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**CONSTITUTION**  
**OF THE GAYLORD EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH**  
**December 4, 2016**

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this church shall be: The Gaylord Evangelical Free Church

**ARTICLE II – STATEMENT OF FAITH**

***GOD***

- A. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

***THE BIBLE***

- B. We believe that God has spoken in the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

***THE HUMAN CONDITION***

- C. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled, and renewed.

***JESUS CHRIST***

- D. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus – Israel's promised Messiah – was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

***THE WORK OF CHRIST***

- E. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitutes the only ground for salvation.

***THE HOLY SPIRIT***

- F. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells,

47 illuminates, guides, and equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.  
48

49 ***THE CHURCH***

50 G. We believe that the true church composes all who have been justified by God’s grace  
51 through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of  
52 Christ, of which He is the head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose  
53 membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two  
54 ordinances, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the  
55 gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the Church in  
56 genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.  
57

58 ***CHRISTIAN LIVING***

59 H. We believe that God’s justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power  
60 and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to  
61 live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for  
62 the oppressed. With God’s Word, the Spirit’s power, and fervent prayer in Christ’s  
63 name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ’s commission,  
64 we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word  
65 and deed.  
66

67 ***CHRIST’S RETURN***

68 I. We believe in the personal, bodily, and pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
69 The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and as  
70 our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service, and energetic  
71 mission.  
72

73 ***RESPONSE AND ETERNAL DESTINY***

74 J. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to  
75 Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise  
76 the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and  
77 eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the  
78 Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.  
79

80 **ARTICLE III – STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE and SEXUALITY**

81  
82 A. We believe God created human beings as male and female. The complementary,  
83 relational nature of the human race as “male and female” reflects the created order given  
84 by God when He created human beings “in His image.”  
85

86 B. We believe the Bible grants two life-enhancing options for sexual behavior: monogamous  
87 marital relations between one man and one woman or sexual celibacy. Either is a gift  
88 from God, given as He wills for His glory and the good of those who receive and rejoice  
89 in His gift to them.  
90

91 C. We believe marriage as a good creation of God, and marriage within the Church as a rite  
92 and institution tied directly to our foundational belief of God as creator who made us

93 male and female. We also regard marriage as a sacred institution which images the  
94 mysterious and wonderful bond between Christ and His Church. To us then, marriage is  
95 much more than merely a contract between two persons (a secular notion). It is a  
96 covenant grounded in promises between a man and a woman which finds its divinely  
97 intended expression in the “one flesh” union of husband and wife, and between the “one  
98 flesh” union of husband and wife and God (the divine design). We therefore will only  
99 authorize and recognize heterosexual marriages, between a biological man and a  
100 biological woman. The Pastors and staff of The Gaylord Evangelical Free Church shall  
101 only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman.  
102 The facilities, campuses, and property of The Gaylord Evangelical Free Church shall  
103 only host weddings between one man and one woman.  
104

#### 105 **ARTICLE IV – PURPOSE**

106

107 The purpose of the Gaylord Evangelical Free Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ,  
108 thereby bringing lives into harmony with God and one another through worship, evangelism,  
109 discipleship, fellowship, and service using the Bible as our standard for faith and practice in all  
110 such matters.  
111

#### 112 **ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

113

114 The membership of the church shall consist of persons who profess belief in Jesus Christ  
115 as their personal Savior and Lord; whose character, conduct and reputation conform therewith;  
116 and who will abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the church. Any person who professes  
117 these beliefs may make application for membership.  
118

#### 119 **ARTICLE VI – GOVERNMENT**

120

##### 121 A. Congregational Authority

122 Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church from whom the church takes her direction. The  
123 membership of the church, at all its duly called congregational meetings, holds final  
124 authority.  
125

##### 126 B. Elder Governance

127 The Elder Board will be elected by and responsible to the membership. The spiritual  
128 governance of the church shall be vested in the Elder Board according to the principles  
129 of the Bible and guidance of the Holy Spirit.  
130

##### 131 C. Pastoral Leadership

132 This church will have a Lead Pastor who meets the qualifications of an overseer  
133 (1 Timothy 3:1-7). He is a member of and accountable to the Elder Board and  
134 together they are accountable to the Congregation. Members of the staff are  
135 accountable to the Lead Pastor or his designee.  
136

##### 137 D. Leadership Team

138 The Leadership Team leads and directs the administration, finances, and volunteer

139 ministries necessary to fulfill the purpose of this church.

