



Church Membership Application

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Introduction: Discovering Church Membership

We are glad that you are interested in becoming a member of BayLife Community Church! This study packet is the basic introduction to our church family. It is designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

"So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household," (Eph. 2:19 CSB)

"So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family." (Eph. 2:19 NLT)

1. The church is _____
2. God expects you to be _____ of a church family.

The Goal of This Study

... That I will commit myself to _____ and to the _____

What Makes BayLife Community Church a Family?

Four things unite us

1. **Our Salvation** (What God has done for us)
2. **Our Statement** (Why we exist as a church)
3. **Our Strategy** (How we fulfill our purpose)
4. **Our Structure** (When and where we fulfill our purpose)

1. Our Salvation

²⁶ You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26-28 NIV)

What is the Problem?

1. Man has a natural desire to _____ and to ignore God's principles for living.
 - "Look out for #1. Do your own thing."
 - "If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it."
 - "It's my life and I'll do what I please!"
2. The Bible calls this attitude: _____
 - "We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; ..." (Is. 53:6a)
 - "If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1Jn 1:8)
3. Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to reject God and try to live our lives outside of His will.
 - "It's your sins that have cut you off from God." (Is. 59:2a NLT)
 - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23)
4. When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives -- marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.
5. When people have problems, they often try many different ways of coping before turning to God.
 - "There is a way that SEEMS right to a person, but its end is the way to death." (Prov. 16:25)
6. Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know Him:
 - "My mother was a Christian so..."
 - "It doesn't matter what you believe, just be sincere."
 - "I'll give up all my bad habits."
 - "I'll work real hard and earn it."
 - "I'll be religious and go to church."

What is the Solution?

- *Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (Jn. 14:6)*
- God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!

- *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 6:23)*

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

- *"But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8)*
- *"For there is one God and one mediator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus," (1Tim. 2:5)*
- God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

What Does God Want Me to Do?

1. _____ that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins.
 - *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)*
2. _____ that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose again from the dead, and is alive today.
 - *"If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)*
 - *"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)*
3. _____ God's free gift of salvation. Don't try to earn it.
 - *"⁸For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—⁹not from works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)*
 - Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!
4. _____ Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the director ("Lord") of your life.
 - *"¹²But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name, ¹³who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13)*
 - *"See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20)*

You can take these steps by praying a simple prayer of commitment to God:

"Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died for my sins and forgiveness. You rose from the dead to give me eternal life. I want to turn from my sins. I will trust and follow You as the Lord and Savior of my life. Lord, please come into my life, forgive me, give me eternal life, and help me grow as a child of God. In Your name I pray. Amen."

"For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13)

The Importance Of Being Baptized

Why Should I be Baptized?

1. To follow the example set by _____.
 - "... Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John." (Mk. 1:9)
2. Because Christ _____ it.
 - ¹⁹ "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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20)
3. It demonstrates that I really am a _____.
 - "... Many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized." (Acts 18:8)
 - "This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commands." (1Jn. 2:3)

What is the Meaning of Baptism?

1. It testifies the historical fact of Christ's _____ and resurrection
 - "Christ died for our sins... He was buried ... and He rose again." (1Cor. 15:3-4)
 - "For when you are baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ." (Col. 2:12)
2. It testifies the reality of my _____ as a Christian.
 - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17)
 - "... we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4)
 - Baptism doesn't make you a believer — it shows that you have already believed. Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.
 - ⁸ "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift — ⁹ not from works, so that no one can boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

Who Should Be Baptized?

1. Every person who has _____ in Christ.
 - "So those who accepted his message were baptized, ..." (Acts 2:41)
 - Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for babies and children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to believe in Christ on his own. The purpose is for the parents to publicly confess their commitment to Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. **This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible** which is only for those old enough to believe. In order to adhere closely to biblical teaching and to avoid unnecessary confusion, BayLife Community Church does not practice baby baptism.

The Meaning of the Lord's Supper

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called "ordinances") as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

What is the Lord's Supper? (1Cor. 11:23-26)

1. It is a _____
*"On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus **took bread**," (v. 23b)*
2. It is a _____
*"...and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this **in remembrance** of me."" (v. 24)*
3. It is a _____
*"In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."" (v. 25)*
4. It is a _____
*"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, **you proclaim the Lord's death** until he comes." (v. 26)*

Who Should Take the Lord's Supper?

Only those who are already _____ (Mk. 14:22-26)
"For whoever eats and drinks without recognizing the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1Cor. 11:29)

How Do I Prepare Myself for the Lord's Supper?

"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (1Cor. 11:27-28)

By ...

1. Self-Examination (1Cor. 11:27)
2. Confessing My Sins (1Jn. 1:9)
3. Recommitment (Rom. 12:1)
4. Restoring Relationships (Matt. 5:23-24)

When and How Often Should We Observe the Lord's Supper?

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe The Lord's Supper. He instituted it on a Thursday night. Since it is a 'supper', it may seem more appropriate to observe it at an evening service when possible.

2. Our Statements

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. (1 Corinthians 1:10 NIV)

Our MISSION

We exist to reach lives, share lives, touch lives, and build lives for the glory of God.

BayLife is where healthy Christian faith begins and grows. It is where you will find Christian support for your walk with God and your life's challenges.

BayLife's Children & Youth Ministry is a lively and loving ministry where children and youths learn to know God, love God and serve God, through sound biblical teaching.

