **623 Congregational Meetings**

624 Meaning of Congregation: Whenever the word “congregation” is used in this document, it is used in the legal sense of the members of the church gathered in business session and as such is an abbreviation for “congregational business meeting.” This disassociates the term from the other common usage applying to members and others gathered for worship. As such it is the local authoritative body, and no member, officer, or group has any authority which it does not derive from the congregation.

625 Items for attention at a Congregational Meeting are to be presented to the Administrative Council prior to the Congregational Meeting. Normally, any items that come from the floor should be directed by the Presiding Clerk to the appropriate commission or to the Administrative Council for further consideration rather than be discussed immediately.

626 Criticisms of a personal nature during the Congregational Meeting are out of order and should be handled in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18 [see #266-267, 508d, & 523].

627 Function

628 The function of the Congregational Meeting is to authorize the official actions of that meeting. It is to deal with the setting of policy, the implementation of which becomes the responsibility of the Senior Pastor, the Officers, the Administrative Council, and the Commissions of the church. Policy decisions (always to be made in accord with the Faith and Practice), include the following matters [see #783]:

- a. To receive reports from the Senior Pastor and the Administrative Council and review effectiveness in ministry for the purposes of mutual accountability and encouragement;
- b. To approve the proposed list of officers;
- c. To approve the budget;
- d. To care for matters involving a change of policy;
- e. To call the senior pastor;
- f. To approve new or eliminate old major programs;
- g. To receive and discharge members (this may be delegated to the Administrative Council and their report given to the next Congregational Meeting);
- h. To prayerfully seek the Lord for His leadership in the future of the church.

629 Frequency of Meetings

630 Regular Congregational Meetings should be scheduled at least quarterly, preferably the first or second week of March, June, September, and December. Special exemptions for large churches are noted in paragraph #783. As a matter of courtesy, a reminder of the meeting should be placed in the bulletin at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

631 Special meetings may be called at any time by the Presiding Clerk with the concurrence of the Elders, providing notice has been given in at least one Sunday morning worship service at least one week in advance of the meeting. Should a situation arise that necessitates a shorter time frame for notice, church leadership shall give great effort to notifying the entire membership of the special emergency meeting.

632 Agenda of priority business for regular meetings is as follows:

- a. March – Call of senior pastor (in applicable years);
- b. June – Appointment of delegates and alternates to the Yearly Meeting;
- c. September – Evaluation of major programs of the church, and report of delegates to Yearly Meeting;
- d. December – Election of officers and approval of programs and budget for the coming year.

633 Voting is only by members who are present in person and only those members 18 or more years of age.

**634 Officers of the Congregation (who must be members of the Church)**

635 The Presiding Clerk presides over the meetings of the congregation and is an Elder by virtue of office. The conduct of business by the Clerk will be governed by paragraphs 625, 1054, and 1056. The Presiding Clerk will have the responsibility to oversee the Manual of Operation and report any non-action changes to the Congregational Meeting [see #628a & 657b].

636 The Recording Clerk keeps the Minutes of the Congregational Meetings; keeps on file the annual membership and statistical records; and forwards to the Presiding Clerk of EFC-ER the names of the delegates and alternates appointed from the church to Yearly Meeting. Also, the Recording Clerk submits the list of elected officers, committees, and other pertinent information in December to the EFC-ER Office to be included in the Directory.

637 The Financial Secretary receives the offerings, counting them in the presence of a second party named by the Commission on Stewardship; makes bank deposits; keeps accounts of contributions and contributors; and prepares and makes available a statement of giving by individual contributors for their own information. The counting of the offering is to be done after the close of the service. The secretary reports to the Stewardship Commission.

638 The Treasurer keeps the accounts and makes payments of bills as authorized by the Administrative Council. The Treasurer submits reports monthly to the Elder of Stewardship and may be asked to sit with the Commission of Stewardship and/or the Administrative Council as a resource person, when desired. The monthly report should be forwarded to the Administrative Council and a quarterly report to the Congregational Meeting.

639 The Statistician keeps accurate and up-to-date membership records, gathers annually the information requested by the EFC-ER Office, and forwards copies to the Presiding Clerk of the local church for the files of the Recording Clerk. Immediately after the close of the church year, December 31, the statistical reports are to be submitted for inclusion in the EFC-ER Yearbook.

640 The Legal Trustees are the authorized representatives of the local church who sign all legal documents based on the action of the Congregational Meeting. Such action includes loans, property deeds, and other legally-binding documents. At a minimum the legal trustees of the church should include the Presiding Clerk, the Stewardship Elder, and the Coordinator of Trustees; or as state law requires for compliance.

#### **641 The Nominating Committee**

642 The Nominating Committee is named by the Administrative Council and approved by the Congregational Meeting in December to serve for the following calendar year. The size, terms, and rotation of the committee are to be determined by the local congregation.

643 Duties of the Nominating Committee:

- a. To meet regularly throughout the calendar year;
- b. To propose names to fill vacancies when necessary, and especially evaluate the gifts of members in a constant search for new talent to be developed;
- c. In June, reports to the Congregational Meeting proposed delegates and alternates to Yearly Meeting [see #1036-1038 & 1040];
- d. In December, reports to the Congregational Meeting the proposed list of officers to be elected for the following calendar year. The recommendation of the Nominating Committee may be amended in the Congregational Meeting before the vote is taken for its approval or rejection.

The Nominating Committee reports directly to the Congregational Meeting for all actions to be taken.

#### **644 The Auditing Committee**

645 The Auditing Committee audits the financial accounts of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer and submits a report to the Stewardship Commission to be forwarded to the next Congregational Meeting after the end of the fiscal year, December 31.

#### **646 Elders**

647 The five Elders are so called by virtue of their office – the Presiding Clerk, and the four chairpersons of commissions.

648 **Qualifications of Elders**

Because of the high office and the heavy responsibility entrusted to these persons, they must have both personal and spiritual qualifications to serve in these positions. Elders need to be persons who can view the matters under their care and the matters brought before the Administrative Council with objectivity; that is, with the ability to study the matters from several points of view.

They need to be respected by the congregation they serve, both for their Christian commitment and for the value of their opinions. Those elected to this position in the Church should have a sense of organization and administration, and sensitivity to the need to serve their congregation, not becoming a lord over it.

Especially, Elders must give definite evidence of a full consecration of heart and life to God, and their personal, daily life must be above reproach. The Scriptural description of leaders in the Church as found in I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9 should describe these leaders in our churches as well.

**649 Overseers**

650 Overseers are named in the number determined by the Administrative Council [see #754a].

651 **Qualifications of Overseers**

The sensitive and important nature of the work of Overseers requires that they be persons with gifts of discernment, wisdom, tact, and love. Being charged with care for the spiritual lives and witness of the members requires, as well, that the lives of Overseers themselves be above reproach and that they be persons who are respected and appreciated in the church family.

652 **Duties of Overseers:** Under the leadership of the Coordinator for Overseers, they shall be charged with the general spiritual oversight of the congregation. They have two main tasks:

- a. Applications for church membership shall be brought to this body for study, personal contact, and eventual recommendation, through the Spiritual Life Commission to the Administrative Council.
- b. The Overseers have responsibility to deal faithfully with any members who give evidence of losing their spiritual victory and witness, and in the event restoration does not occur, to recommend through the Spiritual Life Commission to the Administrative Council suitable action regarding their continued membership in the Church [see #509-510 & 523b-c].

**653 The Administrative Council**

654 A part of the organizational framework within our churches includes an Administrative Council, which is basic to the coordination and implementation of the church's program.

655 **Authority of the Administrative Council**

656 The Administrative Council has only the authority delegated to it by the Congregational Meeting. As indicated in #628, the Congregational Meeting sets policy, approves budgets, and determines major programs. Once they do this, the Administrative Council becomes the means used by the congregation to implement those policies and programs.

657 **Duties of the Administrative Council**

- a. To exercise leadership, along with the Senior Pastor, in proposing to the Congregational Meeting new concerns, policies, programs, and budgets. In this role the Administrative Council is the servant of, and not a substitute for, the Congregational Meeting, which is the policymaking body [see #628];

- b. To maintain under the authorization of the Congregational Meeting church minutes, legal documents, policy decisions, and other guiding principles for the local church, which could constitute a Manual of Operation. The Presiding Clerk will have the responsibility to oversee the Manual of Operation and report any non-action changes to the Congregational Meeting [see #628a & 635];
- c. To implement and manage the concerns, policies, programs, and budgets approved in basic principle by the Congregational Meeting. The congregation expects the Administrative Council to work with freedom in these administrative duties, provided the Administrative Council keeps the Congregational Meeting fully informed of its activities;
- d. To coordinate the work of the church and of its officers, in the areas of concern for Spiritual Life, Outreach, Education, and Stewardship;
- e. To seek to maintain good order, unity, adherence to our Faith and Practice, and efficiency in all the work of the Church;
- f. To communicate to the Congregational Meeting full and regular reports of the actions and concerns of the Administrative Council and its Commissions in an informative and inspirational manner;
- g. To name the local Nominating Committee for approval by the Congregational Meeting in December, to serve for the following calendar year [see #642]. Whenever possible, the Administrative Council shall not name any of its own members to the Nominating Committee. Any recommendations from the Administrative Council for church leadership positions should be sent in writing to the Nominating Committee.

658      **Composition of the Administrative Council**

659      The composition of the Administrative Council varies with the size of the church, and provision is made for flexibility to meet local needs [see #703, 723, 734, & 782].

660      Officers: The Administrative Council shall annually elect a chairperson and secretary from among its members.

661      Members of the Administrative Council are also officers of the congregation, and as such are to be selected from the members of the church.

**662      Task Forces and Committees**

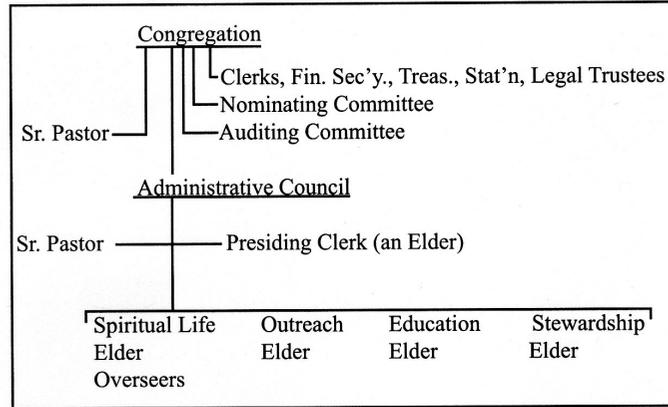
663      It is not possible for the officers and elders/coordinators of the church to do all the work for which they bear responsibility. It is envisioned then that help will be appointed in the form of task forces or committees who will, as needed, work with and under the leadership of an officer, elder, or coordinator. The officer, elder, or coordinator speaks on behalf of the task force or committee.

664      The number of task force or committee members needed depends upon the size of the church, the availability of personnel, and the number of approved projects. Depending upon the role/responsibilities of the particular task force or committee, not all persons named must necessarily be members of the church. It is the responsibility of the Administrative Council to appoint all of these, unless the Administrative Council or the Congregational Meeting wishes to delegate some of this task to the Nominating Committee. A general rule might be for those task forces that are temporary (less than one year) to be appointed by the Administrative Council and those committees which are needed year by year to be nominated by the Nominating Committee.

700 **STRUCTURES FOR DIFFERING SIZES OF LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION**

701 **In Churches with 50 Members or Fewer**

702 Organizational Chart



703 Administrative Council: The Administrative Council will consist of at least the senior pastor and the five elders. All other pastors and ministry (programming) personnel may attend as resource people at the request of the senior pastor.

704 Scope of the Administrative Council's Work: It should be clear that, in the small church, the Council is the body where all church matters are discussed.

705 Meetings of the Administrative Council: The Administrative Council should meet monthly at regularly-set times and, in addition, at the call of the chairperson as often as business requires [see also #736-737].

706 Operation

707 Each of the Elders will work in close cooperation with the Senior Pastor and, as mutually agreed, see that concerns, problems, ideas, methods, and assistance necessary to carry out the will of the Congregational Meeting in their area of concern are presented to the Administrative Council for discussion. After decisions are made there, the Elder for that area becomes responsible to see that these decisions are implemented. This will include the appointment and direction of the work of task forces (or committees) as needed.

708 It is the duty of the Administrative Council to set priorities. That is to say, they must decide how large a program is realistic for their church at present, and with the approval of the Congregational Meeting, determine that these are the things that can be done well.

709 Task Force or Committee Appointments [see #662-664]

710 Work Areas to be Administered Through the Administrative Council by the Four Elders

711 Area of Spiritual Life: The area of Spiritual Life includes pastoral relations; worship services under the direction of the Senior Pastor with the Elder responsible to see that ushers, musicians, and the meetingplace are ready; spiritual renewal; and the work of the Overseers [see #652, 746, & 752-754]. The Elder is also responsible to carry to the Administrative Council the needs of the Senior Pastor and to communicate to the Senior Pastor in an unprejudiced way what the congregation feels to be the Senior Pastor's strengths and weaknesses [see #746a-d]. If the local church so chooses, the Elder is responsible to have the Spiritual Life Inventory [see #7000] answered [see #746i].

The Elder of Spiritual Life serves as chairperson of the Search Committee in years when the local church acquires a new pastor. In the smaller church and in middle-sized churches, the Search Committee is the Administrative Council. (Explanation: In larger churches having over 100 members, the Commission on Spiritual Life serves as a Search Committee and is chaired by the Elder of the Commission [see #746g] ).

- 712 Area of Outreach: The area of Outreach includes promotion of the Great Commission Budget, evangelism and church growth, foreign missionary promotion, and service programs. The Elder is responsible to see that persons are appointed to give leadership to these tasks [see #747 & 755-757].
- 713 Area of Education: The area of Education includes responsibility for Sunday School work for children, youth, and adults; Friends Youth programs; and literature distribution. The Sunday School's task force of teachers is secured by the Elder in cooperation with the Senior Pastor and Administrative Council. The Elder is also responsible to see that other tasks are performed by suitable persons [see #748 & 758-761].
- 714 Area of Stewardship: The area of Stewardship includes stewardship promotion, supervision of the church finances and also the work of the Trustees. The Elder is responsible for the care and performance of these tasks [see #749 & 762-764].
- 715 Work Assignments for Elders [see #745]: All Elders must work in close cooperation with the Senior Pastor in getting the right programs adopted and then helping in their implementation, and at the appointed time providing to the Elder of Stewardship a proposed budget of expenditures needed by their areas. The Elder of Stewardship with the Treasurer (who may be requested to meet regularly with the Administrative Council, if it so desires), will draw up a reasonable budget for the Administrative Council to discuss, and as approved by the Administrative Council, to be carried to the Congregational Meeting for action.

## **720 In Churches of 51 – 100 Members**

- 721 Organization of the Church
- 722 While based on the organization of the smaller church [see #702], churches of 51-100 members may appoint one or more Coordinators to assist the Elder with his or her responsibility, as the work load demands and as qualified personnel become available. The church should be careful that one person does not have more than one eldership or coordinatorship. These Coordinators should be nominated by the Nominating Committee. With the appointment of Coordinators, initial steps will be made toward the development of commissions of which the Elder will be the chairperson.
- 723 Administrative Council: The Administrative Council will continue to consist of at least the senior pastor and the five elders [as listed for the small church, see #703]. All other pastors and ministry (programming) personnel may attend as resource people at the request of the senior pastor.
- 724 Operation: Paragraphs 706-709 under the operation of the smaller church are applicable to the operation of this size church as well [see also #662-664].
- 725 The Administrative Council shall recommend to the Congregational Meeting, and it to the Nominating Committee, that Coordinators are needed to assist the Elders in their work. The Administrative Council shall determine the job description for the Coordinator, which may be one of the two following descriptions:
- a. A Coordinator may give general assistance to the Elder, with the Elder making specific assignments.
  - b. A Coordinator may assist the Elder by assuming a job description listed among the Coordinators in the larger church commissions [see #752-764].

726 The times of the Administrative Council's meetings [see #705] remain the same as for the smaller church, as does the work area of the Administrative Council and of the Elders [see #710-715] except that in this size church, Commissions will begin to assist the Elders in their work area.

**730 In Churches of 101 – 150 Members**

731 Organizational Chart [see page 38]

732 Task Forces and Committee Appointments [see #662-664]

733 Administrative Council

734 Size: In churches with 101 members or more, the Administrative Council will usually include persons serving in the following positions:

Senior Pastor

Presiding Clerk (an Elder)

Elder of Spiritual Life Commission

Coordinator for Worship Services

Coordinator for Spiritual Renewal

Coordinator for Overseers

Elder of Outreach Commission

Coordinator for Evangelism and Church Growth

Coordinator for Foreign Missions

Coordinator for Service Programs

Elder of Education Commission

Coordinator for Child Education

Coordinator for Youth Education

Coordinator for Adult Education

Coordinator for Literature

Elder of Stewardship Commission

Coordinator for Stewardship Promotion

Coordinator for Finance

Coordinator for Trustees

All other pastors and ministry (programming) personnel may attend as resource people at the request of the Senior Pastor.

735 Meetings of the Administrative Council: The Administrative Council should meet at least once a month at a regularly-set time and at the call of the chairperson as often as business requires.

736 Officers: A chairperson and secretary are to be appointed by the Administrative Council from among its members to serve for a year's term.

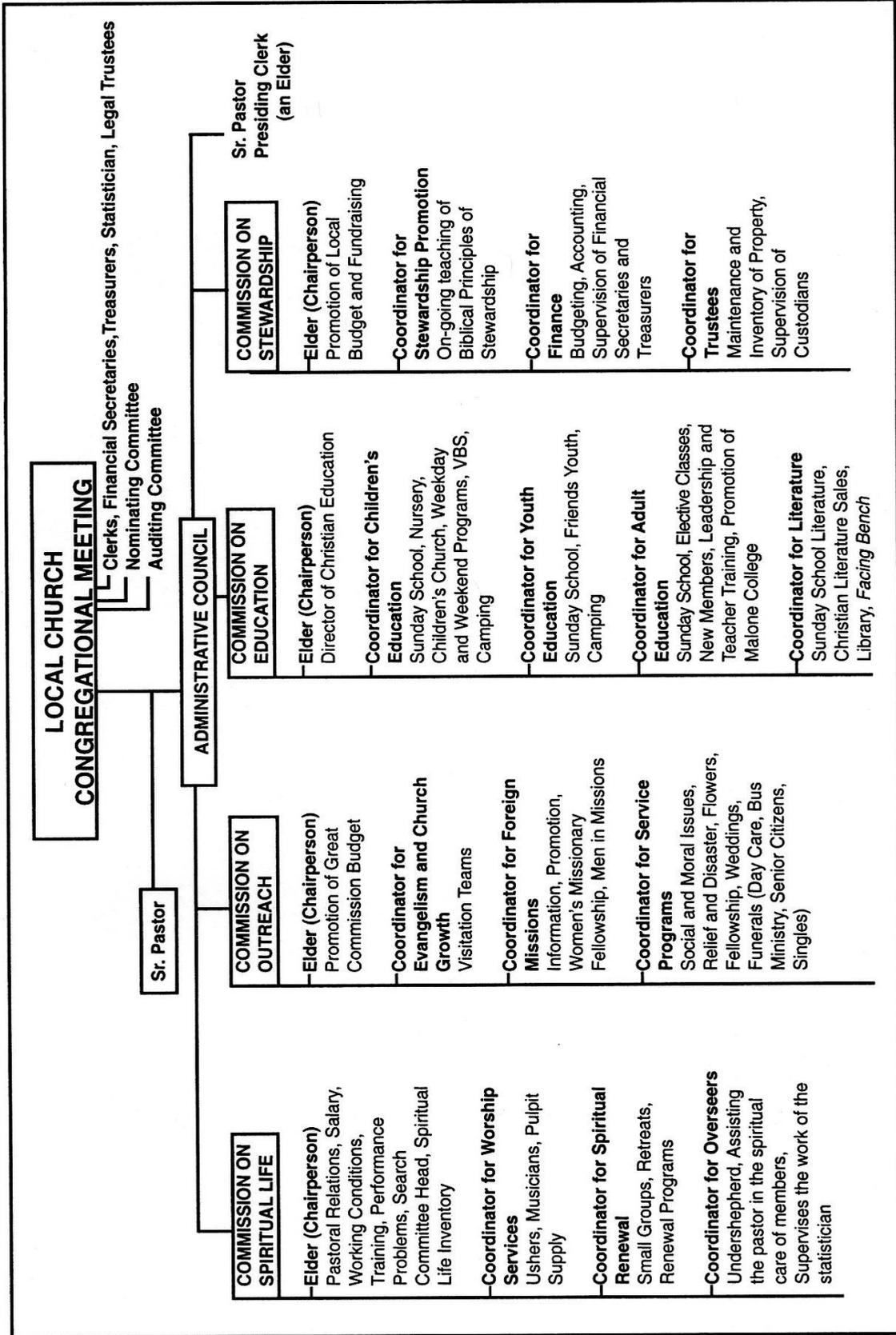
737 Agenda: The chairperson is to arrange the agenda for each meeting after consultation with the Senior Pastor and Elders as to business that will be forthcoming and in such a way as to put the most important business first. Normally the agenda will follow this outline:

Devotions

Minutes of the last meeting

Old business

Reports and proposals from the Senior Pastor, Elders representing their Commissions



- 738 Reports to the Administrative Council
- 739 It is the duty of the Elder of a Commission to be fully aware of the activities in the area of concern, including the work of any related coordinators, and to report in Administrative Council what is happening, especially any new developments. The report may be oral or written as seems best to the Administrative Council.
- 740 It is the duty of the chairperson to see that adequate reports are presented to the Congregational Meetings. The congregation is not usually interested in lengthy reports filled with routine details. They want to know the significant facts about the progress of the church or the reasons for lack of progress. Important information should not be withheld. Members of the congregation should be eager to come to the Congregational Meeting because they know they will be inspired and asked to decide on significant matters.
- 741 Proposals to and from the Administrative Council
- 742 Each Coordinator is encouraged to present to his or her Commission ideas for improving the effectiveness of the work in progress or for expanding the work. The Commission after consideration may accept or reject the idea, authorize its implementation if that is in order, or direct the Elder to carry it to the Administrative Council for further consideration.
- 743 The Administrative Council will give careful consideration to the proposals coming from the Commissions, their basic merits, seeing whether they fit properly into the whole coordinated program of the church, and deciding whether the proposal is suitable for immediate approval and implementation or whether it requires the action of the Congregational Meeting. Where proposals are to be carried to the Congregational Meeting, the Administrative Council should decide who is to make the presentation, making sure that it will be done with careful preparation and sufficient information to enable the Congregational Meeting to make an intelligent decision.
- 744 Duties of the Elders (Chairpersons of Commissions)
- 745 Common Duties of All Elders [see #715]  
[For qualifications of Elders, see #648.]
- a. To work in the closest possible cooperation with the Senior Pastor to achieve the goals of their commissions' areas of concern;
  - b. To call regular meetings of the Commissions;
  - c. To keep in close touch with the Coordinators to know what they are doing, to counsel them, and to encourage them in their work;
  - d. To carry reports and proposals from the Commissions to the Administrative Council;
  - e. To prepare for submission to the Coordinator for Finance, at the designated time, the annual budget for the Commission, having discussed and agreed upon it in a meeting of the Commission where each Coordinator has presented the relevant financial needs [see #802];
  - f. To authorize expenditures of the Commission within the budget authorized by the Congregational Meeting and according to the control regulations set by the Administrative Council [see #808].
- 746 Elder of Spiritual Life [see #711]
- a. To provide a good liaison between the Senior Pastor and the people. The Elder must be capable of being a confidant and counselor to the Senior Pastor;

- b. To convey to the Senior Pastor the feelings of the people about elements in the Senior Pastor's performance which are especially helpful as well as those that cause concern;
- c. To be able to deal with rumors and criticisms of a derogatory character and have wisdom and discernment when trying to correct any misunderstandings as soon as possible;
- d. To have, as needed, the Elders and/or the Spiritual Life Commission assist the Elder of Spiritual Life in dealing with all issues of pastoral relations and concerns. Upon request, the Area Superintendent would assist;
- e. To bring to the attention of the Commission concerns about the pastor(s)'s salary, continuing education, recording, housing, working conditions, family needs, and general welfare [see #860-864];
- f. To initiate action when a Senior Pastor's term of service is expiring, either to extend or terminate service [see #827];
- g. To handle details on behalf of the Commission when it is acting as a search committee for a new pastor [see #828];
- h. To provide the Commission each year with the financial data to propose the pastor(s)'s salary and allowances for the annual budget preparation;
- i. To lead the Commission in answering the Spiritual Life Inventory [see #7000], if the local church so chooses, and presenting the answers to the Congregational Meeting for the assistance of the local church in addressing the spiritual nurture of the congregation.