140

141 **ARTICLE VII – STANDING**

142

143 A. This church will associate with the Evangelical Free Church of America, yet remain self-  
144 governing and conduct its business through its business meetings.

145

146 B. This church will not join itself to any other denomination or synod.

147

148 **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS**

149

150 This Constitution may be amended by the members. A copy of the proposed changes must be  
151 made available to the membership two (2) months prior to a members meeting properly called  
152 for this purpose. A two-thirds vote of the members voting in support of a measure shall be  
153 required to adopt any proposed changes.

154

155 **ARTICLE IX – BUSINESS MEETINGS**

156

157 A. A business meeting shall be held annually at a date and time determined by the  
158 Leadership Team.

159

160 B. Additional business meetings may be held as deemed necessary by the Leadership Team.

161

162 **ARTICLE X – PROPERTY RIGHTS**

163

164 A. In the case of division and separation, the property of this church shall belong to the  
165 members who stand by this Constitution.

166

167 B. In the event of a dispute as to which faction is adhering to the Constitution, the Board of  
168 Directors of the Great Lakes District of the Evangelical Free Church of America shall  
169 review the dispute and make a decision binding upon all factions.

170

171 C. If the church ceases to function and its organization is dissolved, the Great Lakes  
172 District Conference shall assume ownership of the property.

173

174 **BYLAWS**

175

176 **ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP**

177 Section 1: Covenant of Membership

178

179 Having received Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord, I commit as a member of this church  
180 to the following attitudes and practices:

181

182 1. I will be supportive of the doctrinal statement of this church, being careful not to be  
183 divisive about any area of disagreement.

184

2. I will love, honor, and pray for my fellow church members.

- 185 3. I will pursue the peace and unity of this church, refusing to involve myself in gossip and  
186 slander.  
187 4. I will support the church by giving generously of my time, spiritual gifts, and finances.  
188 5. I will love, honor, and pray for the leadership and ministries of this church on a regular  
189 basis.  
190 6. I will seek to grow in my personal relationship with Jesus Christ so that I may be an  
191 example of righteousness to others and not a stumbling block to their faith.  
192 7. I will attend church worship services and business meetings as often as possible.

193  
194 **Section 2: Member Discipline**

- 195  
196 A. Members are expected to conduct their lives according to the standards set forth in the  
197 Bible. Those found living or teaching contrary to the Word of God and the Statement  
198 of Faith of this church shall be counseled in love towards repentance.  
199  
200 B. If efforts to bring repentance and restoration fail, the Elders will follow principles  
201 outlined in the Bible. If judged necessary, the Board of Elders shall make a  
202 determination of dismissal. The individual will then be notified of his or her  
203 removal from membership.  
204

205 **Section 3: Membership Termination**

- 206  
207 A. The Elder Board will accept requests for withdrawals from membership.  
208  
209 B. The church staff shall attempt to contact any member who is absent from all services, or  
210 who has not supported the church in any way for one year. After approval from the Elder  
211 Board, these members will be removed from membership.  
212

213 **ARTICLE II – GOVERNMENT**

214 **Section 1: Membership**

215 **1.1 Elected Positions**

- 216  
217 A. The membership shall elect the following: Lead Pastor, Church Chairman, Elder Board  
218 Chairman, and Elder Board members. All other positions will be appointed.  
219  
220 1. Membership shall vote on each nominee by written ballot. A two-thirds majority of  
221 the votes cast shall be necessary for election.  
222  
223 2. Vacancies for elected positions occurring during the term of office may be filled at any  
224 regular or special business meeting. Newly elected persons shall assume office  
225 immediately after election, and fulfill the remainder of the term of the person being  
226 replaced.  
227

228 **1.2 Property Transactions**

- 229  
230 A. Any transaction of real or personal property in excess of 5% of the annual budget must

231 be made at a business meeting. A legal representative of the church shall sign the legal  
232 documents relating to the transaction. Any action involving property in excess of  
233 5% of the annual church budget must receive at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the  
234 membership at a business meeting.

235  
236 B. No individual shall have rights of ownership to the church property, real or personal,  
237 since all contributions to this non-profit organization are freely given for the work of the  
238 gospel ministry.