- First and foremost, we love our children and youths as God wants us to love them.
- Then, we patiently teach them God's truth from the Bible and show them what it means to believe in Jesus Christ. Yet, we are careful not to manipulate their decisions of faith.
- We practice a balanced approach of grace and truth: we love them and pray for them as God's precious ones while teaching them to obey God's Word, the Bible.

The Great Commission: ¹⁹*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, ²⁰teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*" (Matt. 28:19-20)

The Great Commandment: ³⁷*He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the greatest and most important command. ³⁹The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself."* (Matt. 22:37-39)

Five Purposes

- **Reach Lives** (evangelism) = To "Go ... make disciples"
- **Share Lives** (fellowship) = To "Baptize ..."
- **Touch Lives** (service) = To "Love your neighbor as yourself"
- **Build Lives** (discipleship) = To "Teach them ... all things"
- **For the Glory of God** (worship) = To "Love God with all your heart"

The BayLife Community Church Exists

1. To _____ **God's Word (Reach Lives)**

- *"His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms," (Eph. 3:10 NIV)*
- ¹³*For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. ¹⁴How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:13-14)*

- Why Our Church Must Never Stop Growing:
 - a. Because _____
 - *"He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."* (2Pe. 3:9; 2Cor. 5:14; Lk. 15:3-10; Matt. 9:12-13)
 - b. Because _____
 - *"Then the master told the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and make them come in, **so that my house may be filled.**"* (Lk. 14:23)
 - *"... you will be my witnesses ..."* (Acts 1:8)
 - c. Because _____
 - *"He doesn't hold on to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and tendons, grows with growth from God."* (Col. 2:19)
 - *"... I will build my church, ..."* (Matt. 16:18)
- Our church must grow _____ and _____ at the same time. *"This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and **then** the end will come.* (Matt. 24:14)

2. To _____ God's Family (Share Lives)

3. To _____ God's Love (Touch Lives)

- *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, **if you love one another.*** (Jn. 13:35; 1Jn. 3:16-17; Matt. 25:34-40; Heb. 13:16; Rom. 12:13)
- The heartbeat of BayLife Community Church is our _____. Every member needs to be a part of one.
- *"⁴Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different ministries, but the same Lord. ... ²⁷Now you are the body of Christ, **and individual members of it.**"* (1Cor. 12:4-5, 27)
- At BayLife Community Church
 - Every member is a _____
 - Every task is _____
 - Every member is a "10" in _____

4. To _____ God's People (Build Lives)

- *"let us leave the elementary teaching about Christ and **go on to maturity,** ..."* (Heb. 6:1)
- *"**But grow in the grace and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* (2Pe. 3:18)
- *"[God has given] ... some pastors and teachers, ¹²equipping the saints ..., to build up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness.* (Eph. 4:11-13)

5. To _____ God's Presence (for the Glory of God)

- *"Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only."* (Matt. 4:10)
- *"...Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."* (Jn. 4:23-24)

Our VISION:

Our overall vision is being **a safe place with safe people building safe relationships** together with God and with one another.

Our "7-Blessing" Goals are:

1. **Evangelism** that multiplies disciples at home and abroad through personal evangelism & missionaries
2. **Small groups** for everyone, every family, everywhere
3. **Equipping Christians** for life and ministry (holistic discipleship)
4. **Children and Youth Ministry** that is lively with sound biblical teaching
5. **Two Sunday worship services** that inspire people, witness Christ, and glorify God
6. **A church facility** that seats 200 and houses our "Ministry Training Center" and community ministries
7. **Yourself** as a Christian

Our CORE VALUES

"Core values are consistent, passionate, Biblical, distinctive convictions that determine our priorities, influence our decisions, drive our ministry and are demonstrated by our behavior."

[Adopted from *EFCA Church Planters' Bootcamp*, 2000]

We believe that the following core values are essential to a healthy church. In addition to our Mission and Vision, they are biblical values that govern the development and operation of our church ministry.

1. **Love** that walks with God and connects with people in Christ's grace and truth
2. **Faith** that obeys God's Word, submits to His sovereign authority, and trusts in His faithfulness
3. **Holistic Discipleship** that renews our minds with God's Word, develops Christ-like character in us, promotes Christian fellowship, and equip disciples to become disciple-makers
4. **Personal Evangelism** that is ready, contagious, and sound in biblical reasoning
5. **Servant-Leadership** that demonstrates humility, teamwork, and unity in Christ
6. **Simplicity** that inspires effective ministries, creative ideas, and personal participation

In essential beliefs — we have unity (Eph. 4:4-6)

In non-essential beliefs — we have liberty (Rom. 14:1, 4, 12, 22)

In all our beliefs — we show charity (1Cor. 13:2)



EFCA Statement of Faith

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

God

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

The Bible

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

The Human Condition

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

Jesus Christ

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

The Work of Christ

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

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

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

*Christ's Return**

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

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

* This revision of Article 9 was adopted at the EFCA One Conference on 6/19/2019.

Our Lifestyle Statement

What We Practice

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following seven practices:

1. Bible as Our Sole Authority

- *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness," (2Tim. 3:16)*
- Since God's Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is "What does the Bible say?" We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

2. Autonomy of Each Local Church

- *"He [Christ] is also the head of the body, the church; ..." (Col. 1:18)*
- Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization.
- While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control.