747 Elder of Outreach [see #712]

- a. To be responsible for the implementation of plans satisfactory to the Senior Pastor and the Commission for the promotion of the Great Commission Budget of EFC-ER.

748 Elder of Education [see #713]

- a. To serve as Director of Christian Education.

749 Elder of Stewardship [see #714]

- a. To be responsible for the promotion of fund-raising for the operating budget of the church;
- b. To see that the auditor's report is presented to the Commission, Administrative Council, and to the Congregational Meeting.

750 Duties of Coordinators

751 Common Duties of All Coordinators

- a. To propose to the Commission (after consultation with the Senior Pastor) ideas for improvement in his or her area of concern;
- b. To propose needed task forces [see #662-664] and, after their appointment, to see that they function properly;
- c. To prepare for the Elders at the designated time a statement of funds needed for the Commission in the annual budget.

752 The Coordinator for Worship Services is a special helper to the Senior Pastor (the senior pastor being the leader in charge of worship services), to see that the functions supporting worship are in good order. Specifically the coordinator is responsible:

- a. To work closely with the Senior Pastor and the Elder, proposing to the Commission ways of improving the conditions for worship;
- b. To select, with the approval of the Commission, a task force of ushers, posting their names, assigning them, and directing their work;
- c. To recommend after consultation with the Senior Pastor and the Commission the appointment of musicians such as organist and choir director, whose duty it will be to provide or arrange special music and to find substitutes when they are incapacitated;
- d. To encourage young people to train for such service and keep a list of trainees who can be used as substitutes;
- e. To consult with the Commission when problems arise among personnel who are ushers or musicians, or about other problems which detract from the spirit of worship;
- f. To assist the choir director in securing a task force of singers to form a choir;
- g. To see that the pulpit is supplied in the absence of the Senior Pastor, with approval by the Senior Pastor;
- h. To make certain that the sanctuary is ready for service.

753 The Coordinator for Spiritual Renewal is generally responsible for the implementation of programs for spiritual renewal, as desired by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Commission, including programs of small groups, retreats, Bible study and prayer groups, seminars, etc.

754 The Coordinator for Overseers has general responsibility with the Senior Pastor for the preparation of persons for church membership, helping them to mature as Christians, and guarding them from stumbling. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To recommend to the Administrative Council the number of Overseers that are felt to be needed (two to ten according to the size of the church) so that the Administrative Council, having fixed the number, can instruct the Nominating Committee to bring such a list for the approval of the Congregational Meeting [see #650];
- b. To chair the meetings of the Overseers and to direct their work, assigning individuals to specific tasks;
- c. To lead the Overseers in:
  1. Assisting the Senior Pastor in the instruction of prospective members [see #514d & #760b];
  2. Visiting (two by two) prospective members whom the Senior Pastor deems ready for membership, carrying out their duties [see #514a];
  3. Keeping the membership rolls up-to-date and recommending to the Commission action on persons whose names for any reasons should be removed [see #522a];
  4. Visiting those who are members by parental request (as they approach age 18), endeavoring to bring them to apply for regular membership based on a personal salvation experience [see #517d];

5. Dealing faithfully with members who are losing their love for the Lord, as evidenced by their returning to worldly-mindedness or openly sinful lives, in an effort to recover them [see #508d & 523b];
6. Proposing to the Commission suitable action on delinquents [see #522a].

[For qualifications and duties of Overseers, see #509-510 & 649-652.]

755 The Coordinator for Evangelism and Church Growth has general responsibility to be thoroughly acquainted with the most fruitful methods in this field and, in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, to make proposals to the Commission for action in this area. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To gather for work in this area a task force which is approved by the Commission and to assign and direct them in whatever plans have been approved by the Commission, such as visitation evangelism, literature evangelism, use of the media, special types of evangelistic meetings, etc.

756 The Coordinator for Foreign Missions is generally responsible, in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, for seeing that the congregation is informed about the work of Friends Missions abroad and of the importance of foreign missionary service in the life of the church. Included is the promotion of prayer and giving toward this work. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To discuss with the Senior Pastor and the Commission plans for the implementation of these concerns and the direction of the plans when approved;
- b. To encourage the work of the Women's Missionary Fellowship and the Friends Men In Missions organizations in the local church; [see #1750-1751]
- c. To serve as liaison between the Missionary Board of EFC-ER and the local church;
- d. To encourage young people who are seeking God's will as to investing their lives in missionary service;
- e. To make arrangements for visits of missionaries on home assignment and the holding of public missionary meetings in consultation with the Senior Pastor.

757 The Coordinator for Service Programs is generally responsible for the programs that reach out to serve the community in the name of Christ, promoting and directing those approved by the Commission. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To serve as liaison between the church and the Friends Action Board of EFC-ER to implement its concerns in the church;
- b. To direct programs for the relief of the needy and for disaster relief as needed; [see #1752]
- c. To promote active programs for social justice and other moral concerns;
- d. To promote our testimonies and action in the area of peacemaking;
- e. To be sensitive to areas of community need, proposing suitable plans of action to the Commission and appointing task forces to implement those that are approved. (Programs found useful in larger churches include Day Care Centers, Bus Ministries, Senior Citizens' Projects, and activities for Singles.)

- 758 The Coordinator for Children's Education is generally responsible for the teaching ministry of the church that is concerned with children. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:
- a. To direct the Sunday School for children through grade 6, proposing to the Elder and the Commission a task force of teachers and directing their work when they are approved;
  - b. To staff and carry on a nursery and children's church;
  - c. To promote, staff, and direct as required such projects as Vacation Bible School, camping, and weekend activities.
- 759 The Coordinator for Youth Education is generally responsible for the teaching ministry of the church that is concerned with youth. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:
- a. To direct the youth Sunday School, proposing to the Elder and the Commission a task force of teachers and directing their work when approved;
  - b. To care for the church youth program and serve as liaison between the church and the EFC-ER Youth Board;
  - c. To propose to the Commission a suitable person or persons to act as Youth Director when it seems to the Commission advisable to have a separate person in that position;
  - d. To promote, staff, and direct as needed such projects as camping, retreats, etc.
- 760 The Coordinator for Adult Education is generally responsible for the teaching ministry of the church that is concerned with adults. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:
- a. To direct the adult Sunday School, proposing to the Elder and to the Commission a task force of teachers (except where the Commission has granted to specific classes the privilege of selecting their own teacher), and directing their work when they are approved;
  - b. To promote, staff, and direct as required such projects as elective classes, teacher training classes, and classes for prospective members of the church (usually taught by the Senior Pastor or his/her designee [see #514d & #754c1]);
  - c. To manage in cooperation with the Senior Pastor programs as approved by the Commission, for the improvement of family life and for the promotion of Malone College.
- 761 The Coordinator for Literature is generally responsible for the teaching ministry of the church that comes through reading. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:
- a. To constantly update the subscription list from the church to *The Facing Bench* by notifying the EFC-ER Office of changes;
  - b. To send news items to the EFC-ER Publications Director of *The Facing Bench*;
  - c. To order and distribute the Sunday School literature as directed by the Commission;
  - d. To promote a library and reading program for the church, and serve as librarian or have the Commission appoint one;
  - e. To promote the sale of Christian literature and the distribution of tracts.

762 The Coordinator for Stewardship Promotion is generally responsible, with the Senior Pastor, to emphasize the stewardship of life, time, talents, possessions, and money among the members of the church. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To implement plans approved by the Senior Pastor and the Commission for continuous teaching on the Biblical concept of being stewards;
- b. To distribute literature and secure speakers on this subject;
- c. To assist the elder with fund-raising plans;
- d. To present to the Commission annually the financial needs of this area of concern when the budget is being prepared.

763 The Coordinator for Finance is generally responsible for budgeting, receiving, expending, and accounting for the funds of the church. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To receive from the Commission Chairpersons the budget amount for their commissions and then to prepare a total church budget for the perusal of the Commission before forwarding it on to the Administrative Council [see #803];
- b. To recommend to the Nominating Committee, after consultation with the Elder, names of persons suitable to serve as Financial Secretary and Treasurer;
- c. To recommend to the Commission a suitable system of bookkeeping and, when adopted, make it available for use by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer with the Coordinator supervising its use;
- d. To exercise control of expenditures under the budget approved by the Congregational Meeting and according to the control regulations proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Administrative Council;
- e. To see that the Treasurer's reports are available to the Senior Pastor and to the Commission monthly, and to the Congregational Meeting quarterly;
- f. To see that the Treasurer's books are available to the auditors at the end of the year.

764 The Coordinator for Trustees is generally responsible for the care of the physical plant and equipment of the church. Specifically the Coordinator is responsible:

- a. To recommend to the Commission a suitable person to do custodial service and to supervise the work when one is approved;
- b. To recommend to the Commission needed repairs for building and equipment and to implement their orders;
- c. To make an annual inventory of movable equipment, reporting any losses to the Commission with recommendations included;
- d. To receive requests for improvements and additions to the building or equipment and refer them to the Commission with evaluation and cost estimates of the projects.

## **780 In Churches with 151 Members or More**

781 While churches in the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region have been typically designed to be congregational in their decision-making structures, Friends do recognize the unique changes that come with churches that are larger. Their structures need to be designed to address those changes,

having the pastoral staff and the elders take responsibility for many of the decisions that Congregational Meeting and Administrative Councils have made in the smaller churches. Culture and size have made this philosophical change necessary.

782 No organizational chart will be stipulated herein. Local churches must develop their own organizational chart that covers the pastoral staff, the church officers, the elders, and those who assist each of them in decision-making. It is expected that the local organizational chart will cover responsibilities that are normal to Evangelical Friends Churches and to the ministries that they provide.

783 At least one Congregational Meeting should be held each year: [see #628]:

- a. To have appropriate leaders report on the various areas of ministry and responsibility;
- b. To approve the proposed list of officers;
- c. To approve the budget;
- d. To change major church policies;
- e. To call the senior pastor;
- f. To approve capital building programs and capital debt;
- g. To receive from the Administrative Council a report regarding members;
- h. To prayerfully seek the Lord for His leadership in the future of the church.

784 While each large church has some liberty to set its own organizational structure, that structure should be submitted for review and approved by the local church membership prior to implementation, with a copy of the approved changes filed in the General Superintendent's office.

## **800 BUDGETING IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**

### **801 Preparation of Budgets**

802 In early September, Elders will ask the coordinators in their commission to prepare requests for the funds which they feel will be necessary to operate their departments for the coming year. In early October the Commissions will study these requests and the programs they represent and by mid-October decide upon a total budget for concerns of their commissions which they can unitedly present to the Coordinator for Finance.

803 In late October, the Coordinator for Finance will give careful scrutiny to the combined askings of the four commissions and present them to the Commission on Stewardship for scrutiny and revisions.

804 In early November, the Elder of Stewardship will present to the Administrative Council, along with estimates of income, their recommended budget, itemized according to commissions and the sub-areas therein.

805 The Administrative Council will adjust the requested funds and the estimated income, arriving if necessary at either cuts in the askings or recommended means for increasing income.

806 At the December Congregational Meeting the final recommended budget will be presented to the Congregational Meeting with full explanation for its action.

**807 Budgetary Control**

808 The Administrative Council on the recommendation of the Commission on Stewardship must adopt a set of regulations for the control of expenditures. This will include at least three categories:

- a. Items of fixed expense (such as pastor(s)'s salary, utilities, mortgage payments, etc.). The Treasurer should be given a permanent order for the regular payment of these.
- b. Items in the budgets of the Commissions that the Treasurer may pay only on the order of the chairperson of the commission in which the expenditure is involved. Even though the item is in the approved budget, the Commission on Stewardship may recommend to the Administrative Council a hold on such expenditures if income becomes inadequate. In such a case the Administrative Council may decide how such a situation is to be handled.
- c. Budget items approved in principle but not to be expended until special funds are available or the Council is assured of sufficient income to make these expenditures possible.

809 The Commission on Stewardship should adopt a general policy on the subject of special offerings and after having it approved by the Administrative Council submit it to the Congregational Meeting for approval.

810 Implementation of the church's policy for taking special offerings is the responsibility of the Commission on Stewardship before arrangements are made with parties wishing to take such offerings.

**825 THE PASTOR(S)**

**826 Procedure for Renewing a Senior Pastor's Call/The Calling of a New Senior Pastor**

827 In years when a senior pastor's term is expiring, these steps are taken: [see #746f]

- a. The Spiritual Life Commission, in consultation with the General Superintendent (or appropriate representative as designated by the General Superintendent), will consider the matter of renewing a senior pastor's call with appropriate changes in contract terms during early February. After considering the matter, the Spiritual Life Commission will make its recommendation to renew or to seek a change to the Administrative Council by February 15 [see #746f]. Note: Pastoral salary arrangements are made on the calendar fiscal year. When a pastor is assuming duties in a church July 1, his financial arrangements will run only through December 31 of that year.
- b. The Administrative Council, receiving the recommendation of its Spiritual Life Commission (or in smaller churches initiating the consideration in itself) must give consideration to the matter by the end of February.
- c. In the first week of March the Congregation will meet to consider the recommendation of the Administrative Council by voting on the recommendation by written ballot. The voting is only by members who are present in person and only those members 18 or more years of age.
- d. If the senior pastor's call is being renewed, the senior pastor should give a response in writing to the Congregation in the first week of April. It is the duty of the Presiding Clerk to inform the General Superintendent of the response of the senior pastor.

828 In years when a senior pastor resigns, retires, or the Congregation by the March Congregational Meeting decides to make a change, these steps are taken: [see #746g]

- a. The Administrative Council, or in larger churches the Spiritual Life Commission must immediately seek the advice and counsel of the General Superintendent (or appropriate

representative as designated by the General Superintendent) who will provide a list of approved and available pastors along with recommendations.

- b. The Spiritual Life Commission (or the Committee assigned to conduct the search) will carry on negotiations with prospective pastors and will keep the General Superintendent (or appropriate representative as designated by the General Superintendent) informed of progress until the matter is settled.
- c. When the Spiritual Life Commission (or the Search Committee) has gathered sufficient information, interviewed the candidate unhurriedly and thoroughly, and perhaps had the candidate meet and preach to the congregation, it may make a recommendation to the Administrative Council.
- d. The Congregation shall meet in a regular or called Congregational Meeting to consider the recommendation of the Administrative Council by voting on the recommendation by written ballot. The voting is only by members who are present in person and only those members 18 or more years of age.
- e. When the Congregational Meeting reaches a decision, it is the duty of the Presiding Clerk to inform the General Superintendent immediately and to issue an official call in writing to the prospective pastor. The prospective pastor should respond in writing within a reasonable length of time. Note: Pastoral salary arrangements are made on the calendar fiscal year. When a pastor is assuming duties in a church July 1, his financial arrangements will run only through December 31 of that year.

### **830 Terms of Service**

831 The pastoral year is from July 1 to June 30 of the next year. The church and the fiscal year correspond to the calendar year [see #1032].

832 A local church may extend a call to a pastor for one, two, or three years.

833 Indefinite Tenure: After a pastor has given three years of satisfactory service to a church, that church may, after careful consideration, offer a call to that pastor with indefinite tenure.

- a. With indefinite tenure the question of renewing a call does not come up automatically as it does at the end of a specified term.
- b. If at any time during indefinite tenure a pastor should desire to terminate that relationship, the pastor should under normal circumstances notify the Elder of Spiritual Life and thereafter the congregation by the first week in March and leave at the end of the current pastoral year.
- c. Also during indefinite tenure, should there be a sizeable or significant group of members of the congregation who have come to feel that a pastoral change is needed, they should communicate this concern to the Elder of Spiritual Life, who will first discuss the matter with the pastor, giving opportunity, if the pastor feels so led, to resign. Should the pastor not resign, the Elder will report the situation to the Administrative Council for consideration. Should they concur in the concern for a change, they should make their recommendation for revocable indefinite tenure by ballot vote to the Congregational Meeting in March.

834 Early Termination: The church and the pastor (and/or pastoral staff hereafter referred to as pastor) agree that either the church leadership or the pastor can initiate an early termination of this pastoral agreement by furnishing written notice to the other.

- a. If the church leadership initiates the termination with the advice and consent of the General Superintendent and the EP&E Board, the church leadership shall then have the discretion to either

have the pastor immediately cease performing the pastor's duties according to the terms of this pastoral agreement, or to have the pastor continue performing the pastor's duties according to the terms of this pastoral agreement for a period of time to be agreed upon by the church and the pastor.

- b. In the event that the pastor chooses to terminate this agreement, he/she shall give the church no less than ninety (90) days notice unless otherwise agreed upon with the church. The church and the pastor shall negotiate the time and scope of responsibilities the pastor will perform until the time of departure occurs.
- c. In either event, the pastor shall be entitled to the pastor's full compensation, including but not limited to any and all benefits the pastor is entitled to, according to the terms of this pastoral agreement for a period of not less than ninety (90) days. In the event the pastor obtains other employment prior to the ninety (90) day period, the full compensation package shall be pro-rated or ceased.

#### **840 Duties of the Pastor**

841 The gifts and the duties of a pastor largely lie in three areas: the preaching of the Word, the pastoral care of the flock, and the exercise of leadership in administration.

842 The preaching of the Word must grow out of a well-trained understanding of the Word, reception to its authority, understanding of the principles of interpretation, and faithful and disciplined reading and study of the Scriptures. This is a matter of gift and inspiration and of disciplined study. No pastor can function without both. In preaching, the pastor must not only be faithful to the meaning of Scripture but also relevant to the needs of the congregation. Preaching, whether evangelistic or teaching in character, must always be aimed at a verdict: acceptance of salvation, obedience in discipleship, or taking steps toward maturity in Christlikeness.

843 The shepherding of souls requires, in addition to a teaching ministry, close personal contact with the people, which will involve counseling at home or office and calls in hospitals and homes in order to know the needs of people and how to serve them effectively. The senior pastor and pastoral staff should maintain regular and announced office hours. In addition, time should be set aside for weekly visitation.

844 Pastoral reports to the Administrative Council and to Congregational Meetings should give a specific accounting of activity in their area of responsibility [see #841-843].

845 As an ex-officio member of all Commissions and committees, the senior pastor is expected to be a leader and administrator. This too is a gift of the Spirit and a calling of God. The meaning of administrative leadership is clearer when the following elements are recognized as some of its essential phases:

- a. Vision for advance;
- b. The ability to inspire confidence and to carry the membership along in unity toward the vision;
- c. A sense of priorities as well as of integration of the programs of the church in order to keep them in balance;
- d. The ability to inspire volunteer workers to fulfill their assigned tasks;
- e. The ability to organize work efficiently;

- f. A sense of the difference between the setting of policy, personnel, programs, and major purchases (which is a function of the Congregational Meeting) and its administrative implementation (which is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and the Administrative Council).
- 846 The Senior Pastor is encouraged to keep before the people the doctrines, testimonies, and history of the Friends Church through preaching, teaching, and membership classes.
- 847 In addition to the foregoing functions and duties of a pastor, it is also imperative to be an example to the flock by carrying a genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of all the members. The pastor must give an example of zeal, godliness, transparent honesty, living above reproach, purity, temperance in all things, dignity, gentleness, and self-sacrifice (I Timothy 3:1-7).
- 848 It is also expected that a senior pastor be an effective liaison between the congregation and the EFC-ER, its officers, boards, and concerns. The senior pastor must be an open channel for communications from the EFC-ER Office to the local church.
- 849 The senior pastor is encouraged to use the concept of the Enabling Ministry, seeking to train and use lay leadership wherever possible.
- 850 The working relationship between a church and its employee(s) shall be guided by the principles consistent with I Corinthians 6:1-8 [see #1256]
- 860 Responsibilities of the Congregation to the Pastor(s)**
- 861 The calling of a pastor means that the church issuing the call recognizes the gifts and calling of God's servant. It is incumbent upon the church therefore to give room for the exercise of those gifts instead of stifling them. Pastoral leadership must be accepted by the lay leaders of the church as something they can follow with full cooperation. For a pastor to be effective, the congregation must give loyalty, cooperation, advice, and support. This support must be spiritual, prayerful, and financial (I Corinthians 9:14).
- 862 For the financial support of the pastor, it is required that the church provide the following minimums:
- a. Salary: A minimum salary is set each year by the EP&E Board, which is not meant to be a standard salary, but which does indicate that to pay less is to stretch the pastor's sacrifice too far. It is the minimum below which full-time service must not be expected. With less than the minimum, the pastor is free to accept other employment or serve more than one church. This minimum cash salary must be in addition to other allowances;
  - b. Moving expenses on first arrival;
  - c. The free use of a parsonage or a parsonage allowance;
  - d. A car allowance;
  - e. Payment of utilities (except personal long distance telephone calls);
  - f. Payment of the EFC-ER Pension Fund premium. Pension contributions are computed at 12% of salary plus all allowances, including housing and utilities. Auto mileage is excluded. If the parsonage is furnished, 15% of the base salary is to be included for that factor;
  - g. Payment of Medical Group Insurance premiums for the pastor and dependents as arranged by the Pension Board.
- 863 Vacation and other Leave: Churches are required to provide leave for their pastor in the following minimum ways:

- a. One day off per week;
- b. Annual vacation with the church paying for the pulpit supply. The vacation schedule depends on the pastor's service to the EFC-ER as follows:
  - 1-5 years of service, 2 weeks vacation
  - 6-10 years of service, 3 weeks vacation
  - 11 and more years of service, 4 weeks vacation;
- c. Outside ministries up to a total of two weeks, the pastor paying for pulpit supply;
- d. Time for attendance at Yearly Meeting and also at annual Ministers' Conference, the church paying expense for pastor and spouse to attend, and for pulpit supply;
- e. Time for attendance at and fulfillment of reasonable services for EFC-ER board and offices;
- f. Sabbatical Leave for Pastors – After six (6) years of pastoral ministry in a given church, the pastor will be permitted to apply for a sabbatical such as: Three (3) months for rest and relaxation or travel, or up to five (5) months for an enrolled course of study at a university or seminary approved by the EP&E Board or Superintendent. Not later than November 15 preceding the year when the sabbatical leave is requested, an application is to be made to the local church Administrative Council and to the chairman of the EP&E Board of the Yearly Meeting. In this application, the pastor will state the nature of the proposal and the estimated value to him/herself and to the local church. The final decision on this proposal will rest with the local Congregational Meeting. They may consult with the EP&E Board and the Area Superintendent for advice and cooperation. The church would continue to pay the full pay package during this time as well as supply for the local ministry. Having taken the sabbatical, the pastor would be expected to continue on as pastor for at least two (2) more years with the same local church, unless otherwise agreed upon.