239  
240 1.3 Constitution and Bylaws

241  
242 Membership is responsible for approving amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

243  
244 1.4 Budget

245  
246 Membership is responsible for approving the annual church budget.

247  
248 Section 2: Elder Board

249 2.1 Structure

- 250  
251 A. Elders shall be directly accountable to the membership.  
252  
253 B. Elders shall be wholly comprised of men who are members of this church and are mature,  
254 godly men, who demonstrate the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.  
255  
256 C. The Elder Board shall have a minimum of six members and the term of office for Elders  
257 shall be three years. (The terms will be arranged so that as much as possible an equal  
258 number of terms expire each year.)  
259  
260 D. Elders shall be individuals who are not on the Leadership Team (except for the Lead  
261 Pastor).  
262  
263 E. The Elder Board Chairman will chair meetings of the Elder Board and he shall be a legal  
264 representative of the church. The Elders will elect a Vice Chairman; and a secretary to  
265 record minutes.

266  
267 2.2 Elder Board Responsibilities – The Elder Board shall:

- 268  
269 A. Provide biblical direction and oversight of the ministries of the church.  
270  
271 B. Provide counsel, encouragement, and accountability to the Lead Pastor in matters  
272 relating to doctrine, practice, and spiritual leadership.  
273  
274 C. Administer matters of church discipline following the biblical principles outlined in  
275 Matthew 18:15-18, 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, Galatians 6:1-2 and 1 Timothy  
276 5:19-20. This includes discipline of an Elder or Leadership Team member if found to be

- 277 engaged in serious misconduct.  
278  
279 D. Guard the doctrinal purity of the church.  
280  
281 E. Oversee the church membership process.  
282  
283 F. Approve of all nominations for the elected positions of: Elder Board members, Elder  
284 Board Chairman, and Church Chairman.  
285  
286 G. Appoint in consultation with the Church Chairman, the Leadership Team, and empower  
287 them to carry out the administrative functions of the church.  
288  
289 H. Appoint a Search Committee as needed for the calling of a Lead Pastor, or other staff as  
290 determined by the Lead Pastor.  
291  
292 I. Develop multi-year church vision plans.  
293

### 294 2.3 Lead Pastor vacancy

- 295  
296 A. When a vacancy occurs, the Elder Board shall make temporary provisions for the duties  
297 of the Lead Pastor.  
298  
299 B. In the event the Elders determine that the Lead Pastor should be asked to leave, the Elder  
300 Board shall determine the timeframe and process for dismissal. (Dismissal can  
301 occur only following a two-thirds vote by the Elder Board in support of this action).  
302

## 303 Section 3: Pastoral Leadership

### 304 3.1 Lead Pastor

- 305  
306 A. The Lead Pastor shall be a man who meets the qualifications as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7  
307 and Titus 1:5-9.  
308  
309 B. The Lead Pastor shall be a man who is sympathetic to and cooperative with The  
310 Evangelical Free Church of America. He shall appoint all delegates representing our  
311 church at any EFCA or Great Lakes Conference. Those delegates shall be prepared to  
312 report to the church if called upon.  
313  
314 C. The Lead Pastor shall also be in accord with and uphold the Constitution and Bylaws of  
315 The Gaylord Evangelical Free Church.  
316  
317 D. The Lead Pastor shall preach the Gospel, direct the administration of the ordinances, and  
318 promote the spiritual interests of the church.  
319  
320 E. The Lead Pastor shall be accountable to the Elder Board.  
321  
322 F. The Lead Pastor shall be a voting member of the Elder Board and he or his designee

323 shall be a voting member of the Leadership Team.

324

325 G. The Lead Pastor or his designee shall provide leadership to the pastors, directors of  
326 ministry, and support staff.

327

328 H. The Lead Pastor shall be responsible, in consultation with the Church Chairman and  
329 Elder Board Chairman, for the hiring and dismissing of pastors, directors of  
330 ministry, and support staff (e.g. administration, custodial, etc.)

331

332 I. If the Lead Pastor desires to resign, a notice in writing must be submitted to the Elder  
333 Board at least sixty days in advance of the date.

334

### 335 3.2 Pastors and Directors of Ministry

336

337 A. Pastors shall be men who meet the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and  
338 Titus 1:5-9.

339

340 B. Directors of Ministry shall be men who meet the qualifications stated in  
341 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 or women who meet the qualifications stated in  
342 Titus 2:3-5.