3. Priesthood of Every Believer

- *"and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father ..." (Rev. 1:6)*
- *"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, ... , a people for his possession, ..." (1Pet. 2:9)*
- The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to "full time" Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

4. Giving

- *"Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver." (2Cor. 9:7)*
- *"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? For everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your own hand." (1Chron. 29:14)*
- *"I know, my God, that you test the heart and that you are pleased with what is right. I have willingly given all these things with an upright heart, and now I have seen your people who are present here giving joyfully and willingly to you." (1Chron. 29:17)*

- In the Old Testament times, tithing was to be practiced along with free-will offerings (Gen. 14:18-20; 28:22; Lev. 26:30; Mal. 3:8). Tithing was giving 10% of one's income to the Lord. The free-will offering was a gift to the Lord above the tithe. While the concepts of tithing and free-will offerings are not taught in the New Testament, they are standards by which giving could be evaluated. (see Matt. 23:23; Lk. 11:42)

5. Spirit-led Living & Ministry

- *[Jesus said], "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me." (Jn. 15:5)*
- We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God's power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (Phil. 2:13, Eph. 5:18)
- *"Do not lack diligence in zeal; be fervent in the Spirit; serve the Lord." (Rom. 12:11)*
- *"For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love." (Gal. 5:13)*

6. Telling Others About Christ

- *"but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you." (1Pe. 3:15)*
- It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those with whom God brings us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

BayLife Community Church Constitution

I. NAME

The name of this organization, a nonprofit corporation, shall be "BayLife Community Church."

II. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith of this Church shall be the same as that of The Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA).

III. STANDING

This church shall maintain membership with The Evangelical Free Church of America and its branches.

IV. PURPOSE

The purpose of this church is to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40) of Jesus Christ. We shall reach lives, share lives, touch lives, and build lives for the glory of God. In order to glorify God, we "reach lives" by making disciples of all people through the gospel of Jesus Christ and helping them to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior. We "share lives" by developing Christian fellowship among church members. We "touch lives" by loving, serving, and financially or materially assisting one another as the Bible teaches us. We "build lives" by equipping believers of Christ for godly living and ministry in obedience to Christ and the Scripture through holistic discipleship. Ultimately, we glorify God through Christ-like living and corporate worship as the body of Christ.

V. MEMBERSHIP

The church shall receive as members those who have received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior as taught in the Bible. As such, they are born again Christians who manifest the fruits of the Spirit in their lives, and are in agreement with the doctrine and polity of this church as stated in the bylaws of this church.

VI. PROPERTY RIGHTS

If the church membership votes to dissolve, and cease to function as a church of like faith and practice, or if the membership should dissolve through some disaster, the property rights shall be assigned to EFCA and its branches to enable said district to renew the work or use the assets thereof for further Gospel enterprises.

VII. GOVERNMENT

Ultimate authority lies in Jesus Christ as the head of the Church and in the Scripture as the basis for all faith and practice. This church shall remain free and self-governing. The government is vested in its membership and administered by its officers. In function, final authority shall reside in the membership. They shall approve and/or affirm Biblically qualified leadership to carry out Christ's purposes.

VIII. OFFICERS

The officers of this church shall be the Church Board, and other officers as deemed necessary by the church as described in the bylaws.

IX. PROVISION FOR BYLAWS

A supplement to this constitution known as the bylaws shall embody the stated qualifications for church leaders and officers. The bylaws shall also include officers' duties, provisions for appointment of additional leaders and teachers, conditions for membership, method by which members are received, along with other rules and regulations for church activities as needed.

X. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any business meeting when said proposed Amendments have been presented to the membership in writing via U.S. Mail to the member's address on file and posted it on our church website for at least four weeks prior to the business meeting. A two-thirds majority of those present at the business meeting is required for passage.

BayLife Community Church Bylaws

Article 1 Membership

- 1.1 Membership shall be granted by the Church Board to applicants who provide a credible testimony of conversion to Jesus Christ to the Church Board or to a committee of the Church Board established for this purpose and who affirm the purpose and bylaws of the church.
- 1.2 Applicants for membership shall have been baptized prior to the granting of membership.
- 1.3 Applicants for membership shall have completed such other procedures as are established by the Church Board prior to the granting of membership.
- 1.4 Members who are age 18 or older shall have full voting privileges on all matters presented to the church body in business meetings.
- 1.5 Membership may be terminated by the Church Board for the following reasons:
 - 1.5.1 Death of the member.
 - 1.5.2 Written request of the member.
 - 1.5.3 Lack of any attendance of the church for a period of six months or more.
 - 1.5.4 Failure to respond satisfactorily to discipline by the Church Board.

Article 2 Discipline

- 2.1 When one member observes or experiences behavior on the part of a second member which is inconsistent with biblical expectations and is potentially injurious to the first member, to the second member and/or to the church body, the first member shall share his/her concerns privately with the second member in keeping with Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-5. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the first member shall share his/her concerns with the second member in the presence of one or two other members of the church. If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, it shall be presented to the Church Board for resolution.
- 2.2 If, upon investigation, the Church Board determines that the matter has substance, it shall present the particular issues of concern to the second member, the biblical standards that appear to have been violated, the remedies required, and the actions that will be taken failing this, including removal from membership (1 Corinthians 5).
- 2.3 If the second member demonstrates biblical sorrow over the behavior and takes the recommended action to remedy the consequences of the behavior in the best manner possible, and demonstrates a re-direction of life so as to cease this behavior in the future, the Church Board shall conclude that restoration has been completed.
- 2.4 If the second member fails to respond to the discipline required by the Church Board, the Board shall take whatever action it deems necessary, consistent with biblical standards, including removal from membership.