864 The working relationship between a church and its employee(s) shall be guided by the principles consistent with I Corinthians 6:1-8 [see #1256].

**870 Pastoral Assistants**

871 Both the senior pastor and the local congregation shall be involved with making arrangements for pastoral assistants, such as assistant pastors, youth pastors, or similar type workers. Arrangements will be made only after pastoral assistants are approved by the EP&E Board through the General Superintendent or the appropriate representative. Portions of paragraphs #825-864 may and should apply to pastoral assistants where it seems appropriate to the scope of the pastoral assistant's role.

872 It is recommended that when a senior pastor resigns, the staff members should be willing to submit their resignations. In cases of program staff, the new senior pastor should have the freedom to select his or her staff in consultation with the Elders and the Administrative Council, subject to the approval of the Congregational Meeting. The new senior pastor shall have the freedom to select support staff as budgeted.

**880 Certifying, Licensing, Recording, Retirement**

881 Certifying Christian Workers: Where members of our local churches are gifted and used in special Christian work, and where the local church senses a credential would be useful to such a person and makes a request for it, a Christian Worker's Certificate may be issued by the General Superintendent, valid for one year.

882 Licensing of Pastors: Where persons who have not been recorded as ministers are appointed in our churches as pastor, assistant pastor, or associate pastor, youth pastor, or intern pastor, the General Superintendent is permitted to issue as credentials a special license indicating that the holder is

authorized to perform all the customary duties of a pastor, indicating the church being served and the period of appointment. The license must be renewed annually. Such licensed pastors are entitled to sit on the Administrative Council.

883 Recording of Ministers: For the entire process including the responsibilities of local churches, see #1242-1244.

884 Retirement of Ministers: Pastors are eligible for retirement at age 59½. Retirement from pastoral leadership is recommended at age 70. [see #1259]

## **THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

### **1000 THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION (subsequently referred to as EFC-ER)**

- 1001 The EFC-ER is an association of churches whose delegates meet annually to act as the legislative and judicial body of the organization. The Church delegates the leadership and management of its programs to boards, which are coordinated by the Executive Board. This Board nominates to the delegates, subsequently employs, and supervises the work of a general superintendent and the area superintendents, who implement the approved programs of the church.
- 1002 The EFC-ER is a connectional church and its churches are therefore not independent. Each church sends delegates to the Yearly Meeting and agrees to submit to its directives. This pattern of governance does not have the authoritarianism of episcopacy nor the independence of congregationalism. While the authority of the EFC-ER over its members is real, the major emphasis is upon the services it renders to its members. The local church through this framework is related to other local churches in mutual submission, mutual support, and mutual ministry. Local churches are free to hold title to their own properties.
- 1003 The purpose of the EFC-ER is to provide services and good order to its member churches, which will enable them to fulfill the Great Commission given by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Its officers, boards, and committees are committed to this purpose.
- 1004 The Great Commission of our Lord calls for programs in at least four areas of concern. These are listed in the section entitled: The Local Church [see #602-607], and the organization of the local church is built around these concerns.
- 1005 The boards of the EFC-ER are easily grouped around the same areas of concern and stand ready to assist the local church in its fulfillment of these concerns. The local churches are grouped into Districts that are very simply structured to serve as a promotional and inspirational liaison between the EFC-ER Boards and the local churches. Detailed exposition of this outline is given in the following pages.

### **1010 INCORPORATION**

- 1011 The Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio and is successor to the former Ohio Yearly Meeting of the Friends Church.
- 1012 The headquarters office is located at Canton, Ohio, and its General Superintendent named as its Statutory Agent.

### **1025 DELEGATE BODY AND ITS YEARLY MEETING**

#### **1026 Time and Manner of Meeting**

- 1027 The annual business meeting of the delegates for the EFC-ER is known as YEARLY MEETING and is held at the time and place decided upon by the Executive Board.
- 1028 The Executive Committee of the Executive Board is responsible for the general format of the Yearly Meeting. This includes such issues as whether and in what form meetings may be convened during Yearly Meeting for members of local commissions in the interest of Spiritual Life, Outreach, Education, and Stewardship, and/or open meetings for the public promotion of these concerns.

- 1029 The arrangement of the business agenda and the scheduling of business sessions and board meetings are done by the Presiding Clerk in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Executive Board.
- 1030 The arrangement of the inspirational, evangelistic, and worship services in the non-business segments of the week is made by the General Superintendent and President of the EP&E Board with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Executive Board.
- 1031 The arrangements for housing and food service and use of physical facilities at Malone College are handled by a coordinator at Malone College, appointed by the President of the College and the General Superintendent, who negotiate the terms of service.
- 1032 The church and fiscal year for the EFC-ER and its local churches is the calendar year.

**1033 Delegate Body Composition**

1034 Pastors as Delegates

The senior pastor of each local church plus one full-time associate pastor shall serve formally and automatically as delegates. If recorded, the additional full-time staff pastors may serve as delegates at a ratio not to exceed one pastoral delegate for every two lay delegates from the local church. All other staff pastors may qualify to serve as a lay delegate, if selected by the local church [see #1036 & 1040].

- 1035 All active EFC-ER missionaries in attendance at Yearly Meeting shall automatically be seated as delegates.

1036 Lay Delegates

- a. Each church shall send one lay delegate (which could be a recorded minister not serving as a pastor) for each 50 members or major fraction thereof as reported at the end of the previous calendar year [see #1040].
- b. Churches with 26 members or fewer may have one lay delegate in addition to their senior pastor. In the absence of a senior pastoral delegate, a lay person may be seated as a delegate in that senior pastor's place, preferably from that church. Extension churches officially designated may seat a delegate who is a member of EFC-ER.

- 1037 Choosing Lay Delegates – The choice of delegates is a weighty matter. Churches should avoid sending delegates merely because they are available, and, if possible, avoid sending both husband and wife as delegates. The criteria by which the local Nominating Committee should recommend names to the Congregational Meeting as delegates [see #643c] should include the following:

- a. Active leadership in the local church;
- b. Knowledge of the attitudes of the membership to specific issues likely to arise;
- c. Trusted by the congregation and displays appropriate wisdom with which to listen to information and debate given at the Yearly Meeting;
- d. Openness to participate in the discussions;
- e. Ability to help make decisions that are good for all.

There must be concern to get the best representation of the local church and to make the best contribution to the EFC-ER.

1038 Alternate Delegates

- a. Each church should appoint as many alternate delegates as practical for their size church. The alternate delegates should be selected on the basis of the criteria in #1037 and should expect to fill vacancies created by the absence of any delegate in their District.
- b. In the absence of a senior pastoral delegate, a lay person may be appointed a delegate in that seat. The seating of alternate delegates as full delegates will be made by the District Delegate Captain.

1039 Financial Assistance to Delegates

In order to secure capable delegates, it is recommended that, where possible, churches contribute to the expenses of delegates attending Yearly Meeting.

1040 All delegates – pastoral, missionary, lay, or alternate – must be members of an EFC-ER church and 18 years of age or older [see #1055].

1041 Forwarding Names of Delegates: When the names of delegates to Yearly Meeting have been approved by the Congregational Meeting, the Recording Clerk shall forward the names of delegates and alternates to the Presiding Clerk of EFC-ER. These names, with accurate addresses, shall be sent to the Clerk one week prior to the opening of Yearly Meeting.

1042 In the event a local church cannot staff its delegate quota, this should also be reported to the EFC-ER Presiding Clerk, who shall make this known to the District Delegate Captain at the opening of Yearly Meeting.

1043 To be officially seated as a delegate, the appointed delegate [see #1034, 1035, & 1036] shall attend a majority of the Yearly Meeting business sessions.

1044 Delegates having the right to vote in a business session are those appointed by the local churches or, in their absence, alternates or others appointed by the District Captains, who have been officially seated.

1045 In the case of a call from the Executive Board for a vote by mail, delegates receiving ballots are pastors and the elected delegates from a given church, whether or not they attended the Yearly Meeting.

1046 Seating Arrangement of Delegates: Delegates are seated on the floor of Yearly Meeting in District groups in an area designated for Delegates only.

1047 At the opening session each District shall select a District Delegate Captain who shall be responsible to see that the delegation quota is filled for each session and that delegate attendance is taken at each session.

1048 Use of Alternate Delegates

- a. Alternate delegates who are not seated as delegates for a specific business session may sit with the delegation and participate in the discussion. They may not make motions or vote, however.
- b. In a specific business session, if the delegate quota of the District is not complete, the District Delegate Captain may fill the District delegation from the alternates available. The alternate shall be notified of such an appointment, and the alternate shall then act as a regular delegate for that session. The District Captain shall inform the EFC-ER Recording Clerk of such a change in that session's delegation.

- 1049 Tenure of Delegates
- a. Delegates are elected annually, but churches are advised to maintain a good degree of continuity in sending delegates.
  - b. With one exception, the official work of the delegates ends when they have reported to their churches the significant actions of the Yearly Meeting. The exception is the call from the Executive Board for a vote by mail [see #1045 & 1191].
- 1050 Where action is necessary, the Executive Board acts in lieu of the Yearly Meeting delegates when they are not in session [see #1236].
- 1051 Initiation and Conduct of Business**
- 1052 Initiation of Business: Requests, recommendations and proposals for consideration at the Yearly Meeting are received from two sources:
- a. Local churches may send to the EFC-ER Presiding Clerk at any time during the year their proposals and requests. The Clerk, after consulting with the Executive Committee of the Executive Board, will present these proposals and requests to the floor of the Yearly Meeting or refer them to a suitable board or committee for preliminary study and recommendation. Then the Presiding Clerk will present a list of these requests with recommendations to the delegates on opening day.
  - b. Boards or Committees of the EFC-ER may send proposals likewise through the Executive Board to the Yearly Meeting.
- 1053 Conduct of Business
- 1054 Consensus: Friends believe that business should be conducted as an exercise in corporate, worshipful seeking of the Divine Will, which in general will be attested by waiting until the Meeting arrives at a high degree of unity. In general the consensus of the Meeting is discerned by the Presiding Clerk. Where necessary, voting is an acceptable method by which the Clerk may more accurately determine “the sense of the Meeting.”
- 1055 Voting at Yearly Meeting is restricted to delegates, though members of local churches are encouraged to attend Yearly Meeting and to participate in the discussion. Only members 18 years of age and over may vote [see #633].
- 1056 Good Order: Business is conducted in a simplified form of parliamentary procedure, allowing the Clerk to call for voting where difference is obvious and without obligation to make an action final where significant difference is revealed. In such cases further consideration is in order.
- 1057 Records and Faith and Practice**
- 1058 Minutes of the Yearly Meeting are written by the Recording Clerk and approved at the beginning of the next session. The final day’s minutes should be approved before adjournment.
- 1059 Preservation: Minutes of the Yearly Meeting and all other important records are kept by courtesy of Malone College in the safety of the Archival section of Cattell Library. All subordinate bodies are also advised to store their old records here where they will be available for inspection.
- 1060 Changes in the Faith and Practice: The EFC-ER Recording Clerk is to list all actions of the Yearly Meeting delegates which constitute a change of the Faith and Practice and is to bring them to the attention of the Faith and Practice Committee. This Committee also, through the Executive Board,

recommends to the delegates desirable changes in the Faith and Practice and prepares copy when the reprinting of copies of the Faith and Practice is necessary.

1061 Books of Faith and Practice for churches established by foreign missionary work must have the approval of the Missionary Board before setting them off as autonomous Yearly Meetings.

## **1075 OFFICERS OF THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

All Yearly Meeting clerks, committee and board members shall be members in good standing of an EFC-ER church. A member in good standing is to be defined by the local church following the six points of the Membership Covenant [see #505-506 & 8000].

1076 The Presiding Clerk presides at the business sessions of the delegates at their Yearly Meeting, signs official communications of the EFC-ER, prepares the business agenda of the Yearly Meeting sessions with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Executive Board, and supervises the work of assistants named below.

1077 The Assistant Presiding Clerk presides in a Yearly Meeting business session in the absence of or at the request of the Presiding Clerk. The Presiding Clerk may ask the assistant's help in caring for other responsibilities as needed. In the event of the Presiding Clerk being unable to fulfill the duties or to complete the term, the Assistant shall act in the Clerk's stead until a new Presiding Clerk can be elected.

1078 The Recording Clerk is responsible for writing the Yearly Meeting Minutes; proofreading and preparing them for printing; and preparing Returning Minutes for visitors.

1079 The Assistant Recording Clerk acts in the absence of or at the request of the Recording Clerk. In the event of the Recording Clerk being unable to fulfill the duties or to complete the term, the Assistant shall act in the Clerk's stead until a new Recording Clerk can be elected.

1080 The Reading Clerk assists the Presiding Clerk in the reading of documents for the Yearly Meeting and making necessary announcements.

1081 The Assistant Reading Clerk acts in the absence of or at the request of the Reading Clerk. In the event of the Reading Clerk being unable to fulfill the duties or to complete the term, the Assistant shall act in the Clerk's stead until a new Reading Clerk can be elected.

1082 The Page serves the clerks and the Yearly Meeting as messenger.

1083 The Assistant Page acts in the absence of or at the request of the Page. In the event of the Page being unable to fulfill the duties or to complete the term, the Assistant shall act in the Page's stead until a new Page can be elected.

1084 The Treasurer handles all EFC-ER general funds, accounts for the same, and serves under the direction of, and as a resource person to, the Finance & Stewardship Board [see #1288i]. In particular, the Treasurer receives apportionment payments for the General Operating Budget and also Great Commission Budget contributions from local church treasurers, disbursing these as directed to the appropriate recipients.

1085 The Assistant Treasurer will serve in the absence of or at the request of the Treasurer. In the event of the Treasurer being unable to fulfill the duties or to complete the term, the Assistant shall act in the Treasurer's stead until a new Treasurer can be appointed by the Finance & Stewardship Board [see #1288i].

1086 The EFC-ER Office at the end of each calendar year sends statistical forms in triplicate to local churches with instructions for their preparation and distribution: one copy to be held by the local church (Statistician), one for the local Recording Clerk, and one to be sent to the EFC-ER Office. The local church should have these results compiled and in the hands of the Presiding Clerk and the EFC-ER Office by January 15 of each year so they may be included in the Yearbook published at that time.

## **1100 COMMITTEES OF THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

These committees, unless specified differently, consist of four members, two elected each year for a two-year term and each effecting its own organization except where specifically restricted.

1101 Faith and Practice Committee: To compile policy and procedural changes in Faith and Practice, as proposed by EFC-ER Boards, and then approved by the Executive Board and the Yearly Meeting delegates; to suggest editorial changes in Faith and Practice, for approval by the Executive Board and the Yearly meeting delegates; and to prepare revisions when reprinting is authorized.

1102 Epistle Committee: This committee, consisting of two members, one elected each year for a two-year term, shall prepare a synopsis of epistles received from other Yearly Meetings of Friends and to draft an Epistle to be sent out as our annual letter to other bodies of Friends.

1103 Historical Committee: To gather historical material for the Archives of EFC-ER and to oversee their classification, organization, availability, and preservation in order to promote interest in our Friends heritage and history. District representatives to the Executive Board shall assist the Committee in this collection.

1104 Memorial Committee: This committee, consisting of two members, one elected each year for a two-year term, shall assist the EFC-ER office staff in compiling and disseminating the memorials of deceased members in preparation for possible presentation to the Yearly Meeting [see #277]. In addition, the Memorial Committee will serve as a liaison between the churches and the EFC-ER Office, especially in follow-up with churches who need to prepare a memorial for a particular individual.

1105 Welcoming Committee: To welcome guests attending the Yearly Meeting, making them known to the Presiding Clerk and assisting them with information.

## **1125 THE NOMINATING BOARD**

1126 Composition: The Nominating Board consists of one member elected by each District (not to exceed nine consecutive years of service) in addition to the General Superintendent and the Presiding Clerk as ex-officio members [see #1507].

1127 During the month of February or March the Presiding Clerk is to call the Board together to elect a chairperson. The Board then acts as a search committee to discover and develop new leadership ability, and meets during the year as necessary to bring forth nominations for the officers, committees, and boards of EFC-ER at Yearly Meeting.

1128 Guidelines for Selection of Nominees

1129 This Board is charged to avoid as much as possible the placing of one person on more than one or two boards (except, of course, the Executive Board) and to keep a healthy balance between ministers and laypersons in the composition of each board, as well as giving good district representation.

1130 Individuals should not serve on an EFC-ER board or committee if they are personally receiving non-scholarship funding of that board or committee. In addition, individuals should not serve on an EFC-

ER board or committee if they are immediate family (parent, sibling, child) of an individual who is receiving non-scholarship funding of that board or committee.

1131 Continuous terms of office shall not exceed three three-year terms, nor four two-year terms, nor nine one-year terms without a year off. The Officers are exempt from this rule.

1132 Board and committee members nominated by the Nominating Board and approved by the Yearly Meeting take office on January 1 each year unless otherwise specified [see #1279].

1133 If a vacancy occurs mid-year, the General Superintendent, the Chairperson of the Nominating Board, and the President/Chairman of the Board/Committee on which the vacancy exists shall concur on a name for filling the vacancy immediately. The name shall be approved by the delegates at the succeeding Yearly Meeting session.

1134 If a person has been appointed to fill an unexpired term of another individual, those years beginning with January 1 following the appointment [except Malone College Board of Trustees, see #1279] shall be counted toward the maximum number of years referred to in #1131.

## **1150 FINANCING THE WORK OF THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

### **1151 Apportionments**

1152 Funds needed for the leadership and support services of EFC-ER are raised by apportionment. The General Operating Budget, recommended by the Finance & Stewardship Board and adopted by the Yearly Meeting, is then assessed to the local churches based on membership reported in the last published EFC-ER statistics. Excluded are Extension Churches and Associate Memberships [see #518].

1153 Each local church is expected to pay its apportionment in monthly installments. The Finance & Stewardship Board shall enact a plan to rectify any balance unpaid at the end of the church fiscal year.

### **1154 The Great Commission Budget**

1155 The purpose is to serve as a unified approach for raising financial support for EFC-ER boards and their outreach programs and agencies.

1156 In April each board presents to the Finance & Stewardship Board its proposed budget for the ensuing year. The Finance and Stewardship chairperson then presents the total budget for the next calendar year to the June meeting of the Executive Board. With Executive Board approval, it is then presented to the Yearly Meeting delegates for adoption.

1157 The boards unite their efforts under the direction of the General Superintendent to raise the total sum.

1158 Boards will coordinate with the Yearly Meeting Treasurer for the financial needs of the Boards.

1159 In cases where Boards have an auxiliary treasurer, procedures will need to be enacted to ensure that funds are being handled in the most appropriate ways with proper accountability and audits.

1160 The General Superintendent, in consultation with the appropriate Board Chairs and the Yearly Meeting Treasurer, will assign funding amounts to each Board when funding goes below or above the budget. Care will be given to cover the most essential ministries of each Board.

**1175 ADMINISTRATION OF THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

**1176 Administrative Chart** – the accompanying chart (see page 60) shows at a glance:

- a. The relationships of local churches to EFC-ER of which they are members;
- b. The relationship of the Executive Board, General Superintendent, Area Superintendents, and the boards which provide services to the churches;
- c. The non-governance but promotional liaison relationship with and function of the district organization, all of which is explained in the following text. (Note: Solid lines indicate authoritative relationships and broken lines indicate a non-governance relationship.)

**1177 Executive Board**

1178 Composition:

Presiding Clerk of the EFC-ER

General Superintendent (Assistants and Area Superintendents may attend as non-voting resource people at the request of the General Superintendent.)

Executive Heads of Boards:

Evangelistic, Pastoral, & Extension (EP&E)

Ministerial Accreditation Board

Missionary Board

Friends Action Board

Christian Education Board

Friends Youth Board

Communications Board

Finance & Stewardship Board

Property Trustees Board

Pension Board

The President of Malone College

An elected representative from each district not to exceed nine consecutive years of service [see #1506].