343

344 C. Pastors and Directors of Ministry shall be men and women who are sympathetic to  
345 and cooperative with The Evangelical Free Church of America and shall be in accord  
346 with and uphold the Constitution and Bylaws of the Gaylord Evangelical Free Church.

347

348 D. Pastors and Directors of Ministry shall report to the Lead Pastor or his designee.

349

## 350 Section 4: Leadership Team

351

### 4.1 Structure

352

353 A. The Church Chairman shall be a member of this church and a mature, godly man, who  
354 demonstrates the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. All other  
355 Leadership Team members shall be mature and godly individuals who are members of  
356 the church.

357

358 B. The term of office of the Church Chairman, and all Leadership Team members, shall be  
359 three years.

360

361 C. The Leadership Team shall consist of a minimum of six members.

362

363 D. The Leadership Team shall appoint a Vice Chairman, Church Treasurer, and a Church  
364 Secretary:

365

366 1. The Vice Chairman will preside at meetings in the event the Chairman is unavailable.

367

368 2. The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for the accurate recording and reporting of



369 church finances.

370

371 3. The Secretary shall be responsible for the accurate recording of the proceedings and  
372 decisions made at all business meetings of the church. Minutes will also be made  
373 available to the Elder Board.

374

375 E. The Church Chairman shall be a legal representative of the church. He shall chair all  
376 Congregational meetings and Leadership Team meetings. (In the absence of both the  
377 Church Chairman and the Vice Chairman, the Church Chairman will appoint a temporary  
378 replacement to chair either a Congregational meeting or a Leadership Team meeting.)

379

380 F. A majority of Leadership Team members, present at a meeting, shall constitute a quorum  
381 necessary for the transaction of business. Upon a quorum being present, a simple  
382 majority of the votes cast are needed to pass a measure.

383

384 4.2 Leadership Team Responsibilities – The Leadership Team shall:

385

386 A. Establish ministry teams and committees deemed necessary to fulfill the purpose of  
387 this church.

388

389 B. Develop operating and budget parameters with the ministry teams.

390

391 C. Approve all financial policies, and submit and manage the church budget.

392

393 D. Approve all fund raising and fund raising policies used by the church or ministry teams.

394

395 E. Have the authority to determine the use of church property.

396

397 F. Have the authority to acquire and dispose of other property not in excess of 5% of the  
398 annual budget. In a special situation the Leadership Team may commit for more  
399 than 5% of the annual budget, but must immediately schedule a special Congregational  
400 meeting to inform and receive membership approval. Notification of such a meeting  
401 may be accomplished by the quickest available method.

402

#### 403 **ARTICLE IV – BUSINESS MEETINGS**

404

405 A. The annual business meeting or any special business meeting shall be announced at two  
406 consecutive Sunday services prior to the meeting.

407

408 B. The annual business meeting will be held prior to the beginning of the church fiscal year  
409 at the date and time set by the Leadership Team. The purpose of the meeting shall be for  
410 the election of church officers, approval of the church budget, reception of annual  
411 reports, and transaction of other business as determined by the Leadership Team.

412

413 C. Members may present a written request to the Leadership Team for an item to be  
414 considered for the agenda.

- 415  
416 D. A simple majority of votes cast shall be necessary to pass all items of business unless  
417 stated otherwise in the Constitution or the Bylaws.  
418  
419 E. Eligible voting members, eighteen years old or older, present at any congregational  
420 business meeting shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.  
421  
422 F. Absentee ballots may be made available at the discretion of the Leadership Team.  
423  
424 G. The agenda for the business meeting must be provided to the membership at two  
425 consecutive Sunday services prior to the meeting.  
426

427 **ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS**

- 428  
429 A. The Leadership Team shall provide written proposed changes at least thirty (30)  
430 days prior to a members meeting properly called for this purpose.  
431  
432 B. A two-thirds vote of the members voting in support of a measure, shall be required to  
433 adopt any proposed changes.  
434

435 **ARTICLE VI – OPERATIONS MANUAL**

- 436  
437 A. A supplement to these Bylaws, known as an Operations Manual, shall contain job  
438 descriptions, financial policies, employment policies, and other matters not outlined  
439 herein.  
440  
441 B. The Operations Manual will be reviewed as needed by the Leadership Team.  
442 Membership approval of the Operations Manual will not be required.  
443