- 2.5 The disciplined person may appeal the Church Board's action to the church membership within 30 days. The church membership in a business meeting closed to non-members and members not eligible to vote, by majority vote of those members present and eligible to vote, shall then either ratify the action of the Church Board or rescind it. If the latter, the Church Board shall then determine an alternative course of action.
- 2.6 The accused member has the right to present a defense to the church board or elders which includes presenting witnesses or documents in their defense. An accused member must present their defense within 30 days after receiving notice of potential discipline.

Article 3

Church Board

- 3.1 All authority not specifically reserved to the membership as a whole (the congregation) in these bylaws shall be granted to the Church Board. The following require approval by the membership:
 - 3.1.1 Ratification and removal of members of the Church Board.
 - 3.1.2 Approval of the annual budget or budget amendment.
 - 3.1.3 Voting on the call or dismissal of the Senior Pastor.
 - 3.1.4 The purchase, sale or encumber of real property.
 - 3.1.5 Amendments to the constitution or bylaws.
 - 3.1.6 The dissolution of the church and/or corporation.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the Church Board to take such actions and establish such environments as necessary to further the purpose of this church in a manner consistent with biblical directives and principles.
- 3.3 The function of the Church Board is to establish policy and assume the responsibility of governance of the affairs of the congregation. The Board shall maintain a distinction between governance and management, and shall delegate to the Senior Pastor and other staff and lay leaders the operation and implementation of the affairs of the church.
- 3.4 The Church Board shall be responsible for the exercise of spiritual discipline in accordance with the bylaws.
- 3.5 The Church Board shall have the authority to commission prospective Christian leaders and to charter new congregations.
- 3.6 The Church Board shall consist of the Senior Pastor and such those who meet the requirements of church board members established in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. The Board shall determine its size consistent with the responsibilities to be carried out. Each Board member, with the exception of the Senior Pastor shall be a member in good standing of the church for at least one year before being selected as a Board member.
- 3.7 The Church Board shall select its own membership, subject to the following:
 - 3.7.1 No selected Board member shall begin his service until ratified for this position by a majority vote of the church membership in business meeting.
 - 3.7.2 Each Board member shall serve a full term of three years, and may be selected for a successive three-year term. Following two full terms of service (six successive years), there must be at least a one-year period before being selected again as a Board

member, even to fill a partial term. An initial partial term shall not be counted against the two-term limit. Senior Pastor is not subject to the two-term limit.

- 3.8 The Church Board shall select its own chairman annually at the first Board meeting following the church's first business meeting of the year.
- 3.9 The Church Board may remove a current Board member by a two-third vote of all Board members at will, including lack of attendance and failure to fulfill one's responsibilities.
- 3.10 The Church Board may remove the Senior Pastor at will by a majority vote of all Board members. The Senior Pastor shall cease to function in that office as of the moment of that vote. However, his removal shall not become effective until ratified by a majority vote at a duly called business meeting, with written notice of this business item provided 14 days prior to the date of the business meeting to each member eligible to vote. If the vote fails to ratify the Church Board's action, the Senior Pastor is immediately restored to his office. If the vote ratifies the action of the Church Board, the Senior Pastor is dismissed as of that moment. Terms of severance shall be determined by the Church Board.
- 3.11 At such time as the position of Senior Pastor is vacant, the Church Board shall, at a time it deems appropriate, establish a pastoral search team whose purpose is to identify and present a properly qualified candidate for this position to the Church Board for approval and subsequent ratification by the congregation.
- 3.12 For legal purposes, the Church Board is the Board of Directors of the corporation. The Chairman of the Church Board shall be the President of the corporation. The Secretary of the Church Board shall be the secretary of the corporation.

Article 4 Pastors

- 4.1 The Senior Pastor, by virtue of his office, shall be a member of the Church Board, with vote. He shall be ultimately accountable for the leadership and management of all of the affairs of the church. He shall lead in a manner consistent with the mission, vision, values, strategic plan, objectives and policies established by the Church Board, with a view to seeing them realized in the most fulfilling manner possible. He shall be the spiritual leader of the congregation.
- 4.2 The Senior Pastor shall engage and supervise, directly or through others, such staff as are needed to fulfill the church's purpose. The power to engage includes the power to dismiss. Those additional staff members who are deemed to be pastors or ministers shall only be engaged or dismissed following the approval of the Church Board. The Senior Pastor and all paid staff shall be at-will employees.
- 4.3 The Senior Pastor shall establish such other positions, councils, committees, commissions, task forces or other entities which he deems necessary to carry out the affairs of the church in a manner consistent with the mission, vision, values, strategic plan, objectives and policies established by the Church Board. Each such entity shall have a mission statement, a position description, a line of authority and a defined term (time limit) for its existence. An entity may be renewed for additional terms as appropriate. The above entities shall be

ratified by the Church Board prior to implementation. The Senior Pastor shall appoint qualified persons to these entities.

- 4.4 The Senior Pastor shall prepare an annual budget for all facets of the church's ministry. The Church Board, upon approval of the budget, shall present it to the membership for ratification at the annual business meeting. It may be amended at any special business meeting. At no time shall total expenditures exceed the total authorized budget.
- 4.5 The Senior Pastor is responsible to the Church Board for the execution of his leadership and management responsibilities.