1179 Meetings

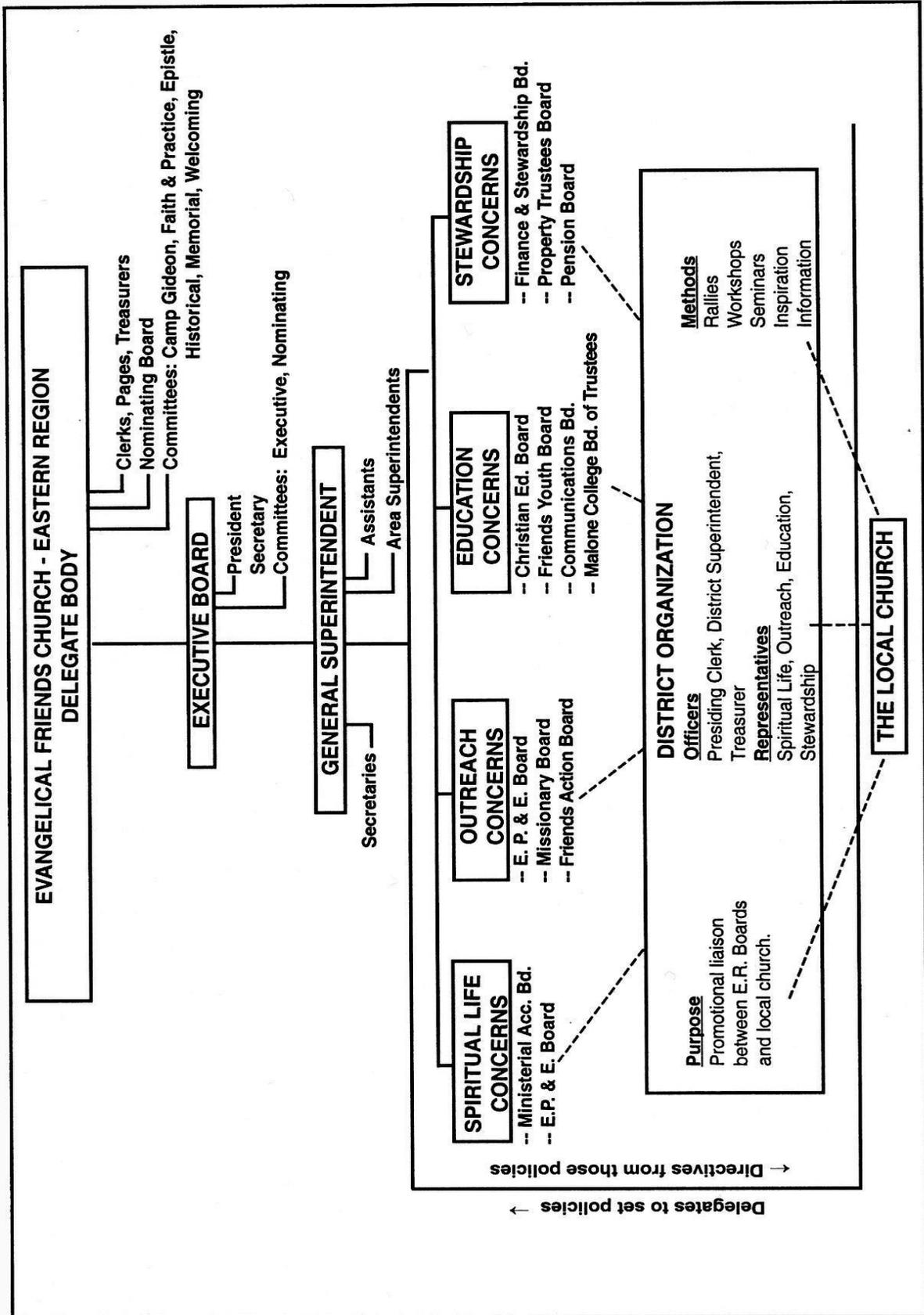
1180 The Executive Board is to meet in February and in June, with the dates and place of meeting to be set at meetings held during the Yearly Meeting. In case of emergency conditions, changes in these dates and place of meeting may be made by the President and General Superintendent.

1181 Special meetings may be called by the President or six members uniting, providing ten days notice is given to the members. The notice should indicate the purpose of the meeting.

1182 The President of the Board in cooperation with the General Superintendent is responsible to see that the various boards submit the required data to enable the Executive Board to exercise its coordinating function [see #1235]. They must also make certain that where boards make proposals that constitute changes in policies or programs, these changes are presented to the delegates for approval before implementation [see #1236].

1183 Quorum: A quorum consists of half of the members.

1184 The Executive Committee of the Executive Board consists of the President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Executive Board; the EFC-ER General Superintendent; the Presiding Clerk; and Presidents of these boards: EP&E, Missionary, and Finance & Stewardship. The Executive Committee is authorized to act for the Executive Board, in the interim between board meetings, on all matters of EFC-ER except those relating to policies and doctrinal standards. Its actions are subject to approval of the Executive Board at a regular or called meeting of the Board.



- 1185 Sub-Committees: The Executive Board appoints annually a Nominating Committee to propose names for President, Vice-President, Secretary, and General Superintendent (in appropriate years), and committees and representatives as needed.
- 1186 Duties and Powers
- 1187 The Executive Board derives its powers and directives from the Yearly Meeting, keeps complete minutes of its proceedings, and reports to the Yearly Meeting its actions and recommendations.
- 1188 In the interim between Yearly Meetings of EFC-ER the Executive Board represents EFC-ER and acts on its behalf in all cases where the interest and reputation of the Church may render it necessary.
- 1189 As the delegates at Yearly Meeting set policies and decide to implement certain concerns by appointing boards and administrative officers, these boards and officers are all answerable to the Executive Board and subject to its approval and coordination in establishing their programs, policies, work, and budgets. The Executive Board requires of each board under their care a prepared Manual of Operation including statements of policy and operating procedures, which must be approved by the Executive Board.
- 1190 Rather than have the boards meet during Yearly Meeting to produce programs, proposals, and budgets which must then pass the Finance & Stewardship Board and the Executive Board in time to reach the floor of the Yearly Meeting late in the week, boards should make these preparations during the year in time to present them to the June meeting of the Executive Board and thus to the early sessions of Yearly Meeting.
- 1191 In years when a General Superintendent's term expires, the Executive Board at its February meeting shall receive from its Nominating Committee a recommendation either for the continuance of the General Superintendent or another person for the office. After thorough and careful consideration, the Executive Board will make a recommendation to the delegates of the past year for a ballot vote by mail [see #1045 & 1049b]. The sending out of the recommendation and the receiving of the ballots shall be done by the Presiding Clerk of EFC-ER. The results shall be communicated to the General Superintendent and to the President of the Executive Board, who will notify all members of the Board.
- 1192 Should the vote be unfavorable or seriously divided, or should the General Superintendent resign, or a newly-elected General Superintendent resign, the matter may be taken up in the same way at the June meeting.
- 1193 The term of service of a General Superintendent begins July 1.

## **1200 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

### **1201 The General Superintendent**

- 1202 Term of Service: The usual term of service is three years, beginning on July 1. Normally, the General Superintendent should come under the same retirement rules as apply to pastors [see #1259].
- 1203 In instances where the General Superintendent may be incapacitated or resigns, the Executive Committee of the Executive Board shall appoint an Acting Superintendent.
- 1204 Election to Office: The General Superintendent is nominated by the Executive Board and elected through a vote by mail from the delegates to the last Yearly Meeting, as fully set forth under the duties of the Executive Board. Salary and other conditions of employment are the responsibility of the Executive Board.
- 1205 Duties and Responsibilities

- 1206 The General Superintendent shall be directly responsible to the Executive Board of the EFC-ER and shall exercise general oversight of and coordinate the work of all departments.
- 1207 The General Superintendent shall be the Statutory Agent for the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region, Incorporated, and represent it at Friends and interdenominational conferences.
- 1208 The duties of the General Superintendent are defined as follows:
- a. To plan, coordinate, and implement the worldwide strategy for the achievement of the goals of EFC-ER;
  - b. To establish annual objectives for the church and to submit these for the approval of the Executive Board at its June meeting;
  - c. To be an ex-officio member of all boards, and advise and consult with them with a view to solving their problems and promoting the interest of their work;
  - d. To delegate and supervise the work of the Administrative Assistants and Area Superintendents and to arrange conditions conducive to their individual satisfaction in the accomplishment of their goals;
  - e. To have a particular and prior responsibility to the work of the EP&E Board as it relates to the area of pastoral relations, to consult with and advise churches and pastors seeking change in pastoral relations, and to keep the District Superintendents advised of expected pastoral changes in their districts and of any recognized situations of difficulty [For procedure in calling senior pastors, see #826-828];
  - f. To seek to discover candidates for the ministry and to encourage them in all aspects of their preparation;
  - g. To give immediate attention if or when serious difficulties develop in a local church; to be responsive to the senior pastor and groups (official or unofficial) within the congregation, helping to clarify the troubling situation and giving counsel toward a suitable solution. If serious trouble in a local church becomes known to the General Superintendent, he or she should take the initiative to investigate and advise. In such a case, it is expected that there will be courteous cooperation and respect for the office and position of the General Superintendent;
  - h. To provide instruments for the periodic evaluation of the achievement objectives in each department of the church;
  - i. To recommend to the Nominating Committee of the Executive Board the appointment of administrative staff members;
  - j. To cooperate with the Finance & Stewardship Board in the organizing and supervising of the financial resources of the church and to maintain careful budgetary control;
  - k. To have overall responsibility for the administration of the Missionary, Extension, Christian Education, Social Action, and Youth Programs of the Church. With the Assistants and Area Superintendents, together they should seek to implement the policies and programs of the respective boards;
  - l. To serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of Malone College and to seek to promote its welfare among the churches;
  - m. To keep the members of EFC-ER churches fully informed of the needs, news, and opportunities of our work in all departments, and to promote adequate giving to the Great Commission Budget;

- n. To arrange the non-business activities of Yearly Meeting in consultation with the President of the EP&E Board and the Executive Committee of the Executive Board [see #1030];
- o. To be a true undershepherd (Acts 20:28).

1209 The EFC-ER expects pastors and people to hold the General Superintendent in honor and respect.

1210 While the implications of the office are far removed from the concept of dictatorship, the General Superintendent is in a position of authority, and it is expected that Friends shall comply cheerfully with the precept of Scripture to “obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves” (Hebrews 13:17). At the same time the General Superintendent shall exercise authority not as being a lord over God’s heritage, but as being an example to the flock.

**1211 Area Superintendents, Assistants, and Secretaries**

1212 In order to assist the General Superintendent with the many tasks, Area Superintendents shall be chosen. The areas served shall be determined by the various geographic factors. They shall be appointed by the General Superintendent with the approval of the Executive Board and their terms of office shall be from one to three years.

The special concerns of the Area Superintendents shall be:

- a. To encourage evangelism and church growth within the established churches;
- b. To be alert to the possibilities of planting new churches;
- c. To be pastors to pastors and their families within their areas, assisting them in developing their gifts and becoming more effective in ministry;
- d. To assist churches and pastors when and if pastoral change seems to be in the best interest for all concerned in consultation with the General Superintendent;
- e. To provide counsel to churches and pastors if difficulties arise;
- f. To encourage systematic teaching and training in the local churches and coordinate workshops for local leaders;
- g. To share information and interpret cooperative ministries and activities of the EFC-ER;
- h. To maintain liaison with district officers within their areas;
- i. To fulfill any other responsibility that may be assigned by the General Superintendent.

1213 The Choosing of Personnel: The choice of persons to serve as administrative assistants, secretaries, and other office workers is the responsibility of the General Superintendent who also drafts job descriptions and assigns duties to office personnel, subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

1214 Assistance to Boards: Since in the interests of coordination of the total work of the EFC-ER, the General Superintendent has administrative and promotional responsibility for all the boards (as stated in the list of duties), no board is at liberty to employ administrative or promotional personnel to be answerable directly to them and paid from their own budgets (except in institutions which they may oversee). They may, however, appeal to the General Superintendent and the Executive Board to employ any qualified persons answering directly to the General Superintendent and paid from apportionment funds.

**1225 BOARDS OF THE EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH – EASTERN REGION**

**1226 Assistance to Local Churches in Areas of Concern**

1227 EFC-ER is committed to assist its member churches in the fulfillment of the major areas of concern growing out of the Great Commission.

1228 To this end it has appointed boards to provide this service, carrying out projects on a scale beyond the ability of single churches to manage and providing assistance with programs to be implemented in the local church.

1229 Structure: The area of concern and the boards working within those areas of concern are currently as follows:

Concerns for Spiritual Life

Ministerial Accreditation Board

EP&E Board

Concerns for Outreach

EP&E Board

Missionary Board

Friends Action Board

Concerns for Education

Christian Education Board

Friends Youth Board

Communications Board

Malone College Board of Trustees

Concerns for Stewardship

Finance & Stewardship Board

Property Trustees Board

Pension Board

1230 Uniformity in Board Structure

1231 The standard size for EFC-ER boards is nine members (excepting the Executive Board, Malone Board of Trustees, Property Trustees Board, and Nominating Board), three to be elected each year for three-year terms, with tenure limited to three consecutive terms without a year off. During Yearly Meeting, district representatives may meet with their respective boards as non-voting members.

1232 Each board effects its own internal organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as they may deem necessary and setting the times and places of meetings. It is required that each board prepares and keeps current a Manual of Operation satisfactory to the Executive Board. These are always to be available to members of EFC-ER in the General Superintendent's office. All boards, following their meetings, are to release pertinent information to churches directly or through *The Facing Bench*.

1233 An ex-officio member of a board or committee is a full member with voting and other privileges.

1234 All boards are served administratively by the General Superintendent's office and are answerable to the Executive Board and the Yearly Meeting.

1235 All boards are to propose policies, programs, and annual goals to the June Executive Board meeting along with the budget proposed for carrying these out the following calendar year. Budgets are coordinated by the Finance & Stewardship Board, and policies and programs are coordinated by the Executive Board.

1236 No board, including the Executive Board, is at liberty to implement new policies or new programs, nor enter new fields, nor abandon old fields of service, without the consent of the delegates, for theirs is the authority to set policy.

The delegates, however, expect leadership from their officers and boards in the form of proposals accompanied by adequate data for making decisions. Once new policies, programs, or fields are approved by the delegates, it is the expectation that the officers and boards of EFC-ER shall have full administrative freedom to implement these with vigor and insight.

### **1237 Concerns For Spiritual Life**

#### **1238 Ministerial Accreditation Board**

1239 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed. The Board is answerable to the Executive Board and to the EFC-ER.

1240 As an important factor in the development and renewal of spiritual life in the local churches, the Board nurtures prospective ministerial candidates and brings them to the point of Recording as Ministers of the Gospel. [For Friends' view of the ministry, see #321-322.]

#### **1241 Duties**

- a. To discover able young people for the ministry and the beginnings of a divine call, and to encourage and nurture them throughout their training;
- b. To recommend through the Executive Board to the delegates any desirable changes in standards or procedures for the recording of ministers;
- c. To recommend educational goals, reading courses, and in-service training under supervision for candidates for the ministry;
- d. To administer the required process for recording;
- e. To recommend to the local church and, with their concurrence, to the Yearly Meeting, the name of a candidate judged ready for this responsibility;
- f. To arrange with the General Superintendent a service of recognition for those recorded by the Yearly Meeting;
- g. To suggest and promote means for the continued growth and effectiveness of recorded ministers of the Gospel;
- h. To prepare and keep current, with the approval of the Executive Board, the *Handbook For Preparing and Recording Ministers*, outlining in detail the process for recording, and a *Folio of Record* (both available from the General Superintendent), which will be a record of all information gathered about and care extended to the candidate, to be filed after recording with the General Superintendent as part of the minister's permanent record [see #1232].

1242 Procedures for Recording Ministers – Details are given in the *Handbook For Preparing and Recording Ministers*. The following are the major steps in the process:

- a. Candidates come under the care of the Ministerial Accreditation Board when they indicate in writing to the General Superintendent their desire to be recorded by EFC-ER.

- b. Information is gathered; the care of a sponsor is provided; academic standards, reading courses, and other forms of training are required; and examination by the Board is undertaken.
  - c. When judged ready, the Board makes recommendation of recording to the local church, and with their concurrence, to the Yearly Meeting for final action.
- 1243 Those ministers seeking transfer from other Evangelical Friends Yearly Meetings or like-denominations will be under the care of the Ministerial Accreditation Board for a minimum of one year. The Ministerial Accreditation Board will evaluate experience, education, and ministerial training and make appropriate recommendations. Interested candidates should indicate in writing to the General Superintendent their desire to transfer their credentials.
- 1244 Persons showing evidence of gift in the ministry in non-pastoral kinds of service may, at the discretion of the Board, be accepted for care upon the recommendation of the Administrative Council of a local church. Interested individuals should indicate in writing to the General Superintendent their desire to be under the care of the Ministerial Accreditation Board.
- 1245 The Evangelistic, Pastoral, and Extension Board (EP&E)
- 1246 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed. While Area Superintendents may be called in as resource people on occasion, they are not members of the Board.
- 1247 Duties
- a. To maintain a Spiritual Life Committee, composed of Board members assigned the following duties:
    1. To develop programs and materials for the enrichment of worship and to assist in making worship more meaningful;
    2. To encourage creation of methods and means for spiritual development and renewal in the local church, such as small groups for Bible study, prayer and sharing; lay witness missions; retreats; revivals; seminars; and other special meetings;
    3. To assist in equipping Elders of Spiritual Life for the care of their responsibilities;
    4. To aid Overseers in knowing how to prepare candidates for church membership and how to give shepherding lay care to the church membership;
    5. To make available instruments such as the Spiritual Life Inventory [see #7000] to assist local churches and superintendents in the spiritual nurture of a congregation.
  - b. To assist the General Superintendent in the area of pastoral relations, especially when difficulties arise.
- 1248 For additional responsibilities in the area of Spiritual Life, see #610-619. For additional duties in the area of Outreach, see #1261.
- 1249 Authority Over Local Churches
- 1250 If any church manifests such lack of unity and love as may lead to disruption, the EP&E Board is directed to advise and assist in arriving at a satisfactory settlement [see #1208g & 1212e].

- 1251 If it should become impossible to settle the differences in such a church, the Board is directed to take the control and management of the church until such time as it sees fit to return it to its regular plan of operation. In such cases the church is directed to turn over immediately to this Board the direction of all business meetings, the care of its business affairs, and all records as the Board may deem advisable. The Board shall not resort to these extreme methods unless in their judgment, disruption is imminent, or the good name and service of the church is dangerously imperiled [see #618-619].
- 1252 Authority Over Pastors
- 1253 Acceptance of ministerial credentials and/or pastoral responsibility in EFC-ER becomes tacit and legal acceptance of the doctrine, testimonies, and organizational provisions stated in Faith and Practice.
- 1254 No minister or worker shall be engaged by any church, either as pastor or evangelist, whose services are considered unsatisfactory by this Board.
- 1255 Principles for Resolving Charges: Should information come to the attention of this Board that the service and conduct of any pastor in EFC-ER is cause for grave concern, or is not for the best interest of, or repugnant to, the good name and order of any local church, or should the General Superintendent believe the situation serious, this Board shall immediately take steps to investigate the matter.
- a. If, after a fair and impartial hearing (time and place and manner of such hearing to be determined by the Board), it shall be the judgment of the Board that the services of the pastor should be terminated, either at the end of the current pastoral year or sooner, regardless of the length of time for which the pastor was called, the Board shall issue written orders to this effect to the church, which shall proceed to carry out such orders without delay.
  - b. Persons so judged have the right of appeal to the Executive Board. Such appeals must be made in writing and the decision of the Executive Board, which is final, shall be given in writing to those concerned.
- 1256 Principles of Christian Conciliation: The working relationship between a church and its employee(s) shall be guided by the principles consistent with I Corinthians 6:1-8 [see #523, 850, & 864].
- a. All EFC-ER churches, pastors, pastoral staff, and other EFC-ER church employees agree that should there arise disagreements that cannot be satisfactorily resolved within the local church, both the pastor(s), pastoral staff, and/or other church employees and the local church will submit to the guidance and decisions of the EP&E Board and the General Superintendent (Ephesians 5:21, Hebrews 13:17).
  - b. Should the matter(s) at hand still not be resolved satisfactorily, both the church and the pastor (and/or other church employee) agree to abide by the final results of Biblically based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with Biblical principles offered by a Christian conciliation ministry (Matthew 18:16). The EFC-ER Office will keep a list of several available ministries and attorneys.
- 1257 Divorced Pastor's Policy: We desire to apply our understanding of the sanctity of marriage [see #308] to the matter of a pastoral candidate who is divorced. Under most circumstances, divorced persons will not be eligible for pastoral ministry or recording in the EFC-ER. However, the redemptive tone of the New Testament must allow for careful investigation and consideration of exceptional cases. Exceptional circumstances should be dealt with prior to employment and/or the beginning of the recording process. Persons will be considered as ineligible for pastoral ministry or recording unless the breaking of the marriage bond was due to adultery or permanent desertion by the spouse, or divorce prior to conversion. The divorce will be a part of the pastoral candidate's record. Individual churches will of course have the choice to deny or accept such pastoral candidates. [see #307-310]

1258 Principles of Restoration: When a minister is accused of sexually immoral conduct, the following procedure will be used, which is consistent with both the principle and spirit of Galatians 6:1-2.

a. General Guidelines

1. The General Superintendent and the Area Superintendent, as designated by the General Superintendent, will meet all parties involved as appropriate to evaluate the charges.
2. If the charges are deemed true, the President of the EP&E Board will be informed.
3. The Superintendent will arrange a meeting with the elders of the minister's home church where the minister will share his/her confession. Usually the minister will also share his/her confession with the assembled congregation.
4. The minister will immediately be released from all ministerial responsibilities and placed on discipline under the care of the EP&E Board in consultation with the local church and the EP&E Board will decide if and when the minister and spouse may return in any non-pastoral capacity to the church in which they have served.
5. A three-person Restoration Team, acceptable to the minister involved, will be immediately appointed by the Superintendent and the Executive Committee of the EP&E Board to meet with the minister and spouse to assist in restoration.
6. Professional Christian counseling for the minister and spouse is a necessary part of this process.
7. In the event that the spouse of a minister becomes involved in sexual immorality, a similar restorative action will be taken. Any limitation of the minister's service in such a case will be subject to the decision of the Executive Committee of the EP&E Board.

b. Guidelines for the Restoration Team

1. The task of the team will first be to discover whether the minister involved shows a spirit of sorrow and of genuine penitence. If this is so, they will then seek to assist him/her in spiritual restoration in his/her own life and also in his/her family relationships.
2. The Team will maintain strict confidentiality. They will meet with the minister and his/her spouse regularly and commit themselves to much prayer for the minister and his/her family.
3. They will carefully counsel with the minister and his/her spouse to discover the sequence of events which led to this failure. Then they will plan with them to prevent the reoccurrence of such a situation.
4. The Team will evaluate restorative progress periodically in reports to the Executive Committee of the EP&E Board. This Committee will then decide whether to continue the process or not.
5. If after a certain period of time the Restoration Team believes that the minister is failing to respond to counseling, they will recommend to the EP&E Board that the process be concluded.

c. Assumptions of the Process

1. Complete submission to the Restoration Team is required for success.

2. Usually a minimum of one year is required before any recommendation for further ministry can be considered.
3. While the Eastern Region wholeheartedly endorses the practice of restoration to Christ, His church, and the family, we are currently unable to speak unitedly on the matter of reinstatement to pastoral ministry within the EFC-ER. Therefore, until such time as greater unity prevails, pastors who have successfully completed the restoration process are free to seek pastoral ministry only outside of Eastern Region.
4. The restoration will be a part of the pastor's record. Possible employers will, of course, have the authority to deny or accept such pastors for ministry.

The concern in the Restoration process is not only for the minister, but also for his/her spouse and family. They all must be given opportunity to work through the situation as they are able.

1259 Retirement of Ministers: The EP&E Board has responsibility to introduce retiring pastors to the Pension Board prior to the release of pension funds. Pastors are eligible for retirement at age 59½ and recommended at age 70. [see other pastoral issues in #825-884].