Article 5 Business Meetings

- 5.1 The annual business meeting of the congregation shall be held at a date and time specified by the Church Board, and shall take place at approximately the same time and date each year.
- 5.2 Special meetings of the congregation shall be held when called by the Church Board or upon written request by 25 percent of the members eligible to vote. Written notice of the meeting shall be given 14 days prior to the meeting to all members eligible to vote. Notice shall include a description of the items to be considered. Only those items so noticed shall be acted upon.
- 5.3 A person so designated by the Church Board shall moderate the meeting.
- 5.4 A quorum shall consist of 20 percent of the members of the church eligible to vote.
- 5.5 Majority vote of those present and voting unless otherwise provided in these bylaws shall decide all matters. Absentee ballots and proxy voting will not be allowed.
- 5.6 Business meetings are to be conducted with dignity and order.
- 5.7 The church's fiscal year is from January 1st through December 31st.

Article 6 Political Practices

- 6.1 No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article 7 Term, Limitations, Dissolution

- 7.1 The term of existence of this corporation shall be in perpetuity without specific term of existence.
- 7.2 The corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious or charitable purposes within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

- 7.3 The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person.

Article 8 Affiliation

- 8.1 This church is in affiliation with the Evangelical Free Church of America. In addition to this affiliation, it may engage in voluntary associations with other groups where such association will serve to further the church's purpose.

Article 9 Amendments

- 9.1 Amendments to this bylaws may be made at any business meeting when said proposed amendments have been presented to the membership in writing via U.S. Mail to the member's address on file and posted it on our church website for at least four weeks prior to the business meeting. A two-thirds majority of those present at the business meeting is required for passage.

3. Our Strategy

[Paul] ²²To the weak I became weak, in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some. ²³Now I do all this because of the gospel, so that I may share in the blessings." (1 Corinthians 9:22-23)

The Story of BayLife Community Church

BayLife Community Church was a church plant started in Foster City, California, by Pastor Frederick Chang, his family, and 2 other families on January 20, 2001.

Originally, due to our very limited resources and manpower, BayLife focused on reaching Asian Americans for Christ. We started out reaching contemporary Asian immigrants and the 2nd generation Asian Americans who are not used to the traditional style of church programs. However, God used us to reach people of different ethnic groups and languages though still with a majority of Asian Americans.

Foster City was chosen as our ministry field because of ...

- Its strategic location in the Bay Area,
- Its highly unchurched population,
- Its high density of Asian Americans – every 1 in 5, and
- Its shortage of Christian churches in the area – less than 10.

Eventually, God expanded our ministry to up and down the peninsula.

Undoubtedly, this mid-Peninsula area is difficult for pioneer church planting and church ministry. Unquestionably, this is also where God wants us, Christians, to witness Christ and preach His gospel. "... **For we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory.**" (2Cor. 10:16 NIV)

The Lord has been gracious in leading and providing for BayLife's ministry for the past years.

- He has provided meeting places for us, from Foster City Recreation Center, to Edgewater Townhome's Clubhouse, Crystal Springs Bible Church, Parkside Elementary School, Challenge School (Chinese School), and, now, Belmont Community Center.
- He has used BayLife to reach hundreds of adults, children, and elderly with the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.
- Children have grown up into young adults knowing and walking with Christ.
- Many life changing experiences are evident among our members through these years.

Surely, this is not the work of man but of God among us and through us. May He and Him alone be glorified. Amen!

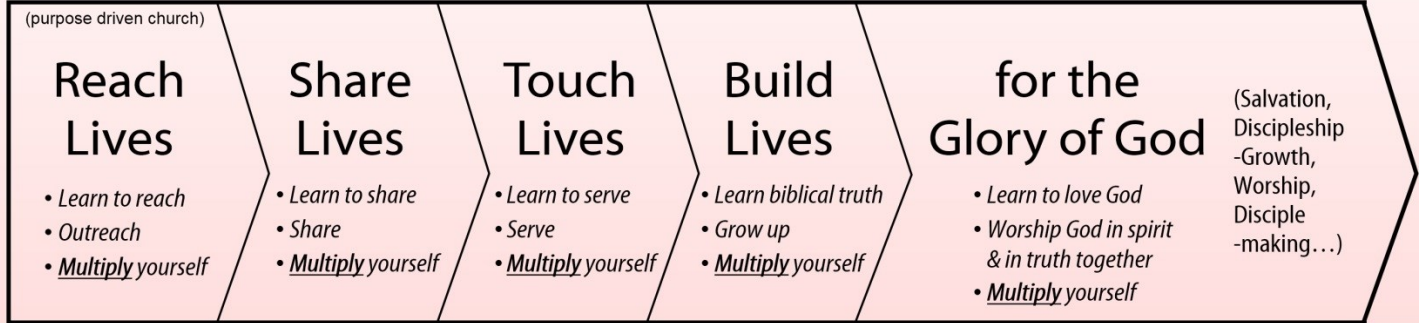
Church Mission & Vision

is a achieves

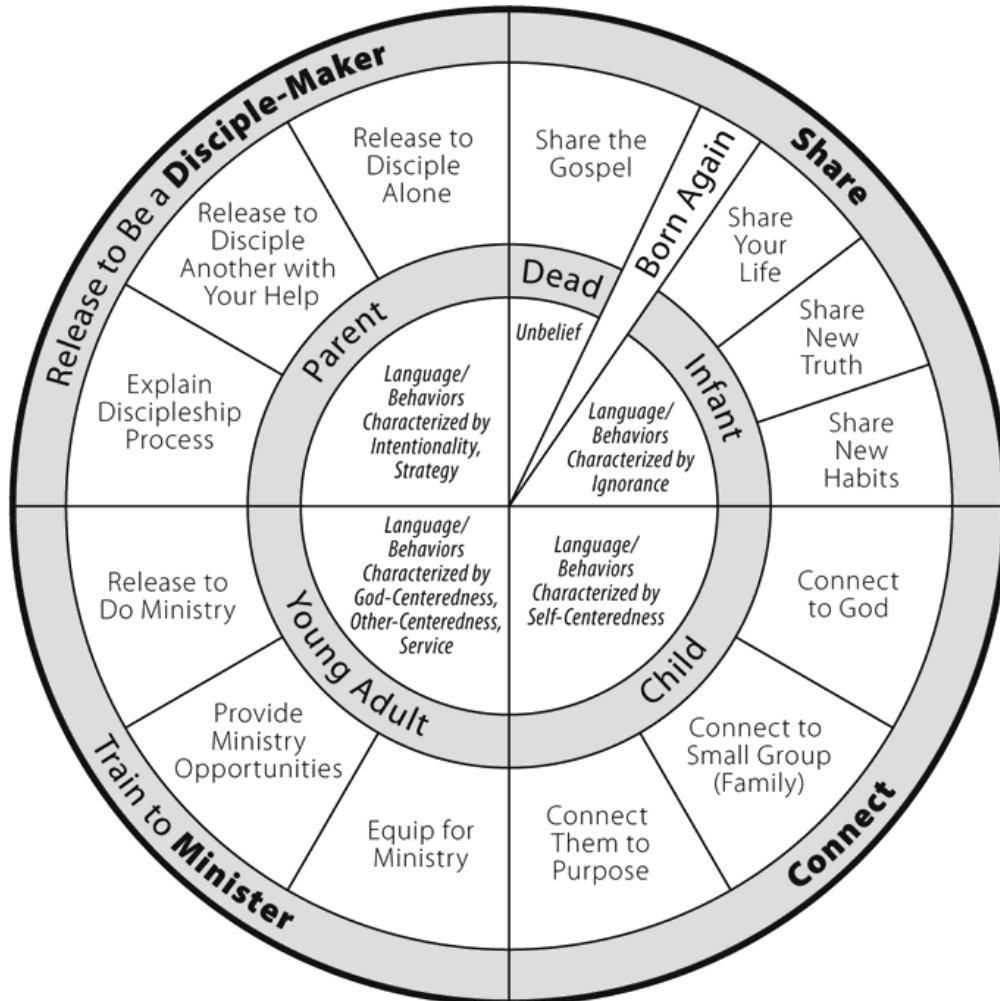
Discipleship Process

Disciple-Making ... Discipling ... Leadership-Building ... Worship in Spirit & in Truth
 (ministry programs are created to serve this process.)

From the Christian givers' perspective — (1) to be discipled & learn to make disciples; (2) create/seize ministry opportunities
 From the recipients' perspective — to connect with Christians & understand the Christian faith through different opportunities



Combining with the "Real-life Discipleship" strategy



4. Our Structure

³³since God is not a God of disorder but of peace. ... ⁴⁰But everything is to be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40)

Church Structure: the nature of the church determines its structure

1. The Church is a _____.

- "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer...." (Acts 2:42)
- A top priority in a fellowship is _____ and _____
- "making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3)
- "So then, let us pursue what promotes peace and what builds up one another." (Rom. 14:19)
- ANY attitude that causes disunity is sin.
(Col. 3:15; 1Cor. 1:10; 2Tim. 2:14; Prov. 17:14; 2Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27; 2:1-3; Col. 2:2; Phil. 4:2; 1Pe. 3:8; 1Cor. 14:33; Jn. 13:34-35; 2Tim. 2:23; Rom. 15:5-6; 12:16-18; Col. 3:13-14; Ps. 133:1)
- Implication: A good structure promotes unity and down plays _____
- At BayLife Community Church we have a simple structure so we can maximize _____ and minimize _____

2. The Church is a _____.

- "Finally, all of you be like-minded and sympathetic, love one another, and be compassionate and humble," (1Pe. 3:8; cf. Gal. 6:10; Heb. 2:10-12; 1Pe. 4:17)
- So, we operate on the basis of _____ not rules though, sometimes, rules are necessary in order to provide structure.
- "Don't rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a **father**, younger men as **brothers**,² older women as **mothers**, and the younger women as **sisters** with all purity." (1Tim. 5:1-2)
- "⁴He [a pastor] must manage his own household competently and have his children under control with all dignity. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of God's church?)" (1Tim. 3:4-5)

3. The Church is a _____. (1Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:23; 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 2:19)
We are a body — not a business!
We are an organism — not an organization!

- Therefore, we function on the basis of _____ not _____

⁴*Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, ⁵in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. ⁶According to the grace given to us, we have **different gifts**: ...” (Rom. 12:4-6a)*

- In an organization, “maintenance” becomes the focus. But in an organism, “ministry” is the focus.

¹¹*And He Himself gave ... some pastors and teachers, ¹²equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,” (Eph. 4:11-12)*

- The people are the “_____”.
- The pastors are the “_____”.