## **1260 Concerns For Outreach**

### 1261 The Evangelistic, Pastoral, and Extension Board (EP&E)

In addition to the material for this Board under Concerns for Spiritual Life [see #1245-1259] these duties continue:

- a. To foster church growth [see #611-612]:

In fostering church growth, the EP&E Board realizes that finance alone is not the main requirement, but there must also be wise leadership, committed consistency, fervent prayer, and vision.

To this end attempts will be made to identify, recruit, train, and deploy those in local churches who have the possibility of becoming leaders and catalytic church planters.

Also, the EP&E Board will provide training for lay leadership through the local churches and districts. Seminars on church planting are encouraged at the Friends Men In Missions Retreat, the Women's Missionary Fellowship Retreat, and at the Youth Conferences.

Prospective church planting pastors are encouraged to have a year of "on the job training" under the supervision of a pastor where church growth has been significant.

Local churches or cluster churches, with the approval of the EP&E Board, will take the initiative in funding the purchase of suitable property.

- b. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232].
- c. To work with the Evangelical Friends International (North America Region) on cooperative projects especially related to evangelism and church growth.

### 1262 Missionary Board

1263 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed.

1264 Duties

- a. To prepare and adopt, with the approval of the Executive Board and the Yearly Meeting, a comprehensive set of policies to be followed in the foreign missionary program of EFC-ER;
- b. To propose to the Executive Board and the Yearly Meeting new programs, including the delineating of fields, areas, and types of work to be added as well as old programs to be phased out or closed;
- c. To administer the approved programs, selecting personnel, fixing their compensation and working conditions, organizing field work, etc;
- d. To represent EFC-ER in liaison with other church and mission bodies in approved programs of cooperative endeavor;
- e. To prepare budgets for the work of the Board and for the Finance & Stewardship Board, and reports for the Executive Board;
- f. To promote prayer and financial support for the work with adequate information and encouragement to its constituency, and especially to assist local missionary societies with needed materials;
- g. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232];
- h. To annually appoint two members to the Missions Commission of the Evangelical Friends International (North America Region).

1265 Friends Action Board

1266 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed.

1267 Duties

- a. To give leadership to the EFC-ER churches helping them to become aware of moral and social issues and to develop programs of action in response to evils;
- b. To promote with information and encouragement a wide range of community ministries with which churches can serve areas of need;
- c. To promote a series of Christian service projects involving wider areas than the local community – e.g., peace testimony and disaster service;
- d. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232].

**1268 Concerns For Education**

1269 Christian Education Board

1270 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed. Resource people may be asked to sit with the Board on occasion.

1271 Duties

- a. To promote and improve the quality of Christian Education work done in EFC-ER at the child, youth, and adult levels based on policies approved by the Executive Board and the Yearly Meeting;
- b. To propose programs for children and, when approved by the Executive Board, to promote these in the local churches;
- c. To promote leadership and teacher training in the churches;
- d. To examine and recommend Sunday School and youth program literature to the churches;
- e. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232];
- f. To annually appoint two members to the Commission on Christian Education of the Evangelical Friends International (North America Region).

1272 Friends Youth Board

1273 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed.

1274 Duties

- a. To organize and maintain for Christian interest and fellowship Friends Youth groups in local churches among junior and senior high school youth;
- b. To develop leadership in Friends Youth groups through devotional services;
- c. To encourage youth in building habits of daily devotions, Christian stewardship, and the support of the total work and standards of the church;
- d. To develop in youth a sense of obligation for world evangelization;
- e. To sponsor area conferences and camps to help achieve these objectives;
- f. To help local Friends Youth to work with ideas and programs which have been proven effective;
- g. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232];
- h. To annually appoint one member to meet on the Youth Commission of the Evangelical Friends International (North America Region).

1275 Communications Board

1276 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed.

1277 Duties

- a. To cooperate in the publishing of periodicals from the EFI Communications Commission;

- b. To arrange for printing and distribution of the Faith and Practice and the EFC- ER Yearbook which contains the Yearly Meeting Minutes and Directory;
- c. To arrange for press releases or press coverage for the Yearly Meeting;
- d. To publish church bulletins and other EFC-ER publications as may be assigned;
- e. To provide oversight of all manuscripts intended for publication, promoting or discouraging the publication at the Board's discretion. The oversight shall include the examination of the publication in light of Biblical principles;
- f. To reprint and distribute any writings already published upon the authorization of the Yearly Meeting;
- g. To administer the use of the proceeds of the H. H. Mosher Fund;
- h. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232];
- i. To appoint annually two members to the Publications Commission of Evangelical Friends International (North America Region).

1278 The Malone College Board of Trustees

1279 Composition: There are not fewer than 25 and not more than 33 Trustees composed of the following:

The Malone College President (ex-officio) who shall be or become a member of an EFC-ER church.

The EFC-ER shall elect seventeen Trustees: two of such Trustees being the General Superintendent and the President of the Executive Board (should the President of the Executive Board be an employee of the college, then the Presiding Clerk shall serve as a Trustee in his place, and if the Presiding Clerk is an employee of the college, then someone named by the Executive Board shall serve); and fifteen Trustees, five elected each year for a three-year term. The Trustees shall take office at the close of the Yearly Meeting sessions. EFC-ER has the right to replace any of the 17 Trustees that it has elected at any time for their unexpired term.

The Board of Trustees of Malone College shall elect the remaining Trustees, which shall number up to 15, to serve as it shall determine.

1280 The EFC-ER regards Malone College as an institution founded and operated to express its concern and provide for its needs in Christian higher education. It supports the College through the Great Commission Budget and encourages its youth to attend.

1281 Malone College is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio and is certified by the Ohio Board of Regents to grant certain degrees. It is fully accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

1282 It operates under its own Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation, which recognizes the right of the EFC-ER to appoint certain Trustees and to receive an annual report from its President. EFC-ER recognizes the need for loyalty to the doctrines and to the Faith and Practice of EFC-ER and reserves the right to approve any amendments of the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation.

1283 Article Five of the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation provides that "Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an

exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue law) as the Trustees shall determine, however, subject to any restrictions placed upon said assets by the donors. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be conveyed, assigned, and transferred to the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region to be used as the church shall determine."

1284 Within the framework of the foregoing provisions, the Board of Trustees is charged with the full authority and responsibility of administering the College.

**1285 Concerns For Stewardship**

1286 Finance & Stewardship Board

1287 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. Three of these are chosen for their special qualifications to act as a Development Committee. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, a Development Committee, and other officers and sub-committees as needed. The EFC-ER Treasurer, if not a member of this Board, may be invited to attend at any time as a resource person, as may also the EFC-ER Administrative Assistant designated to handle stewardship and development matters on occasion. It is also understood that the Treasurers, or other representatives designated by the board, of the various boards will be on occasion consulted and/or invited to hearings on their budget requests and other matters pertaining to their interests.

1288 Duties

- a. To coordinate all the financial affairs of the EFC-ER and exercise regulatory control over all appeals for funds;
- b. To consider all requests for funds for the General Operating Budget and to propose an assessment to the Yearly Meeting for raising this sum;
- c. To require attendance of, and reports from, Trustees and Board representatives of those with financial concerns coming under the jurisdiction of the Finance & Stewardship Board;
- d. To promote stewardship throughout EFC-ER;
- e. To review requested funds from the Boards, propose the Great Commission Budget for approval by the Yearly Meeting delegates, and seek to raise funding for the same;
- f. To set interest rates for loans from Development Trust Funds;
- g. To receive and administer charitable legacies and donations, and to give advice and assistance to prospective donors concerning such gifts. In situations where real property is involved, this responsibility shall be a joint one with the Property Trustees Board of EFC-ER;
- h. To give the Yearly Meeting annual reports from the Development Fund;
- i. To appoint annually the EFC-ER Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, and an outside auditing firm; supervising and receiving reports from each;
- j. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232].

1289 Property Trustees Board

1290 Composition: Four members, two elected annually for two-year terms. One of these shall be from outside Ohio. Three of these, resident in Ohio, constitute the Executive Committee and shall be the

legal body for properties located in the State of Ohio. In the event that EFC-ER would acquire property in a state other than Ohio, which by its laws require a resident trustee(s), the Property Trustees Board shall have the power to appoint a special trustee(s) for the purpose of dealing with or transacting business concerning the specific property. Such special trustee(s) shall function only with the authority of the Property Trustees Board as a whole.

1291 The Board will effect its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed.

1292 Duties

- a. To hold title to and care for the maintenance of EFC-ER properties;
- b. To inspect and ascertain titles to lands of any of the local churches of EFC-ER;
- c. To execute legal deeds, mortgages, leases, or other legal instruments by signature of the President and Secretary when authorized by the Property Trustees Board and the Executive Board;
- d. To advise the Executive Board on property matters including gathering information on specific projects;
- e. To prepare and keep current a Manual of Operation [see #1232].

1293 Pension Board

1294 Composition: Nine members, three elected each year for a three-year term. The Board effects its own organization, appointing a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and other officers and sub-committees as needed.

1295 Duties

- a. To promote and administer the Pension Plan and the accompanying life and health insurance benefits;
- b. To oversee the collection, investment, and distribution of funds for the Pension Plan in accordance with the investment selections of the pension participants;
- c. To see that all churches and full-time pastors participate in the Plan as required by the EFC-ER;
- d. To give guidelines to the Pension Fund manager in his/her supervision of the investment program;
- e. To prepare and keep current for distribution to the public a Manual of Operation [see #1232] and a brochure explaining the Fund, its benefits and operation;
- f. To review periodically the Pension and Insurance Plans so as to better serve the needs of the participants;
- g. To develop and maintain job descriptions for those involved in the administration of the Pension and Insurance Plans in order to bring clarity and accountability to the procedures;
- h. To distribute funds to the beneficiaries according to the directives of the Pension Plan.

## **THE DISTRICT**

1500 The purpose of the District is to be a channel by which the services of the Boards of the EFC-ER may be communicated to the local churches with inspiration, instruction, motivation, and promotion; to help the local churches achieve their goals in the four great areas of concern growing out of The Great Commission around which the local church is organized; and to care for any business concerning the District.

### **1501 Organization of the District**

1502 Officers

1503 The District Executive Committee is composed of three members:

- a. The Presiding Clerk is to preside at occasional meetings for business concerning only the District.
- b. The District Superintendent is to assist the General Superintendent, when requested, in the care of pastors and churches; and to chair the District Executive Committee in arranging District Rallies, workshops, retreats, seminars, etc., in cooperation with EFC-ER Boards. District Rallies shall be planned in cooperation with the District Representative for that area of concern.
- c. The Treasurer is to receive, record, and disburse all district funds. EFC-ER Great Commission and Apportionment funds shall be sent directly to the EFC-ER Treasurer.

### **1504 Representatives**

1505 Each of the representatives is to promote the interests of his or her area of concern and the services of the EFC-ER Boards serving in the area of concern to the local churches of the District. During Yearly Meeting, District Representatives may meet with their respective boards as non-voting members.

Representative for Spiritual Life  
Representative for Outreach  
Representative for Education  
Representative for Stewardship

1506 Representative of the District to the Executive Board of EFC-ER (not to exceed nine consecutive years of service): This representative shall also assist the Historical Committee in gathering material for the Archives of the EFC-ER. This person may well be one of the foregoing officers [see #1178].

1507 Representative of the District to the Nominating Board of EFC-ER (not to exceed nine consecutive years of service): The person filling this office may also fill one of the foregoing offices [see #1126].

### **1508 Alternate Organization Plans**

1509 Districts with fewer than five churches could well do with only a Presiding Clerk and District Superintendent (and representatives to the Executive Board and Nominating Board, if other than the two are named).

1510 Districts with more than ten churches and those with special projects are at liberty to increase the organization in ways which seem suitable to them.

### **1511 Meetings**

1512 The Executive Committee may meet at the call of the District Superintendent or fix regular meeting times as may best suit their purpose. They should plan the meetings of the District, including an

annual fall business session (which may be a part of another rally) to elect officers for the coming year. These may be nominated by a Nominating Committee appointed by the Executive Committee.

- 1513 District Meetings preferably should be addressed to areas of vital concern – in the form of rallies, workshops, seminars, or whatever the Executive Committee arranges and believes will be most effective. Such District Meetings shall be planned in communication with the leadership of EFC-ER.
- 1514 The pastors of the District should normally meet monthly at the call of the District Superintendent, who will chair the meetings for fellowship, prayer, instruction, inspiration, and in-service training. This also gives the General Superintendent opportunity to express concerns either in person or through area superintendents or assistants.
- 1515 When in the judgment of any District it is felt desirable to have a regular meeting of members of the Spiritual Life Commission of the District, this can be arranged by the Executive Committee of the District.

## ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS

### 1750 Friends Men In Missions

This organization challenges the men of EFC-ER to participate in the missionary emphasis of the denomination. Not only are the men of EFC-ER given opportunity for spiritual fellowship at their annual retreat, but also they work together to support vital mission projects.

For the purpose of gaining information, the Superintendent of Missionary Education for Men may attend meetings of the Missionary Board at his own expense, or that of Friends Men in Missions, without the privilege of voting.

### 1751 Women's Missionary Fellowship

This organization provides fellowship for the women of EFC-ER and unites them in the promotion and support of missionary outreach both at home and abroad. They select their own leadership, plan an annual retreat, and have special sessions during Yearly Meeting. In addition, the funds they voluntarily raise for projects approved by the Missionary Board are significant each year.

For the purpose of gaining information, the Coordinator of Home and Foreign Projects, or another representative may attend meetings of the Missionary Board at her own expense or that of WMF without the privilege of voting.

### 1752 Friends Disaster Service

Friends Disaster Service (FDS) is incorporated by the State of Ohio (September 1980) with its stated purpose being: "To provide food, clothing, and shelter to our fellow men [people] who are victimized by trouble or disaster; the providing of labor, equipment, and materials for rebuilding and restoration of victims' homes and property."

The program is coordinated by a five-member Board of Directors, accountable to the Friends Action Board of EFC-ER.

### 1753 Friends Adult Ministries

This organization provides events for fellowship, worship, education, and service opportunities for adults age 50 and over. The group is self-funded and welcomes participants from all areas and districts of EFC-ER.

### 1754 EFC-ER Camps

1755 The following camp is owned and operated by a District of EFC-ER:

- a. Camp Wakefield, Wakefield, Virginia, is under the sponsorship of Virginia District with authority to name an Executive Committee, a Camp Director, and a Camp Board.

1756 Camp Gideon, which is located at Mechanicstown, Ohio, is the only camp owned by EFC-ER.

To oversee Camp Gideon, a camp committee of nine persons is named by the EFC-ER Nominating Board with three persons completing their three-year term of office each year. The Committee has authority to organize itself and to name sub-committees as follows:

- a. The Operations Committee, whose primary duty is to set policies, name staff, and outline procedures for operating Camp Gideon.

- b. The Development Committee, whose primary duty is to oversee the physical development of the Camp.
- c. The Finance Committee, whose function is in the areas of budgeting and fund-raising.

The Camp Director, who represents the Camp Board, is responsible to the EFC-ER Executive Board through the General Superintendent.

## **THE APPENDIX**

### **Historical Documents**

- 2000 The Epistle of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados, 1671  
3000 The Declaration of Faith issued by the Richmond Conference, 1887

### **The Statements of Faith and/or Organization of Affiliated Organizations**

- 4000 The Constitution of Evangelical Friends International (EFI)  
5000 The Evangelical Friends Mission (EFM)  
6000 The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)

### **Spiritual Life Inventory**

- 7000 Spiritual Life Inventory for Personal Examination and Spiritual Life Inventory for the Local Church

### **The Membership Application**

- 8000 The Application for Adult Membership  
8001 The Application for Parental Request for Child Membership  
8002 The Application for Transfer of Membership Between EFC-ER Churches

## HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

2000 The Epistle of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados, 1671

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God; who is the Creator of all things, both in heaven and earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; Who is God over all, blessed forever; to Whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and evermore!

And we do own and believe in Jesus Christ, His beloved and only begotten Son, in Whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the virgin Mary; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; Who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by Whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers all things were created by Him.

And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, Who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; and that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and we do believe that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God.

This Jesus, Who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we do believe that there is no other foundation to be laid but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; Who, we believe tasted death for every man, and shed His blood for all men and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world; according as John the Baptist testified, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the Captain of our Salvation (Who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and wrath to come, and destroys the devil and His works), Who is the seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to wit, Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.

That He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved.

It is He alone Who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; He it is Who is our Prophet, Whom Moses long since testified of, saying "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto Me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear the prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." Acts 3:22-23. (He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." And He rules our hearts by His law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death.)

And we have no life but by Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by Whose blood we are cleansed and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God.

And He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace and peace; the Author and finisher of our faith.

Now this Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly Man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in Him Whom the high priests raged against, and said He had spoken blasphemy; Whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against and put to death; the same Whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach an horrible lie, namely, that His disciples came and stole Him away by night while they slept.

And after He was risen from the dead, the history of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus for preaching Christ and His resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, Whom we own to be our life and salvation.

And as concerning the Holy Scriptures we do believe they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who (as the Scripture itself declares, II Peter 1:21) "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled (He that fulfills them is Christ); and they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," II Timothy 3:16-17; and are able to make wise "unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (We call the Holy Scriptures, as Christ and the apostles called them, and holy men of God called them -- the words of God.)

We do declare that we do esteem it a duty incumbent on us to pray with, and for, to teach and instruct, and admonish those in and belonging to our families. Now, Negroes and Indians make up a very great part of the families in this island for who an account will be required by Him Who comes to judge the quick and the dead, at the great day of judgment, when every one shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil; at that day, I say, of the resurrection both of the good and of the bad, of the just and the unjust. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." II Thessalonians 1:7-10. See also II Peter 3:3.

We sincerely confess that divine honor and worship is due to the Son of God; and that He is, in true faith to be prayed unto, and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ called upon (as the primitive Christians did), because of the glorious union of oneness of the Father and Son, and that we cannot acceptably offer up prayer and praises to God, nor receive a gracious answer or blessing from God, but in and through His dear Son.

-- From a declaration of Christian Doctrine  
given forth in behalf of the Church, 1671.

#### 3000 The Declaration of Faith Issued by the Richmond Conference, 1887

It is under a deep sense of what we owe to Him who has loved us that we feel called upon to offer a declaration of those fundamental doctrines of Christian truth that have always been professed by our branch of the Church of Christ.

#### OF GOD

We believe in one holy (Isaiah 6:3, 57:15), almighty (Genesis 17:1), all wise (Romans 11:33, 16:27) and everlasting (Psalms 90:1-2) God, the Father, (Matthew 11:25-27), the Creator (Genesis 1:1) and preserver (Job 7:20) of all things; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, by whom all things were made (John 1:3), and by whom all things consist (Colossians 1:17), and in one Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son (John 15:26, 16:7), The Reprover (John 16:8) of the world, the Witness for Christ (John 15:26), and the Teacher (John 14:26), Guide (John 16:13), and Sanctifier (II Thessalonians 2:13) of the people of God; and that these three are one in the eternal Godhead (Matthew 28:19, John 10:30, 17:21), to whom be honor, praise and thanksgiving, now and forever. Amen.

#### THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

It is with reverence and thanksgiving that we profess our unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. (John 1:18) In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. (John 1:4) He is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:9); through whom the light of truth in all ages has proceeded from the Father of lights. (James 1:17). He is the eternal Word (John 1:1) who was with God and was God, revealing Himself in infinite wisdom and love, both as man's Creator (Colossians 1:13-16) and Redeemer (Colossians 1:14); for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible. Conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20), born of the virgin Mary, (Matthew 1:23-25, Luke 1:35), the Word was made flesh (John 1:14), and dwelt amongst men. He came in the fullness (Galatians 4:4) of the appointed time, being verily foreordained before the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:20) that He might fulfill (Isaiah 11:1-5, Isaiah 52:13-15) the eternal counsel of the righteousness and love of God for the

redemption of man. (Isaiah 53) In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Colossians 2:9) Though he was rich, yet for our sakes, He became poor, veiling in the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7) the brightness of His glory, that, through Him, the kindness and love of God (Titus 3:4) toward man might appear in a manner every way suited to our wants and finite capacities. He went about doing good (Acts 10:38); for us He endured (Isaiah 53:4, Luke 12:50, 19:41, 22:44) sorrow, hunger, thirst, weariness (John 4:6), pain, unutterable anguish (Luke 22:43-44) of body and soul, being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15). Thus humbling Himself that we might be exalted, He emphatically recognized the duties and the sufferings of humanity as among the means whereby, through the obedience of faith, we are to be disciplined for heaven, sanctifying them to us, by Himself performing and enduring them, leaving us the one perfect example (I Peter 2:21) of all righteousness (Matthew 3:15) in self-sacrificing love.

But not only in these blessed relations must the Lord Jesus be ever precious to His people. In Him is revealed as true God and perfect man (Ephesians 4:13), a Redeemer, at once able to suffer and almighty to save. He became obedient (Philippians 2:8) unto death, even the death of the cross, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2); in whom we have redemption through His blood (Ephesians 1:7), the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. It is our joy to confess that the remission of sins which any partake of is only in and by virtue of His most satisfactory sacrifice and not otherwise. (Barclay's Apology, p. 141). He was buried and rose again the third day (I Corinthians 15:4) according to the Scriptures, becoming the first fruits (I Corinthians 15:23) of them that sleep, and having shown Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3), He ascended into heaven, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, now to appear in the presence of God for us. (Hebrews 1:3, 9:24). With the apostles who beheld His ascension, we rest in the assurance of the angelic messengers, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11, and see v. 7). With the apostle John, we would desire to unite in the words "Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20). And now, whilst thus watching and waiting, we rejoice to believe that He is our King and Savior, He is the one Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant (I Timothy 1:5, Hebrews 9:15), who makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and man offending (George Fox's Epistle to the Governor of Barbados); the great High Priest whose priesthood is unchangeable. (Hebrews 4:14, 7:24). He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25) All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. (Matthew 28:18). By Him the world shall be judged in righteousness (Acts 17:31); for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the son even as they honor the Father (John 5:22-23). All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28-29 R.V.).

We reverently confess and believe that divine honor and worship are due to the Son of God, and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and His name to be called upon, as the Primitive Christians did, because of the glorious oneness of the Father and the Son; and that we cannot acceptably offer prayer and praises to God, nor receive from Him a gracious answer or blessing, but in and through his dear Son (Declaration of 1693 in Sewell's History, Volume II, 379).