4. The Church is a _____.
(Jesus’ favorite description of the church – Jn. 10:1-30; Matt. 25:33; 26:31)

- Therefore, it is cared for and led by _____

¹⁶*A second time he asked him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”
“Yes, Lord,” he said to him, “you know that I love you.”
“Shepherd my sheep,” he told him.
¹⁷... “Feed my sheep,” Jesus said.” (John 21:16-17)*

- Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leaders

POIMEN = pastor or shepherd

PRESBUTEROS = elder

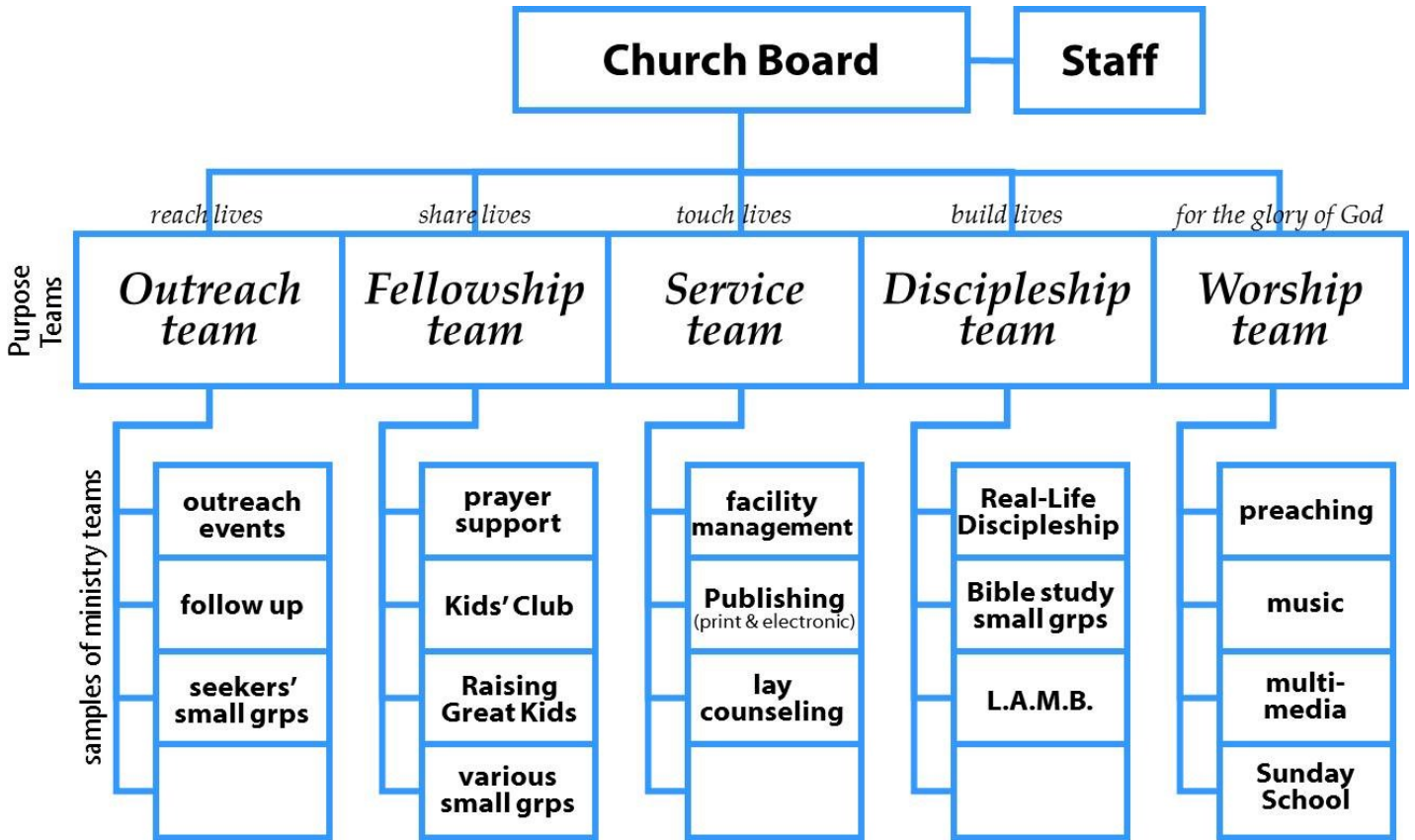
EPISCOPOS = overseer or bishop

*“I exhort the **elders** among you ... ² **Shepherd** God’s flock among you, not **overseeing** out of compulsion but willingly, ...” (1Pe. 5:1-2)*

¹⁷*Now from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and summoned the **elders** of the church. ¹⁸When they came to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, ... ²⁸Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as **overseers**, to **shepherd** the church of God, ...” (Acts 20:17-18, 28)*

See also Titus 1:5-7; 1Timothy 5:17

Ministry Teams: organizational structure of ministry teams



Who Are We Affiliated With?

We are affiliated with the **Evangelical Free Church of America**. Even so, there is no denominational control or hierarchy, as there is in other denominations. We are self-governed and **free** to determine our own affairs. For example:

- We choose our own pastor
- We own our own building(s) and assets
- We determine our own programs

The EFCA

The Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) is an association of about 1,250 autonomous churches united by a mutual commitment to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in obedience to the Word of God. We are committed to cooperate with one another in ministry and fellowship as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission which Christ entrusted to His Church.

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

The term **Free** refers to the autonomy of local churches, as well as to a congregational form of government. Evangelical Free Churches depend upon the active participation of lay people in their decisions and ministries.

The Mission

The EFCA is a mission movement committed: ***to glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people.*** (Matt. 28:19-20) The logo captures her essential heartbeat and commitments:

- The cross of Christ stands at the center of the gospel we believe and preach.
- Our movement is vibrant, healthy and growing, composed of individuals and churches of all shapes, sizes and hues.
- We are poised on the world, springing forth in spiritual multiplication around the world.
- Our movement must be inclusive of "all people," regardless of ethnic group, geography or national origin.

The History

The Evangelical Free Church of America began in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. Its religious and philosophical roots are firmly planted on the foundational principles of two major historical events. The first was the 16th century Protestant Reformation, which changed the religious climate all across Europe. The Church had strayed far from a biblically-based foundation, and reform back to biblical roots was desperately needed. Three revolutionary principles of the Reformation laid the foundation for spiritual renewal and formed the basis for the “free church” movement during the next 250 years:

- **Sola Scriptura** (“only the Scriptures”)
- **Sola Gratia** (“only by grace”)
- **Sola Fides** (“only by faith”)

The second major historical event was a mid-19th century grass-roots movement across Europe to break away from established state-controlled churches which were, in many cases, simply the arms of the government. In the Scandinavian countries, the Lutheran Church acted in such a manner.

The Distinctives

1. The Evangelical Free Church of America is inclusive, not exclusive.
2. The Evangelical Free Church of America is ecumenical in spirit though not in structure.
3. The Evangelical Free Church of America is evangelical but not separatistic.
4. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in liberty with responsibility.
5. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in both the rational and relational dimensions of Christianity.
6. The Evangelical Free Church of America is congregational in government.

What It Means to be a Member?

The difference between “attendees” and “members” can be summed up in one word: _____

At BayLife Community Church we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:

I. A Biblical Reason: Christ is committed to the Church

“... Christ loved the church and gave himself for her ...” (Eph. 5:25)

II. A Cultural Reason: It is an Antidote to Our Society

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

III. A Practical Reason: It Defines Who Can Be Counted On

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

IV. A Personal Reason: It Produces Spiritual Growth

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

What is expected of me as a member?

At BayLife Community Church we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

The BayLife Community Church Membership Covenant

"Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with BayLife Community Church's statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the BayLife Community Church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. I will Protect the Unity of My Church

... By acting in love toward other members

... By refusing to gossip

... By following the leaders

- *"⁵Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, according to Christ Jesus, ⁶so that you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and one voice." (Rom. 15:5-6)*
- *"Since you have purified yourselves by your obedience to the truth, so that you show sincere brotherly love for each other, from a pure heart love one another constantly," (1Peter 1:22)*
- *"No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear." (Eph. 4:29)*
- *"Obey your leaders and submit to them, since they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account, so that they can do this with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you." (Heb. 13:17)*

II. I will Share the Responsibility of My Church

... By praying for its growth

... By inviting the unchurched to attend

... By warmly welcoming those who visit

... By prayerfully participate in our church's business meetings

- *"We always thank God for all of you, making mention of you constantly in our prayers." (1Thess. 1:2)*
- *"Then the master told the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and make them come in, so that my house may be filled.'" (Luke 14:23)*
- *"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (Rom. 15:7 ESV)*

III. I will Serve the Ministry of My Church

... By discovering my gifts and talents

... By being equipped to serve by my pastors and teachers

... By developing a servant's heart

- *"Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God." (1Peter 4:10)*
- *"¹¹And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹²equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ," (Eph. 4:11-12)*
- *"³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. ⁴Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ... ⁷Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant," (Phil 2:3-4, 7)*

IV. I will Support the Testimony of My Church

... By attending faithfully

... By living a godly life

... By giving regularly

- *"not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching." (Heb. 10:25)*
- *"Just one thing: As citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Phil. 1:27)*
- *"On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with how he is prospering, so that no collections will need to be made when I come." (1Cor. 16:2)*
- *"Every tenth of the land's produce, grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD." (Lev. 27:30)*

Your Signature

Your Name (print)

Date

Church Membership Application

BayLife Community Church

Having received Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and Lord, and desiring to be active and to support the ministries of this church, I hereby apply for membership.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Date of birth _____

Marital Status: () Single () Married () Divorced () Widowed () Remarried

Members of the immediate family: (relationship and age)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Have you been baptized? _____ When? _____ If not, do you wish to be? _____
(Church membership will only be granted to born-again Christians who have been baptized. While we believe that water baptism is not the means to receive salvation, yet it is an act of obedience to Jesus Christ.)

List churches in which you have held membership within the past ten years:

Name: _____ City/State _____

Reason for leaving: _____

Name: _____ City/State _____

Reason for leaving: _____

Name: _____ City/State _____

Reason for leaving: _____

In which church do you presently hold membership? _____

Do we have your permission to contact your former church regarding a recommendation for change of membership? _____ Yes _____ No

Personal Salvation Testimony

Please write your personal testimony on another piece of paper. Include when, why, and how you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, how this personal relationship has changed your daily life, and how you know that you are a child of God. Please include related scriptures.

Please initial each of the following statements, if you wholeheartedly agree with them.

- I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior, and am striving to live in that personal relationship with God daily. _____
- I agree with the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of BayLife Community Church. _____
- I have read and understand the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and Bylaws of BayLife Community Church and am in full agreement with them in word and in spirit. _____
- In so far as possible, I will be faithful in worshipping God with my church family, and in attending congregational meetings, and my selected small/fellowship groups. _____
- I will do my best to actively participate in the church’s ministry through my Bible study and prayer life, my God-given spiritual gifts and abilities, my financial support, and my openness to God’s leading in building up His church together with other church members. _____
- I will do my best to love my brothers and sisters in Christ as the Lord has commanded. _____

As far as it depends on me, I am presently living in Biblical harmony with all my Christian brothers and sisters. As a member of this church, I will abide by the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and Bylaws, as well as the membership responsibilities, and will endeavor to fulfill my responsibilities to the Lord and to His work.

(Signature)

(Date of Application)

<u>Office Records</u>	
Interviewed & approved by Pastor, _____	on _____
Interviewed & approved by Board Member, _____	on _____

Church Chairman

Date

Pastor

Date