We would, with humble thanksgiving, bear an especial testimony to our Lord's perpetual dominion and power in His church. Through Him the redeemed in all generations have derived their light, their forgiveness, and their joy. All are members of this church, by whatsoever name they may be called among men, who have been baptized by the one Spirit into the one body; who are builded as living stones upon Christ, the Eternal Foundation, and are united in faith and love in the fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son. Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the alone Head. (Ephesians 1:22). All its true members are made one in Him. They have washed their robes and made them white in His precious blood, (Revelation 7:14) and He has made them priests unto God and His Father. (Revelation 1:6). Then He dwells in their hearts by faith, and gives them of His peace. His will is their law, and in Him they enjoy the true liberty, a freedom from the bondage of sin.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is, in the unity of the eternal Godhead, one with the Father and with the Son. (Matthew 28:19, II Corinthians 13:14). He is the comforter "Whom" saith Christ, "the Father will send in my name." (John 14:26). He testifies of and glorifies Jesus. (John 16:14). It is the Holy Spirit who makes the evil manifest. He quickens them that are dead in trespasses and sins, and opens the inward eye to behold the Lamb

of God that taketh away the sins of the world. (Ephesians 2:1). Coming in the name and with the authority of the risen and ascended Savior, He is the precious pledge of the continued love and care of our exalted King. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them, as a realized possession, to the believing soul. (John 16:14). Dwelling in the hearts of believers (John 14:17), He opens their understanding that they may understand the Scriptures, and becomes, to the humbled and surrendered heart, the Guide, Comforter, Support, and Sanctifier.

We believe that the essential qualification for the Lord's service is bestowed upon His children through the reception of and baptism with the Holy Ghost. This Holy Spirit is the seal of reconciliation to the believer in Jesus (Ephesians 1:13-14), the witness to his adoption into the family of the redeemed (Romans 8:15-16), the earnest and the foretaste of the full communion and perfect joy which are reserved for them that endure unto the end.

We own no principle of spiritual light, life, or holiness, inherent by nature in the mind or heart of man. We believe in no principle of spiritual light, life, or holiness, but the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, bestowed on mankind, in various measures and degrees, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the capacity to receive this blessed influence, which, in an especial manner, gives man pre-eminence above the beasts that perish; which distinguishes him, in every nation and in every clime, as an object of the redeeming love of God; as a being not only intelligent but responsible; for whom the message of salvation through our crucified Redeemer is, under all possible circumstances, designed to be a joyful sound. The Holy Spirit must ever be distinguished, both from the conscience which He enlightens, and from the natural faculty of reason, which when unsubjected to His Holy influence, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. As the eye is to the body, so is the conscience to our inner being, the organ by which we see; and as both light and life are essential to the eye, so conscience, as the inward eye, cannot see aright without the quickening and illumination of the Spirit of God. One with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit can never disown or dishonor our once crucified and now risen and glorified Redeemer. We disavow all professed illumination or spirituality that is divorced from faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem.

#### THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

It has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that, therefore, there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." (John 20:31). The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound, as Christians, to accept, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions. No one can be required to believe, as an article of faith, any doctrine which is not contained in them; and whatsoever anyone says or does, contrary to the Scriptures, though under profession of the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion. To the Christian, the Old Testament comes with the solemn and repeated attestation of his Lord. It is to be read in the light and completeness of the New; thus will its meaning be unveiled, and the humble disciple will be taught to discern the unity and mutual adaptation of the whole, and the manysidedness and harmony of its testimony to Christ. The great Inspirer of Scripture is ever its true Interpreter. He performs this office in condescending love, not by superseding our understandings, but by renewing and enlightening them. Where Christ presides, idle speculation is hushed; His doctrine is learned in the doing of His will, and all knowledge ripens into a deeper and richer experience of His truth and love.

#### MAN'S CREATION AND FALL

It pleased God, in His wisdom and goodness, to create man out of the dust of the earth, and to breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a living soul; formed after the image and likeness of God, capable of fulfilling the divine law, and of holding communion with his Maker. (Genesis 2:7, 1:26-27). Being free to obey or to disobey, he fell into transgression, through unbelief, under the temptation of Satan (Genesis 3:1-7), and, thereby, lost that spiritual life of righteousness in which he was created; and so, death passed upon him, as the inevitable consequence of his sin. (Romans 5:12). As the children of fallen Adam, all mankind bear his image. They partake of his nature, and are involved in the consequences of his fall. To every member of every successive generation, the words of the Redeemer are alike applicable, "Ye must be born again." (John 3:7). But while we hold these views of the lost condition of man in the fall, we rejoice to believe that sin is not imputed to any until they transgress the divine law, after sufficient capacity has been given to understand it; and

that infants, though inheriting this fallen nature, are saved in the infinite mercy of God through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

#### JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16). We believe that justification is of God’s free grace, through which, upon repentance and faith, He pardons our sins, and imparts to us a new life. It is received, not for any works of righteousness that we have done (Titus 3:5), but in the unmerited mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Through faith in Him, and the shedding of His precious blood, the guilt of sin is taken away, and we stand reconciled to God. The offering up of Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world is the appointed manifestation both of the righteousness and of the love of God. In this propitiation the pardon of sin involves no abrogation or relaxation of the law of holiness. It is the vindication and establishment of that law (Romans 3:31), in virtue of the free and righteous submission of the Son of God Himself to all its requirements. He, the unchangeably just, proclaims Himself the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. (Romans 3:26). From age to age, the sufferings and death of Christ have been a hidden mystery, and a rock of offense to the unbelief and pride of man’s fallen nature; yet, to the humble penitent whose heart is broken under the convicting power of the Spirit, life is revealed in that death. As he looks upon Him who was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5), and upon whom the Lord was pleased to lay the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6), his eye is more and more opened to see, and his heart to understand, the exceeding sinfulness of sin for which the Saviour died; whilst, in the sense of pardoning grace, he will joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Romans 5:11).

We believe that in connection with Justification and Regeneration, that they who come to this experience know that they are not their own (I Corinthians 6:19), that being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we are saved by His life (Romans 5:10); a new heart is given and new desires; old things are passed away, and we become new creatures (II Corinthians 5:17), through faith in Christ Jesus; our wills being surrendered to His holy will, grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:21).

Sanctification is experienced in the acceptance of Christ in living faith for justification, in so far as the pardoned sinner, through faith in Christ, is clothed with a measure of His righteousness and receives the Spirit of promise; for, as saith the Apostle, “Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (I Corinthians 6:11). We rejoice to believe that the provisions of God’s grace are sufficient to deliver from the power, as well as from the guilt, of sin, and to enable His believing children always to triumph in Christ. (II Corinthians 2:14). How full of encouragement is the declaration, “According to your faith be it unto you.” (Matthew 9:29). Whosoever submits himself wholly to God, believing and appropriating His promises, and exercising faith in Christ Jesus, will have his heart continually cleansed from all sin by His precious blood, and through the renewing, refining power of the Holy Spirit, be kept in conformity to the will of God, will love Him with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength and be able to say, with Apostle Paul, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:2). Thus, in its full experience, Sanctification is deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. To this we are every one called, that we may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all of the days of our life. (Luke 1:74-75). It was the prayer of the apostle for the believers, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.” (I Thessalonians 5:23-24). Yet the most holy Christian is still liable to temptation, is exposed to the subtle assaults of Satan, and can only continue to follow holiness as he humbly watches unto prayer, and is kept in constant dependence upon his Saviour, walking in the light (I John 1:7), in the loving obedience of faith.

#### THE RESURRECTION AND FINAL JUDGMENT

We believe, according to the Scriptures, that there shall be a resurrection from the dead, both of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15), and that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ whom He hath ordained. (Acts 17:31). For, as saith the apostle, “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (II Corinthians 5:10).

We sincerely believe, not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen and sinful state here, but a rising and ascending into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears we may appear with Him in glory. But that all the wicked, who live in rebellion against the light of grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. And that the soul of every man and woman shall be reserved, in its own distinct and proper being, and shall have its proper body as God is pleased to give it. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:44); that being first which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. And though it is said, "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" (I Corinthians 15:53), the change shall be such as will accord with the declaration, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." (I Corinthians 15:50). We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality, and shall be the children of God, being the children of resurrection. (Luke 20:36). (See also the Declaration of 1693, Sewell's History, Volume II, 383-384).

"Our citizenship is in heaven" (R.V.), from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. (Philippians 3:20-21).

We believe that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; according to the declaration of our compassionate Redeemer, to whom the judgment is committed, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life." (R.V., Matthew 25:46).

#### BAPTISM

We would express our continued conviction that our Lord appointed no outward rite of ceremony for observance in His church. We accept every command of our Lord, in what we believe to be its genuine import, as absolutely conclusive. The question of the use of outward ordinances is with us a question, not as to the authority of Christ, but as to His real meaning.

We reverently believe that, as there is one Lord and one faith, so there is, under the Christian dispensation, but one baptism (Ephesians 4:4-5) even that whereby all believers are baptized in the one Spirit into the one body. (I Corinthians 12:13, R.V.). This is not an outward baptism with water, but a spiritual experience; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (I Peter 3:21), but the inward work which, by transforming the heart and settling the soul upon Christ, brings forth the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the experience of His love and power, as the risen and ascended Savior. No baptism in outward water can satisfy the description of the apostle, of being buried with Christ by baptism unto death. (Romans 6:4). It is with the Spirit alone that any can thus be baptized. In this experience the announcement of the Forerunner of our Lord is fulfilled, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matthew 3:11). In this view we accept the commission of our blessed Lord as given in Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (R.V.). This commission, as we believe, was not designed to set up a new ritual under the new covenant, or to connect the initiation into a membership, in its nature essentially spiritual, with a mere ceremony of a typical character. Otherwise it was not possible for the Apostle Paul, who was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle (II Corinthians 11:5), to have disclaimed that which would, in that case, have been of the essence of his commission when he wrote, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." (I Corinthians 1:17). Whenever an external ceremony is commanded, the particulars, the mode, and incidents of that ceremony become of its essence. There is an utter absence of these particulars in the text before us, which confirms our persuasion that the commission must be construed in connection with the spiritual power which the risen Lord promised should attend the witness of His apostles and of the church to Him, and which, after Pentecost, so mightily accompanied their ministry of the word and prayer, that those to whom they were sent were introduced into an experience wherein they had a saving knowledge of, and living fellowship with, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

#### THE SUPPER OF THE LORD

Intimately connected with the conviction already expressed is the view that we have ever maintained as to the true supper of the Lord. We are well aware that our Lord was pleased to make use of a variety of symbolic

utterances, but He often gently upbraided His disciples for accepting literally what He had intended only in its spiritual meaning. His teaching, as in His parables or in the command to wash one another's feet, was often in symbols, and ought ever to be received in the light of His own emphatic declaration, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63). The old covenant was full of ceremonial symbols; the new covenant, to which our Savior alluded at the last supper, is expressly declared by the prophet to be "not according to the old." (Jeremiah 31:32, Hebrews 8:9). We cannot believe that in setting up this new covenant the Lord Jesus intended an institution out of harmony with the spirit of this prophecy. The eating of His body and the drinking of His blood cannot be an outward act. They truly partake of them who habitually rest upon the sufferings and death of our Lord as their only hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives to drink of the fullness that is in Christ. It is this inward and spiritual partaking that is the true supper of the Lord.

The presence of Christ with His church is not designed to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of His own Spirit. "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, who shall abide with you forever." (John 14:16). Convincing of sin, testifying of Jesus, taking of the things of Christ, this blessed Comforter communicates to the believer and to the church in a gracious, abiding manifestation, the REAL PRESENCE of the Lord. As the great remembrancer, through whom the promise is fulfilled, He needs no ritual or priestly intervention in bringing to the experience of the true commemoration and communion. "Behold," saith the risen Redeemer, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me." (Revelation 3:20). In an especial manner, when assembled for congregational worship, are believers invited to the festival of the Savior's peace, and, in a united act of faith and love, unfettered by any outward rite or ceremonial, to partake together of the body that was broken and of the blood that was shed for them, without the gates of Jerusalem. In such a worship they are enabled to understand the words of the apostles as expressive of a sweet and most real experience: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (I Corinthians 10:16-17).

## WORSHIP

Worship is that adoring response of the heart and mind to the influence of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms; it may be without words as well as with them, but it must be in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24). We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the attainment of the end; a silence, not of listlessness or of vacant musing, but of holy expectation before the Lord. Having become His adopted children through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our privilege to meet together and unite in the worship of Almighty God, to wait upon Him for the renewal of our strength, for communion with one another, for the edification of believers in the exercise of various spiritual gifts, and for the declaration of the glad tidings of salvation to the unconverted who may gather with us. This worship depends not upon numbers. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there is a church, and Christ, the living Head, in the midst of them. Through His mediation, without the necessity for any inferior instrumentality is the Father to be approached and reverently worshiped. The Lord Jesus has forever fulfilled and ended the typical and sacrificial worship under the law, by the offering up of Himself upon the cross for us, once for all. He has opened the door of access into the inner sanctuary, and graciously provided spiritual offerings for the service of His temple, suited to the several conditions of all who worship in spirit and in truth. The broken and the contrite heart, the confession of the soul prostrate before God, the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, the earnest wrestling of the spirit, the outpouring of humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song and melody of the heart (Ephesians 5:19), the simple exercise of faith, the self-denying service of love, these are among the sacrifices which He, our merciful and faithful High Priest, is pleased to prepare, by His Spirit, in the hearts of them that receive Him, and to present with acceptance unto God.

By the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit, He, as the Head of the church, alone selects and qualifies those who are to present His messages or engage in other service for Him; and hence, we cannot commit any formal arrangement to any one in our regular meetings for worship. We are well aware that the Lord has provided a diversity of gifts (I Corinthians 12:4-6) for the needs both of the church and of the world, and we desire that the church may feel her responsibility, under the government of her Great Head, in doing her part to foster these gifts, and in making arrangements for their proper exercise.

It is not for individual exaltation, but for mutual profit, that the gifts are bestowed (I Corinthians 12:7); and every living church, abiding under the government of Christ, is humbly and thankfully to receive and exercise them, in subjection to her Holy Head. The church that quenches the Spirit and lives to itself alone must die.

We believe the preaching of the Gospel to be one of the chief means, divinely appointed, for the spreading of the glad tidings of life and salvation through our crucified Redeemer, for the awakening and conversion of sinners, and for the comfort and edification of believers. As it is the prerogative of the Great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of His Gospel, so we believe that both the gift and the qualification to exercise it must be derived immediately from Him, and that, as in the primitive church, so now also, He confers spiritual gifts upon women as well as upon men, agreeable to the prophecy recited by the apostle Peter, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17), respecting which the apostle declares, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:39). As the gift is freely received so it is to be freely exercised (Matthew 10:8. See also Acts 20:33-35), in simple obedience to the will of God.

Spiritual gifts, precious as they are, must not be mistaken for grace; they add to our responsibility, but do not raise the minister above his brethren or sisters. They must be exercised in continued dependence upon our Lord, and blessed is that ministry in which man is humbled, and Christ and His grace exalted. "He that is greatest among you," said our Lord and Master, "let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve. I am among you as he that serveth." (Luke 22:26-27).

While the church cannot confer spiritual gifts, it is its duty to recognize and foster them and to promote their efficiency by all the means in its power. And while, on the one hand, the Gospel should never be preached for money (Acts 8:20, 20:33-35), on the other, it is the duty of the church to make such provision that it shall never be hindered for want of it.

The church, if true to her allegiance, cannot forget her part in the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). Knowing that it is the Spirit of God that can alone prepare and qualify the instruments who fulfill this command, the true disciple will be found still sitting at the feet of Jesus listening that he may learn, and learning that he may obey. He humbly places himself at his Lord's disposal, and when he hears the call "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" is prepared to respond, in childlike reverence and love, "Here am I, send me." (Isaiah 6:8).

#### PRAYER AND PRAISE

Prayer is the outcome of our sense of need, and of our continual dependence upon God. He who uttered the invitation, "Ask and it shall be given you" (Matthew 7:7), is himself the Mediator and High Priest who, by His Spirit, prompts the petition, and who presents it with acceptance before God. With such an invitation, prayer becomes the duty and the privilege of all who are called by His name. Prayer is, in the awakened soul, the utterance of the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13) and, at every stage of the believer's course, prayer is essential to his spiritual life. A life without prayer is a life practically without God. The Christian's life is a continual asking. The thirst that prompts the petition produces, as it is satisfied, still deeper longings, which prepare for yet more bounteous supplies, from Him who delights to bless. Prayer is not confined to the closet. When uttered in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, it becomes an important part of public worship, and whenever the Lord's people meet together in His name, it is their privilege to wait upon Him for the spirit of grace and supplications. (Zechariah 12:10). A life of prayer cannot be other than a life of praise. As the peace of Christ reigns in the church, her living members accept all that they receive as from His pure bounty, and each day brings them fresh pledges of their Father's love. Satisfied with the goodness of His house, whether as individuals, in families, or in congregations, they will be still praising Him (Psalm 134:4), heart answering to heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name." (Psalm 103:1).

#### LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE IN ITS RELATION TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT

That conscience should be free, and that in matters of religious doctrine and worship man is accountable only to God, are truths which are plainly declared in the New Testament; and which are confirmed by the whole scope of the Gospel, and by the example of our Lord and His disciples. To rule over the conscience, and to command the spiritual allegiance of His creature man, is the high and sacred prerogative of God alone. In religion every

act ought to be free. A forced worship is plainly a contradiction in terms, under that dispensation in which the worship of the Father must be in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24).

We have ever maintained that it is the duty of Christians to obey the enactments of civil government, except those which interfere with our allegiance to God. We owe much to its blessings. Through it we enjoy liberty and protection, in connection with law and order. Civil government is a divine ordinance (Romans 13:1, I Peter 2:13-16), instituted to promote the best welfare of man, hence magistrates are to be regarded as God's ministers who should be a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well. Therefore, it is with us a matter of conscience to render them respect and obedience in the exercise of their proper functions.

#### MARRIAGE

Marriage is an institution graciously ordained by the Creator Himself, for the help and continuance of the human family. It is not a mere civil contract, and ought never to be entered upon without a reference to the sanction and blessing of Him who ordained it. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life (Matthew 19:5-6), designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they may be helpmates to each other in things temporal and spiritual. To this end it should imply concurrence in spiritual as well as temporal concerns, and should be entered upon discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of the Lord.

#### PEACE

We feel bound explicitly to avow our unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our divine Lord and Lawgiver, and the whole spirit of His Gospel, and that no plea of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release either individuals or nations from the paramount allegiance which they owe to Him who hath said, "Love your enemies." (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27). In enjoining this love, and the forgiveness of injuries, He who has brought us to Himself has not prescribed for man precepts which are incapable of being carried into practice, or of which the practice is to be postponed until all shall be persuaded to act upon them. We cannot doubt that they are incumbent now, and that we have in the prophetic scriptures the distinct intimation of their direct application not only to individuals, but to nations also. (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:1). When nations conform their laws to this divine teaching, wars must necessarily cease.

We would, in humility, but in faithfulness to our Lord, express our firm persuasion that all the exigencies of civil government and social order may be met under the banner of the Prince of Peace, in strict conformity with His commands.

#### OATHS

We hold it to be the inalienable privilege of the disciple of the Lord Jesus that his statements concerning matters of fact within his knowledge should be accepted, under all circumstances, as expressing his belief as to the fact asserted. We rest upon the plain command of our Lord and Master, "Swear not at all" (Matthew 5:34); and we believe any departure from this standard to be prejudicial to the cause of truth and to that confidence between man and man, the maintenance of which is indispensable to our mutual well being. This command, in our persuasion, applies not to profane swearing only, but to judicial oaths also. It abrogates any previous permission to the contrary, and is, for the Christian, absolutely conclusive.

#### THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

Whilst the remembrance of our Creator ought to be at all times present with the Christian, we would express our thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that He has been pleased to honor the setting apart of one day in seven for the purpose of holy rest, religious duties, and public worship; and we desire that all under our name may avail themselves of this great privilege as those who are called to be risen with Christ, and to seek those things that are above where He sitteth at the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1). May the release thus granted from other occupations be diligently improved. On this day of the week especially ought the households of Friends to be assembled for the reading of the Scriptures and for waiting upon the Lord; and we trust that, in a Christianly wise economy of our time and strength, the engagements of the day may be so ordered as not to frustrate the gracious provision thus made for us by our Heavenly Father, or to shut out the opportunity either for public worship or for private retirement and devotional reading.

## CONCLUSION

In presenting this declaration of our Christian faith, we desire that all our members may be afresh encouraged, in humility and devotedness, to renewed faithfulness in fulfilling their part in the great mission of the church, and through the Church to the world around us, in the name of our Crucified Redeemer. Life FROM Christ, life IN Christ, must ever be the basis of life FOR Christ. For this we have been created and redeemed, and by this alone can the longings of our immortal souls be satisfied.

## THE STATEMENTS OF FAITH AND/OR ORGANIZATION OF AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

### 4000 The Constitution of Evangelical Friends International

#### **Preamble**

Arising out of a God-given concern to participate fully as Friends in seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness through the church, we herein set forth a constitution to serve as a guide for faith and action by Evangelical Friends International. In so doing, we declare our belief in the value of Christian unity for the spiritual welfare and for the advancement of the program of the Friends Church worldwide.

#### **Article I -- Name**

The name of this organization shall be: Evangelical Friends International.

#### **Article II -- Purpose**

The organization shall be an international alliance of Friends churches that officially accept and communicate the evangelical doctrines of the Christian faith as herein defined. This purpose of the alliance will be seen:

1. By working together under policies and arrangements herein stated,
2. By serving together in Christian ministries based upon Biblical principles,
3. By prayerfully investing both personal and material resources in order to fulfill the Great Commission,
4. By seeking continuously to discern both the call of God and the need of humanity as it is expressed in diverse cultures and respond appropriately in a Christian manner.

#### **Article III -- Objectives**

1. Renewal. To motivate a renewed sensitivity to God's voice through Scripture and contemporary needs by persistent waiting on the Lord and total availability to the Holy Spirit for living the life of Christ in and through us.
2. Evangelism. To share creative and effective methods of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world with those who have not received Him as Savior and Lord.
3. Fellowship. To stimulate genuine sharing of joys and burdens with one another in the family of Friends, locally, nationally and internationally.
4. Leadership. To develop individuals whose God-given call and vision, spiritual gifts and Christlike lifestyles command respect as servant leaders among God's people.

#### **Article IV -- Statement of Faith**

##### The Holy Bible

We believe that the 66 books of the Holy Bible were given by the inspiration of God; that there can be no appeal from these Scriptures to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith that is in Jesus Christ; that the Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures must ever be its true interpreter as Christ works through the disciplined and dedicated minds of those within His Church; that any professed guidance that is contrary to these Scriptures must be counted as a delusion.

## God

We believe in one God, revealed through the Holy Spirit in the person of Jesus Christ; that He is both the creator and preserver of all things visible and invisible; that He alone is worthy of worship, honor, glory, dominion, praise, and thanksgiving both now and forevermore; and that in the unity of the Godhead there exists three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, inseparable in divinity, power, glory, and eternity.

## Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God; that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; that He is the express image of the invisible God; and that He combines within Himself both the nature of God and the nature of man in one perfect indivisible personality, the God-man.

We believe that He was crucified as a substitutionary atonement for us and for the sins of the whole world, making provision whereby each person may find the forgiveness of sins, the power for a new life, and be brought back into a perfect relationship with the Father.

We believe that He arose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, making intercession for us, and that He will come to earth again to receive His Church unto Himself and to judge the world in righteousness.

## Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third person of the Trinity, proceeding from both Father and Son, but equal with them in authority, power, and glory; that He convicts the world of sin, imparts life to the penitent believer, sanctifies the child of God, empowers the disciple for service to others, and enables each one by His indwelling presence to love God supremely.

## People

We believe that God created people as male and female in His own image; that they enjoyed unbroken fellowship with their maker; and that their whole life centered in the person of God. We believe that people fell from this original state by an act of transgression; that in this fall they suffered the immediate loss of their perfect relationship to God, making self the center of their life; and that in this act they suffered immediate spiritual death. All people are born in this disposition to sin. We own no principle inherent naturally by which they may be saved, except by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ as a provision for all people.

## Salvation

We believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, people can be recovered from their fallen state through divine enlightenment, forgiveness of sin, regeneration and sanctification of their affection, and the final glorification of their bodies; that in this life they can love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength; that they can live in victory over known sin and enjoy unbroken fellowship with the Heavenly Father; and that once more their whole lives may center in and revolve around their Creator and Redeemer.

We believe that the experience of sanctification is the work of God's grace by which affections are purified and exalted to a supreme love to God and others, and the believer is empowered to witness of the living Christ. This is accomplished by the filling with the Holy Spirit in the life of a dedicated and believing child of God; that this is both an act in which the heart is purified by faith and a process in which the life is continuously disciplined into paths of holiness. By submission and availability to Jesus Christ, people become channels for Christ to do His work in this present age.

## The Church

We believe that all those persons who repent of their sins, believe in and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, are born again into His kingdom by the Holy Spirit, and that these constitute the Church of Jesus Christ. This Church we believe to be spiritual in nature, universal in scope, holy in character, and redemptive in her life and purpose.

We believe that wherever two or three are gathered together regularly and faithfully in the name of Christ, He is truly present in the person of the Holy Spirit and that such an assembly is a local church, the visible expression of His body and the Church universal.

We believe that believers must relate themselves to the local and visible body of Christ being fitly framed together with others into a holy temple in the Lord and built together for a habitation of His Holy Spirit.

### Christian Ministries

We believe that in the church, the believer is committed to both the worship and the work of God; that this work involves not only personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but the ministry of evangelism and teaching; that in this commission of Christ every believer is involved in the stewardship of the kingdom, and that is fulfilled only by faithful service in and through the fellowship of His Church; and that this work is continuous until Christ comes again calling the Church unto Himself. We believe that all Christians are called upon to witness by word and by deed within a sinful world, not returning evil for evil, but in Christlikeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace.

We believe that in the fellowship of His body, the Holy Spirit gives to every member a gift to be exercised for the mutual advantage of every member in the body, and for the influence of the Church upon those outside; the ministry is a special calling given to certain ones whom God ordains for a service of leadership in His Church; that this service may be that of pastoring, teaching, evangelizing, administration, or other kinds of service to humanity.

### Liberty

Regarding Christian liberty we recognize that among Evangelical Friends and among the larger body of evangelical Christians there are minor differences of faith and practice, due in part to historical and cultural differences and our imperfections. We look forward to the time when we shall all come into a greater unity of the faith. Until then we believe that in biblical essentials there must be unity, that in nonessentials there must be liberty, but in all things there must be charity.

### Spiritual Realities

We believe that both Christian baptism and communion are spiritual realities which are not dependent upon physical and outward ordinances; that baptism is an inward receiving of the Holy Spirit in which He becomes Lord over all -- guiding, cleansing, empowering, and in general, representing God to us in immediate experience; that communion is the daily receiving and realization of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; that this communion is dependent not only upon the condition of the believer walking daily in the light of Christ but also in the historic act of Christ on Calvary as His body was broken and blood shed once and for all for us; that Christ thus becomes a daily personal spiritual reality known immediately in Christian experience; and that through Him and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, God and divine realities are known experientially and immediately.

### Resurrection and Judgment

We believe in the second coming of Christ; that at His coming the dead shall be resurrected, some to everlasting glory and others to everlasting condemnation; that we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive recompense for the things done in the body; that the judgment of the blessed shall be unto heaven, and the judgment of the lost shall be unto hell; that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; that this judgment is in the hands of our compassionate Redeemer, who does all things after the counsel of His wisdom, love and holiness.

## **Article V – Membership**

Any Yearly Meeting of the Friends, or any organized Friends group of churches, may apply for membership in Evangelical Friends International and will be accepted provided there is official agreement with the doctrines and policies of Evangelical Friends International and the Regional Coordinating Council of the respective region approves such application.

For a single international or regional event, a non-member Yearly Meeting or Friends group of churches who agrees with the Statement of Faith may participate on a temporary basis. Their financial support will be proportionate for this event. Planning and participation will last for this single event only.

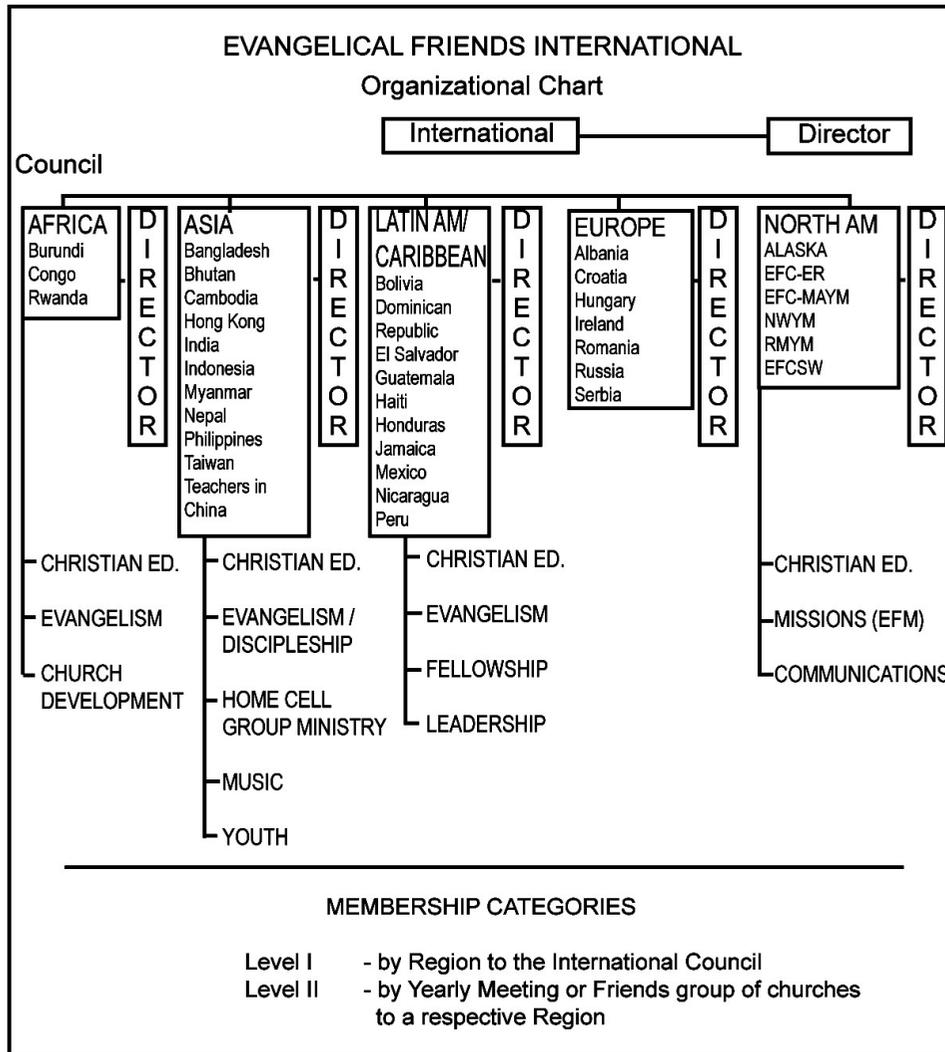
Article VI -- **Organization**

Membership shall be under a two-level system.

Level I -- Membership in Evangelical Friends International by geographical region, i.e.: Africa, Asia, Latin America, and North America. It shall be directed by an international council composed of the director of each region, plus an international director to be nominated by them and approved by each Regional Coordinating Council.

Level II -- Membership in respective regions as a Yearly Meeting or organized Friends group within any of the regions. It shall have a controlling body to be known as the Coordinating Council and is made up of representatives of member Yearly Meetings, as determined by each respective region.

There shall be in addition an Executive Committee of each Regional Coordinating Council composed of the general superintendents or their equivalent, and a member-at-large of each member Yearly Meeting, or any organized Friends group of churches.



## Article VII -- Commissions

Commissions may be established in a respective region by the Regional Coordinating Council to give impetus and direction to the special areas of concern. Specifically, such commissions shall follow the general departmental concerns of the member churches. Each commission shall organize from its own members, with a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. Also, it may appoint a treasurer.

All official minutes and actions of each commission shall be forwarded promptly to the director of each Regional Coordinating Council for final disposition. There shall be a close cooperative working relationship between each commission and the Coordinating Council.

Any commission may also be open for participation by individuals with expertise from corresponding yearly meeting departments provided both the commission and the Executive Committee shall approve such affiliation, but without membership in the Regional Coordinating Council.

Each commission shall draw up guidelines or a constitution for its own use in providing stability and continuity to its work and program.

## Article VIII -- Officers

Level I -- The International Council of Evangelical Friends International shall be composed of the Regional Directors and shall organize every three years by appointing the International Director. The other officers of Assistant International Director, Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed from among themselves. The officers shall be limited to not more than three years.

Level II -- The Regional Coordinating Council shall organize annually by appointing the following officers: Regional Director, Assistant Regional Director, Secretary, and Treasurer, with the Regional Director as ex-officio member of each commission. These officers shall be nominated from the Executive Committee by a nominating committee of three named by the Regional Coordinating Council and shall also serve as the officers of the Executive Committee.

As need may arise, the Coordinating Council may appoint, as stipulated under Article IX, Level II, paragraph 1, such administrative personnel as may be deemed advisable. Such persons shall be well qualified by natural ability, experience, and Christian character, enabling them to act in the best interests for the entire cause of evangelical Friends.

## Article IX -- Policies

The following policies are accepted as guides for Evangelical Friends International:

Level I:

- 1) The International Council shall be empowered to appoint task force members to plan a specific event that is to be international in scope. Otherwise, all organized gatherings shall be on regional levels and shall be planned and directed by the respective Regional Coordinating Council.
- 2) Funding for international events shall be raised from the entire membership of Evangelical Friends International.

The following policies are accepted as guides for the future development of a respective Region:

Level II:

- 1) The regional Coordinating Council shall be empowered to take actions in areas of Christian concern that are delegated to it by the member Yearly Meetings, with the exception that action involving the appointment of administrative personnel, major policy changes, budgets, and amendments are subject to the approval of the member groups.

- 2) All decisions made by the Regional Coordinating Council shall be in accordance with the Friends' policy of seeking, through prayer and discussion, the mind of the Lord, which shall be discerned as the sense of the meeting by the one in charge. Those who disagree, after extended discussion and prayer, may stand aside from the decision allowing the others to move ahead. If those who disagree with an action want their opposition on record, they may register their concerns in the official minute, which must be recorded.
- 3) Member churches shall be kept informed on financial needs in the operation of the respective region and may support the united program by whatever methods may be deemed advisable, whether by budgetary or freewill contributions. In cases where fixed expenses are involved, the requests for finances should be met on a proportionate basis. The Regional Coordinating Council shall be responsible for receiving and considering all financial needs and askings of the various commissions, and when approved it shall forward such appeals to the member churches through proper channels.

#### **Article X -- Budget**

Level I -- All budgets which have been approved by Evangelical Friends International for specific international events shall be underwritten by each member Yearly Meeting and organized Friends group on a formula basis that takes into consideration applicable factors, including: a) the membership of each one, and b) the ability to pay based on per capita gross national product for each country represented. These apportionments shall be paid into the treasury of Evangelical Friends International.

Level II -- Each region shall establish its own annual budget with approval by its Regional Coordinating Council which shall be underwritten by member yearly meetings and organized Friends groups in the region on a formula basis determined by yearly meeting memberships.

#### **Article XI -- Records**

Official minutes of all actions taken shall be carefully kept and preserved by the International Council, each Regional Coordinating Council and the commissions. Careful records of receipts and expenditures of the councils or commissions shall be kept by their respective treasurers, and the books audited annually. Audit reports shall be forwarded to each member church.

#### **Article XII -- Amendments**

The power to amend the constitution may be initiated by the Coordinating Council of any region at its regularly held meeting.

Amendments, upon approval by the recommending Regional Coordinating Council, shall then be presented to all other Regional Coordinating Councils for similar action.

Upon approval by each Regional Coordinating Council, amendments to this constitution shall become final upon approval of the International Coordinating Council.

#### **Article XIII -- Bylaws**

The International Coordinating Council is authorized to adopt bylaws and job descriptions.

#### **Article XIV -- Dissolution**

If it is found desirable to dissolve Evangelical Friends International, it shall be done by approval of the Regional Councils and the International Council. The International Council shall supervise the distribution of assets to member Yearly Meeting and groups of Friends Churches on a proportionate basis.

5000 The Evangelical Friends Mission (EFM)

The Evangelical Friends Mission represents the coordinated mission work of the North America Region of Evangelical Friends International. Its office is currently in Arvada, Colorado, and is staffed by an Executive Director, an Assistant Executive Director, three Administrative Assistants, and a Treasurer (part-time).

For many years members of the Evangelical Friends Alliance (now Evangelical Friends International/North America Region) shared a growing concern for greater unity in extending their Christian faith through worldwide mission outreach. Thus, in 1978 they began the Evangelical Friends Mission as a cooperative mission program, with an office opened in Canton, Ohio, and then moved to Denver, Colorado, in July 1980. Robert Hess was named as the first Executive Director of EFM. Upon the resignation of Robert Hess in June 1980, James Morris succeeded him. Morris retired in June 1992 and was replaced by Norval Hadley as Executive Director. Norval retired in June 2001 and Chuck Mylander succeeded him in July 2001.

The purpose of EFM is to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ through helping to build His Church, encouraging the efforts of Friends internationally in proclaiming Jesus Christ as “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” This purpose is fulfilled by coordinating the mission work of EFC-ER, Mid-America, Northwest, Rocky Mountain, Southwest, and Alaska Yearly Meetings in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Ireland, Mexico, Middle East Ministries, Navajo Nation, Nepal, the Philippines, and Rwanda.

EFM seeks in various ways, such as by candidating, inter-yearly meeting deputation, and formulation of common policies, to enable and encourage the existing mission work of Evangelical Friends. It serves the Yearly Meeting mission boards through consultation. It also aims to expand the witness of Evangelical Friends by providing a program for entering new fields. In addition, it is designed to administer the joint mission programs in various fields throughout the world. The rationale for EFM is that by working together, Evangelical Friends can accomplish more in fulfilling the Great Commission and bringing others into the family of God.

6000 The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)

EFC-ER endorses the following statements from the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).

6001 Statement of Faith

- 1) We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
- 2) We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- 3) We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
- 4) We believe that, for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
- 5) We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
- 6) We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
- 7) We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

6002 Pornography and Obscenity Resolution

The National Association of Evangelicals affirms the declaration of Scripture that all persons are made in the image of God and are therefore to be treated with respect and dignity. We also affirm that sex is a gift from our loving Father to be enjoyed within the sacred bonds of marriage between husband and wife.

Because of our sin, we, as individuals and as a nation, continue to experience a decline in moral values and beliefs. Our sinful behavior has resulted in increasing rates of unmarried adolescent and adult sexual activity, the birth of children to unwed mothers, the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and decreasing marital fidelity. These are all signs of the decline of our culture.

Today pornography and obscenity are available through increasingly sexually explicit movies and television programs, magazines, videotapes and, most recently, the Internet. The Internet brings pornography into our homes, schools, and libraries. Everything from soft-core to hard-core to child pornography is now available not just for adults, but for children. The powerfully corrosive effect within American society is deeply troubling to Evangelicals.

Pornography and obscenity cause harm to those (often women and children) who are abused in the production of it as well as to those who use it. These materials exploit persons made in God's image, destroy healthy relationships and distort God's gift of loving, mutual sexuality between husband and wife.

As members of the National Association of Evangelicals, we are therefore committed to educating both our members and the broader culture about the harm of pornography. To facilitate that commitment, we encourage our membership denominations to take official action at their national governing bodies and to implement an educational process that will protect God's people from the impact of pornography. We encourage pastors and congregations to protect their youth and children from exposure to these materials. We call upon leaders of businesses, schools, and libraries as well as parents to participate in an effort to protect children and youth from being harmed by these materials.

We also urge local, state, and federal agencies to prosecute aggressively those who break the law in producing and distributing illegal pornography or who operate illegal sex businesses.

Lastly, we call upon all leaders of the broader faith community, all persons of goodwill and especially representatives of the Evangelical community to be "salt and light" in protecting people from the harm of pornography, obscenity, and sex businesses. We also call upon these same people to join together in their own communities to win the battle against pornography and obscenity through education, appropriate law enforcement efforts, and by helping those who have been harmed.

7000 Spiritual Life Inventory

I. The Spiritual Life Inventory for Personal Examination

A. Directives

Each year, the membership of the local church, under the direction of the Elder of Spiritual Life and/or the Spiritual Life Commission, is asked to answer this Spiritual Life Inventory as an aid to self-examination of their personal spiritual life.

The answers to this Spiritual Life Inventory, usually unsigned, should be returned to the Elder of Spiritual Life. The Elder of Spiritual Life and/or the Spiritual Life Commission will use these answers to help prepare a Spiritual State of the Church Report (see the Spiritual Life Inventory for the Local Church), following which the answers to the Personal Spiritual Life Inventory will remain at the local church.

This Spiritual Life Inventory should be answered in May of each year.

B. Purposes

1. To serve as a guideline for personal spiritual growth among our members;
2. To aid the local church in reviewing its spiritual state.

C. The Spiritual Life Inventory

1. My practice of worship

- a. Do I regularly attend the worship services of my church?
- b. Am I faithful to attend the congregational business meeting?
- c. Do I contribute to the spirit of the worship service by my reverence and participation?

2. My practice of witness

- a. Do I endeavor in my daily life to exemplify the teachings of the Gospel?
- b. Do I share my Christian faith with others?
- c. Am I watchful against amusements, habits, and activities which tend to demoralize, discourage, or defame one's Christian life and testimony?
- d. Do I care for the material needs of others?

3. My practice of prayer and study

- a. Do I observe a time of daily prayer and Bible reading?
- b. Am I experiencing spiritual growth?
- c. Am I in agreement with the Doctrine and Testimonies of the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region?

4. My practice of fellowship

- a. Do I have a growing Christian love toward others in the church?
- b. If differences arise, do I in love seek reconciliation?
- c. Am I working toward the salvation and spiritual development of my family?
- d. Do I encourage children, youth, and others to seek God's guidance in all the affairs of their lives?

5. My practice in stewardship

- a. Am I discovering my spiritual gift(s)? Do I give my talents and time for the building of the body of Christ?
- b. In cheerful response to Christ's love, do I share my tithes and offerings to support the mission of the church at home and abroad?

(If any additional information is needed as to an explanation of the position reflected in the Spiritual Life Inventory, the reader is directed to read the Testimonial statements in this Faith and Practice.)

## II. The Spiritual Life Inventory for the Local Church

### A. Directives

Each year, the church under the direction of the Elder of Spiritual Life and/or the Spiritual Life Commission is required to prepare an annual statement as to the Spiritual State of the Church.

Such a statement will include the answers to the questions below (see C below). Note that question 1a will usually be based on the answers from the Spiritual Life Inventory for Personal Examination.

The Statement is to be prepared by the Elder of Spiritual Life and/or the Spiritual Life Commission, reviewed by the Administrative Council, and presented for approval at the June Congregational Meeting.

### B. Purposes

1. To aid in evaluating the ministry of the church;
2. To stimulate action toward carrying out the ministry of the church.

### C. The Spiritual Life Inventory

1. Each church shall prepare an annual State of the Church report including the answers to the Spiritual Life Inventory for Personal Examination in your consideration.
  - a. Briefly outline the spiritual condition of your church.
  - b. In light of this report, what steps are you taking to minister to the needs of your people?
2. Are the members of the Administrative Council (or Ministry and Oversight Body) in good fellowship:
  - a. With God?
  - b. With each other?
  - c. With the pastor(s)?In what ways can these relationships be improved?
3. How do you propose to reach more of your community for Christ?
4. Have you recognized and encouraged spiritual gifts for ministry among your people? Does anyone appear to have a call to full-time Christian ministry?

## EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH - EASTERN REGION

### Application for Membership

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby make application for membership in the \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Local Church)  
Friends Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Location of Local Church)

### Membership Information

1. Do you believe in the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son (the one true Savior), and God the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_
2. Do you know by personal experience, based on the Word of God and the assurance from the Holy Spirit, that you have had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and can bear testimony to a real conversion experience? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Will you endeavor to seek further spiritual growth through prayer, Bible reading & study, and becoming connected with the Body of Believers? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you willing to attend faithfully the services of your church, accept responsibility in its work, and will you seek to bear witness at every opportunity to your Christian experience? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you willing to give cheerfully of your finances to support this church and its approved ministries as God prospers you? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are you willing to listen to and respect the counsel of the duly affirmed leaders of your church? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Have you acquainted yourself with the Faith and Practice and will you support its doctrinal positions as well as seek personal conformity to its testimonies and precepts? \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Covenant

To become a member of the Church of Jesus Christ and a church of the EFC-ER involves a covenant relationship. The following is a covenant you make upon becoming a member of the Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, covenant with the \_\_\_\_\_  
Friends Church to bear testimony to a real conversion experience, based on the Word of God and assurance from the Holy Spirit of sins forgiven and commitment to Christian discipleship. I will continuously seek spiritual growth, according to the Scriptures, attend faithfully the services of the church, accept responsibility in its work, and cheerfully give for the financial support of the church and its approved ministries. I will listen to and respect the counsel of the duly affirmed leaders of the Church. I further covenant to acquaint myself more fully with the Faith and Practice, to support the doctrinal position of the church, and to seek personal conformity to the testimonies of the church.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_ (Applicant's Signature)      Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Report of Administrative Council

After having received the report of the committee delegated to visit the new applicant for membership, we present the name of \_\_\_\_\_ for membership in our church.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman of Administrative Council      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary of Administrative Council      Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Church Covenant

Your name has been presented and accepted for membership in our church. The following is a covenant this local body of believers, the \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church makes with you.

We welcome you into our fellowship and wish to convey to you our covenant with you as long as you remain a part of this local Friends Church. We covenant with you to provide an opportunity for, and assistance in, worship, and in spiritual growth. We further covenant to help you in discovering your talents and gifts and give you an opportunity to express these in service. In addition, we covenant to seek to provide discipleship opportunities. We covenant to counsel you if you in any way stray from being true to the call of Christ and will faithfully strive to restore you back to a commitment to Jesus Christ and to our local meeting. Finally, we will receive and respect your input as a member of this local meeting.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_ Elder (Presiding Clerk)      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_ Senior Pastor      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 2005

-----Tear Off Upon Acceptance, Return Original Top Portion to Applicant, Give Bottom Portion to Church Statistician-----

## Record of Membership

Received into membership of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date approved in Congregational Meeting):

Name (in full) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Married? \_\_\_\_\_ To Whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Marriage \_\_\_\_\_

Name of father \_\_\_\_\_

Name of mother before marriage \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 2005

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## General Instructions for the Use of the Application for Membership

- Upon receipt, the applicant fills out the first three sections, and signs and dates the "Membership Covenant." In addition, the applicant will fill out the personal information under the "Record of Membership."
- After Administrative Council approves the applicant for membership, the Chairman and Secretary of Administrative Council sign and date the "Report of Administrative Council."
- After the Congregational Meeting accepts the applicant for membership, the Presiding Clerk and the Senior Pastor sign and date the "Church Covenant" and fill in their portion of the "Record of Membership." In addition, the applicant and the senior pastor sign and date the "Record of Membership."
- After all sections are filled out, signed, and dated, the original top portion of the application is returned to the applicant (the church may want to keep a copy) and the bottom portion "Record of Membership" is given to the church statistician.

**EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH - EASTERN REGION**

**Parental Request for Child Membership**

I (We), being member(s) of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church, request that my (our) child, whose name is \_\_\_\_\_ and who was born \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ day, \_\_\_\_\_ year, be received as a child member of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church.

I (We) promise, with God’s help to do my (our) best to instruct, encourage, and aid him/her towards a personal relationship with Christ and to establish them in their Christian walk. We understand that membership status will be terminated at the age of 18 unless the individual makes application for regular adult membership (see Faith and Practice).

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Father) (Date) and/or \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Mother) (Date)

If this request is approved by the Overseers, the Coordinator for Overseers will sign here and forward the Request to the Congregational Meeting for action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Coordinator of Overseers) (Date)

-----Tear off, Return Original Top Portion to Applicant, Give Bottom Portion to Church Statistician-----

**Record of Membership**

Received into child membership of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date approved in Congregational Meeting):  Birthright Membership  Childhood Membership

Name (in full) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Name of father \_\_\_\_\_

Name of mother before marriage \_\_\_\_\_

Father’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mother’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Presiding Clerk’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 2002

**EVANGELICAL FRIENDS CHURCH - EASTERN REGION**  
**Transfer of Membership**

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has requested a membership transfer to your church. We are delighted to hear of \_\_\_\_\_'s involvement in your church. This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is a member in good standing with us, and we therefore commend to your Christian care and fellowship, knowing full well that they are still part of God's family.

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church held at (location): \_\_\_\_\_  
on (date): \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ year.

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ Presiding Clerk

*----Return A Signed Copy to Receiving Church. \*Church Statisticians in both churches need copies for Membership Records.----*

**Transfer of Membership Received**

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that we have received and accepted the transfer of membership issued by you for \_\_\_\_\_.

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Friends Church held at (location): \_\_\_\_\_  
on (date): \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ year.

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ Presiding Clerk

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. *Transfer Form to be used for membership transfers exclusively between EFC-ER churches.*
2. *Both churches responsible for making copies of all records for their church statisticians.\**

## ALPHABETICAL INDEX

TOPIC	Paragraph Number
<b>A</b>	
Abortion, testimony on	364-365
Admission to Membership	500-508
Administration of EFC-ER	1175-1193
Administrative Chart, EFC-ER	1176
Administrative Council, Local Church, 50 members or fewer	703-705
Administrative Council, Local Church, 51-100 members	723-726
Administrative Council, Local Church, 101-150 members	733-743
Administrative Council, Local Church, 151 members or more	781-782
Administrative Council, Agenda	737
Administrative Council, Authority of	655-656
Administrative Council, Composition of	658-659
Administrative Council, Duties of	657
Administrative Council, Local Church	653-661
Administrative Council, Meetings	705; 726; 735
Administrative Council, Officers	660; 736
Administrative Council, Proposals to & from	741-743
Administrative Council, Reports to & from	738-740
Adult Membership	513-514
Alcohol, testimony on	280-281
Alternate Delegates to Yearly Meeting	643c; 1038; 1040; 1048
Amusements, testimony on	282-286
Appendix	2000-8002
Application for Membership	511-518; 8000; 8001
Application for Membership, General Instructions	8000
Apportionments	517c; 518e; 1151-1153
Apportionments, Sent to	1084; 1503c
Area Superintendents, EFC-ER, Duties of	746d; 1212; 1258al
Articles of Incorporation	617
Assistant Page, EFC-ER	1083
Assistant Pastors	870-872
Assistant Presiding Clerk, EFC-ER	1077
Assistant Reading Clerk, EFC-ER	1081
Assistant Recording Clerk, EFC-ER	1079
Assistant Treasurer, EFC-ER	1085
Assistants to the General Superintendent	1211-1214
Assisted Suicide (euthanasia), testimony on	366-367
Associate Membership	518
Auditing Committee, Local Church	644-645
Auditing Firm, Outside EFC-ER	1288i
Authority Over Local Churches, EP&E Board	1249-1251
Authority Over Pastors, EP&E Board	1252-1258
<b>B</b>	
Baptism of Holy Spirit, doctrine of	174-176
Baptism, Water, testimony on	262; 264-265
Barbados Epistle of George Fox	2000
Beginning Church	611-612
Bible, doctrine of	130-133
Birthright Membership	517a
Board Procedures, EFC-ER	1232-1236

Board Structure, EFC-ER	1229-1232
Boards of EFC-ER	1225-1295
Born Again, doctrine of	170-173
Budget Control, Local Church	807-810
Budget Preparation, Local Church	801-806
Budgeting in the Local Church	800-810
Buildings, testimony on use of	330-331
Business for Yearly Meeting, Conduct of	1053-1056
Business for Yearly Meeting, Initiation of	1052
Business Practices, testimony on	332-333
<b>C</b>	
Calling Procedure for a Senior Pastor	826-828
Camp Gideon	1756
Camps Owned by Districts	1755
Certain Current Issues, testimony on	360-381
Certifying Christian Workers	881
Childhood Membership	517b
Children and Parents, testimony on	311-314
Christian Conciliation (Mediation), Principles of	523; 1256
Christian Differences, testimony on	377-381
Christian Education Board, EFC-ER	1269-1271
Christian Family, The, testimony on	300-314
Christian-Government Relationship, testimony on	340-356
Christian Living, testimony on	270-288
Christian Service, testimony on	320-333
Christian Workers' Certificate	881
Christian Worship, testimony on	255-260
Church, Beginning	611-612
Church, Declining	618-619
Church, Full Local	615-617
Church, Intermediate	613-614
Church, Local Church, 50 members or fewer	701-715
Church, Local Church, 51-100 members	720-726
Church, Local Church, 101-150 members	730-764
Church, Local Church, 151 members or more	780-784
Church, Local Incorporation	617
Church, The, doctrine of	180-183
Church Buildings, testimony on use of	330-331
Church Covenant to Member	507-508
Church Growth, stages in	610-619
Church Responsibility to Pastor	860-864
Civil Government, testimony on	345-347
Committees, EFC-ER	1100-1105
Committees, Local Church	662-664; 709; 732
Communications Board, EFC-ER	1275-1277
Communion, testimony on	262-263; 265
Concerns for Education, EFC-ER	1268-1284
Concerns for Outreach, EFC-ER	1260-1267
Concerns for Spiritual Life, EFC-ER	1237-1259
Concerns for Stewardship, EFC-ER	1285-1295
Conduct of Business	1053-1056
Congregational Meeting, Agenda	625-626; 632
Congregational Meeting, Defined	624
Congregational Meeting, Frequency	629-631
Congregational Meeting, Function	627-628; 783

Congregational Meeting, Responsibility to Pastor	860-864
Congregational Meeting, Voting	633
Connectional Church	1002
Consensus in Business	1054
Constitution of Evangelical Friends International (EFI)	4000
Contributions Management, Pension Board	1295
Coordinator for Adult Education	760
Coordinator for Children's Education	758
Coordinator for Evangelism & Church Growth	755
Coordinator for Finance	763
Coordinator for Foreign Missions	756
Coordinator for Literature	761
Coordinator for Overseers	652; 754
Coordinator for Service Programs	757
Coordinator for Spiritual Renewal	753
Coordinator for Stewardship Promotion	762
Coordinator for Trustees	764
Coordinator for Worship Services	752
Coordinator for Youth Education	759
Coordinators, Common Duties	751
Creation, doctrine of	140-141
Cults, testimony on	373-376
Current Issues, testimony on	360-381

## D

Dance, testimony on	284
Death, doctrine of	191
Declaration at Richmond Conference	3000
Declining Churches	618-619
Delegate Body, Composition	1033-1050
Delegate Body and its Yearly Meeting	1025-1061
Delegate Qualifications	1037; 1040
Delegate Quota	1036
Delegate Seating Arrangement	1046
Delegates, Alternate	1038; 1048
Delegates, Financial Assistance to	1039
Delegates, Forwarding Names of	1041
Delegates, Lay	1036-1037
Delegates, Missionary	1035
Delegates, Officially Seated	1043
Delegates, Pastoral	1034
Delegates, Tenure	1049
Development Committee, Camp Gideon	1756b
Development Committee, Finance & Stewardship Board	1287
Devil, doctrine of	150-153; 193
District, The	1500-1515
District Delegate Captain	1042; 1044; 1047; 1048b
District Executive Committee	1503; 1512; 1515
District Meetings	1503b; 1513
District Pastors' Meetings	1514
District Purpose	1500
District Representative for Education	1505
District Representative for Outreach	1505
District Representative for Spiritual Life	1505
District Representative for Stewardship	1505
District Representative to EFC-ER Executive Board	1506

District Representative to EFC-ER Nominating Board	1507
District Superintendent	1503b
Divorce, testimony on	307-310
Divorced Pastor's Policy	1257
Doctrinal Differences with Other Christians, testimony on	377-381
Doctrine of EFC-ER	100-194
Dress, testimony on	272-273
Drug Abuse, testimony on	280-281
Duties of the Pastor	840-850

## **E**

Early Termination of Pastoral Agreement	834
Earth, testimony on stewardship of	362-363
EFC-ER Office Personnel	1213
EFC-ER Organization	1000-1295
EFC-ER Tie to Malone College	1278-1284
Elder of Education, Local Church, 100 members or fewer	713
Elder of Education, Local Church, 101 members or more	748
Elder of Outreach, Local Church, 100 members or fewer	712
Elder of Outreach, Local Church, 101 members or more	747
Elder of Spiritual Life, Local Church, 100 members or fewer	711
Elder of Spiritual Life, Local Church, 101 members or more	746
Elder of Stewardship, Local Church, 100 members or fewer	714
Elder of Stewardship, Local Church, 101 members or more	749
Elders, Common Duties, Local Church, 100 members or fewer	715
Elders, Common Duties, Local Church, 101 members or more	745
Elders, Local Church	646-648
Elders, Qualifications of	648
Elders, Responsibilities of, Local Church, 100 members or fewer	710-715
Elders, Responsibilities of, Local Church, 101 members or more	746-749
Election of Assistants to the General Superintendent	1211-1213
Election of General Superintendent	1191-1192; 1204
End times, doctrine of	190-194
Epistle Committee, EFC-ER	1102
Equality of Persons, testimony on	355-356
Eternal Death, doctrine of	191; 194
Eternal Life, doctrine of	194
Euthanasia, testimony on	366-367
Evangelical Friends International (EFI)	4000
Evangelical Friends Mission (EFM)	5000
Evangelistic, Pastoral & Extension Board, EFC-ER	1245-1259; 1261
Executive Board, EFC-ER, duties & powers	1049b; 1050; 1186-1192; 1236
Executive Board, EFC-ER, meetings	1179-1181
Executive Board, EFC-ER, quorum	1183
Executive Board of EFC-ER	1177-1193
Executive Committee, EFC-ER Executive Board	1184
Executive Officers, EFC-ER	1200-1214
Ex-Officio Member, defined	1233

## **F**

Facilities, testimony on use of	330-331
<u>Faith &amp; Practice</u> , EFC-ER, changes in	1060
<u>Faith &amp; Practice</u> , Mission Fields	1061
Faith & Practice Committee, EFC-ER	1101
Family, The, testimony on	301-302

Finance & Stewardship Board, EFC-ER	1286-1288
Financial Secretary, Local Church	637
Financing the Work of EFC-ER	1150-1160
Fiscal Year, EFC-ER	1032
Fiscal Year, Local Church	1032
Friends Action Board, EFC-ER	1265-1267
Friends Adult Ministries	1753
Friends Disaster Service	1752
Friends Men in Missions	1750
Friends Youth Board	1272-1274
Full Local Church	615-617
Funerals, testimony on	276

## G

Gambling, testimony on	284
General Operating Budget (Apportionment)	517c; 518e; 1151-1153
General Superintendent, EFC-ER	1201-1210
General Superintendent, EFC-ER, Duties & Responsibilities of	1205-1208
General Superintendent, EFC-ER, Election of	1191-1192; 1204
General Superintendent, EFC-ER, Term of	1193; 1202
Gifts of the Spirit, doctrine of	123; 183
Glossalalia, testimony on	381
God, doctrine of	100-104
Government, Civil, testimony on	345-347
Great Commission Budget (Missionary Outreach)	1154-1160

## H

H. H. Mosher Fund	1277g
Habits, Unwholesome, testimony on	278-281
Hades, doctrine of	191; 194
<i>Handbook for Preparing and Recording Ministers</i>	1241h; 1242
Harmony in the Church, testimony on	266-267
Headquarters, EFC-ER	1012
Healing, testimony on	380
Heaven, doctrine of	191-192; 194
Hell, doctrine of	191; 194
Historical Committee, EFC-ER	1103
Historical Documents	2000-3000
History of Friends	Historical Background
Holy Scriptures, doctrine of	130-133
Holy Spirit, doctrine of	120-123
Homosexuality, testimony on	303-306; 368-369
Humanity, doctrine of	160-163

## I

Incorporation, EFC-ER	1010-1012
Incorporation, Local Church	617
Indefinite Tenure for Pastors	833
Initiation of Business for Yearly Meeting	1051-1052
Inspiration of Scripture, doctrine of	130-133
Interim Yearly Meeting Decisions	1050; 1188
Intermediate Churches	613-614
Internet, testimony on amusements/pornography of	282-286; 370-372
Investment, Pension Board	1295

**J**

Jesus, Return of, doctrine of	113; 192
Jesus Christ, doctrine of	110-113
Justification, doctrine of	172

**L**

Last Things, doctrine of	190-194
Legal Trustees, local church	640
Licensed Pastors	882
Lord's Day, testimony on	325
Lotteries, testimony on	284

**M**

Mail Vote from Executive Board	1045; 1191
Malone College Board of Trustees	1278-1284
Malone College Ties to EFC-ER	1278-1284
Man, doctrine of	160-163
<u>Manual of Operation</u> , EFC-ER Boards	1189; 1232
<u>Manual of Operation</u> , Local Church	635; 657b
Marriage, testimony on	303-306
Material Things, testimony on	272-273
Mediation (Principles of Christian Conciliation)	523; 1256
Mediums, testimony on	373-376
Membership	500-523
Membership, Admission to	500-508
Membership, Adult	513-514
Membership, Application for	511-518; 8000; 8001
Membership, Associate	518
Membership, Birthright	517a
Membership, Childhood	517b
Membership, Church Covenant	507-508
Membership, Providing Certificate of Transfer	520; 8002
Membership, Receipt of Certificate of Transfer	521; 8002
Membership, Test for	501-502
Membership, Youth	515-516
Membership by Parental Request	517; 8001
Membership Classes	514d; 754cl; 760b
Membership Conciliation	523
Membership Covenant	505-506
Membership is in Local Church	504
Membership Maintenance	522
Membership Process	512-518
Membership Removal	522; 523e
Memorial Committee, EFC-ER	1104
Memorials, testimony on	277
Mercy Killing (euthanasia), testimony on	366-367
Ministerial Accreditation Board, EFC-ER	1238-1244
Ministry, Public, testimony on	321-322
Minutes of Yearly Meeting	1058-1059
Missionary Board, EFC-ER	1262-1264
Moderation and Modesty, testimony on	272-273
Movies, testimony on	284
Music, testimony on	285

**N**

National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)	6000
Nominating Board of EFC-ER	1125-1134
Nominating Committee, EFC-ER Executive Board	1185
Nominating Committee, Local Church	641-643

**O**

Oaths, testimony on	353-354
Officers of the Congregation	634-640
Officers of the EFC-ER	1075-1086
Ordinances, testimony on	261-265
Organization, District	1500-1515
Organization, Local Church, 50 members or fewer	701-715
Organization, Local Church, 51-100 members	720-726
Organization, Local Church, 101-150 members	730-764
Organization, Local Church, 151 members or more	780-784
Organization of Local Churches	620-784
Organizational Chart, Local Church, 50 members or fewer	702
Organizational Chart, Local Church, 51-100 members	702; 722
Organizational Chart, Local Church, 101-150 members	731
Organizational Chart, Local Church, 151 members or more	782
Overseers, Duties of	503; 509-510; 514; 523b-c; 652; 754c
Overseers, Local Church	649-652
Overseers, Qualifications of	651
Overseers and Membership	503; 509-510; 514; 523b-c; 652; 754c

**P**

Page, EFC-ER	1082
Parenthood, testimony on	312
Parents and Children, testimony on	311-314
Passover Meal, testimony on	263
Pastor(s), The	825-850
Pastoral Agreement, Early Termination	834
Pastoral Assistants	870-872
Pastoral Compensation	862-863
Pastoral Duties	840-850
Pastoral Relations, Local Church	746a-d
Pastoral Restoration, Principles of	1258
Pastoral Terms of Service	830-834
Pastoral Vacation/Leave	863
Pastoral Year	831
Peace and War, testimony on	348-352
Pension Board, EFC-ER	1293-1295
Pension Fund Manager	1295
Poor, The, testimony on	341-342
Pornography, testimony on	370-372
Prayer and Praise, testimony on	251-254
Presiding Clerk, District	1503a
Presiding Clerk, EFC-ER	1076
Presiding Clerk, Local Church	635
Principles for Resolving Charges	1255
Principles of Christian Conciliation (Mediation)	523; 1256
Principles of Restoration	1258
Procedure for Calling a Senior Pastor	826-828
Property Trustees Board, EFC-ER	1289-1292

Public Ministry, The, testimony on	321-322
Purpose and Ministries of the Local Church	600-607
Purpose and Nature of EFC-ER	1000-1005

## Q

Qualifications of Elders	648
Qualifications of Overseers	651

## R

Radio, testimony on	285
Reading Clerk, EFC-ER	1080
Reconciliation, doctrine of	171
Reconciliation, testimony on	266-267
Recording Clerk, EFC-ER	1078
Recording Clerk, Local Church	636
Recording of Ministers	883; 1242
Records of the Yearly Meeting	1057-1059
Recreation, testimony on	282-286
Regeneration, doctrine of	173
Restoration, Principles of	1258
Resurrection, doctrine of	113; 171; 192
Retirement of Ministers	884; 1259
Return of the Lord Jesus, doctrine of	113; 192
Returning Minutes	1078

## S

Sabbatical Leave for Pastors	863f
Sacred Worship, testimony on	250-266
Salvation, doctrine of	170-176
Sanctification, doctrine of	174-176
Satan, doctrine of	150-153; 193
Schools, testimony on	343-344
Scripture, doctrine of	130-133
Search Committee for Pastor	711; 746g
Second Coming, doctrine of	113; 192
Secret Societies, testimony on	287-288
Security of the Believer, testimony on	379
Sexual Relations, testimony on	303-306
Sin, doctrine of	112; 162; 172
Sin Nature, doctrine of	163
Speaking in Tongues, testimony on	381
Special Offerings, policy on	809-810
Spiritism, testimony on	376
Spiritual Life Committee, EP&E Board	1247
Spiritual Life Inventory	711; 746i; 1247a5; 7000
Stages in Church Growth	610-619
Statements of Faith, Affiliated Organizations	4000-6000
Statistical Records, EFC-ER	1086
Statistician, Local Church	639
Statutory Agent, EFC-ER	1012
Stewardship, testimony on	323-329
Stewardship of Earth, testimony on	362-363
Suicide (euthanasia), testimony on	366-367

<b>T</b>	
Talents, testimony on	329
Task Forces, Local Church	662-664; 709; 732
Television (TV), testimony on	285
Test for Membership	501-504
Testimonies, Christian Living	270-288
Testimonies, Christian Service	320-333
Testimonies, Current Issues	360-381
Testimonies, Sacred Worship	250-266
Testimonies, The Christian and Government	340-356
Testimonies, The Christian Family	300-314
Testimonies of EFC-ER	250-381
Theater, testimony on	284
Tithing, testimony on	326-327
Title to Local Church Property	1002
Tobacco, testimony on	280-281
Transfer of Members	520-521
Transfer of Ministerial Credentials	1243
Treasurer, District	1503c
Treasurer, EFC-ER	1084
Treasurer, Local Church	638
Trustees, Legal, Local Church	640
<b>U</b>	
Unity of Fellowship, testimony on	266-267
Unwholesome Habits, testimony on	278-281
Use of Church Buildings/Facilities, testimony on	330-331
<b>V</b>	
Voting at Yearly Meeting	1055
Voting Limit and Age, Local Church	633
<b>W</b>	
War and Peace, testimony on	348-352
Weddings, testimony on	275
Welcoming Committee, EFC-ER	1105
Wills, testimony on	328
Women in Ministry, testimony on	321-322
Women's Missionary Fellowship	1751
Worship, testimony on	250-266
<b>Y</b>	
Yearly Meeting Date	1027
Yearly Meeting Records	1058-1059
Yearly Meeting Schedule	1029-1030
Yearly Meeting Voting	1055
Youth Membership	515-516

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by Betty Hockett, Barclay Press

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by Betty Hockett, Barclay Press

## CHURCH HISTORY AND QUAKERISM

American Quakers Today

by Edwin Bronner, Philadelphia, 1972

The People Called Quakers

by Elton D. Trueblood, Harper, 1966

The Journal of John Woolman

London, 1910

The Journal of George Fox

Norman Penny, Ed., NY 1973

Rich Heritage of Quakerism (reprint)

by Walter Williams and Epilogue by Paul Anderson

A Century of Planting

by Anna E. Nixon, Barclay Press, 1985

Fruit That Remains

by Charles DeVol

On the Cutting Edge

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