

THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION AND BYLAWS OF HERITAGE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH (DBA) RIDGELINE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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PREAMBLE

Whereas, we, a body of evangelical believers in Jesus Christ, organized for the purpose of knowing and glorifying our Lord Jesus Christ, propagation of the gospel of Christ as recorded in the Holy Scriptures and for fellowship, deem it wise that we have certain laws to serve as a criterion to work by; and help preserve the purpose and function of the local church; therefore be it resolved: that beginning with its legal adoption thereof we shall be governed by the following Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. These bylaws when adopted, shall take precedence over all previously adopted rules and bylaws, except that it is understood that these bylaws must conform to the limits set by the State of Colorado relative to Articles of Incorporation, and that unless they conflict with Article III. Doctrinal Statement, the legal limits shall take precedence.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization, a non-profit religious corporation organized under the laws of the State of Colorado, is Heritage Evangelical Free Church (DBA) Ridgeline Community Church located in Castle Rock, Colorado.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

In response to God's call, Ridgeline Community Church (RCC) exists to glorify God by continuing the ministry of Jesus to our families, to our communities, and to our world.

ARTICLE III. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

As members of this church, we believe in the following doctrinal statement:

GOD

1. We believe in one God,¹ Creator of all things,² holy,³ infinitely perfect,⁴ and eternally existing,⁵ in a loving unity⁶ of three equally divine Persons:⁷ the Father,⁸ the Son,⁹ and the Holy Spirit.¹⁰ Having limitless knowledge¹¹ and sovereign power,¹² God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself¹³ and to make all things new¹⁴ for His own glory.¹⁵

THE BIBLE

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures,¹⁶ both Old and New Testaments,¹⁷ through the words of human authors.¹⁸ As the verbally inspired Word of God,¹⁹ the Bible is without error in the original writings,²⁰ the complete revelation of His will for salvation,²¹ and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged.²² Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches,²³ obeyed in all that it requires,²⁴ and trusted in all that it promises.²⁵

THE HUMAN CONDITION

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image,²⁶ but they sinned when tempted by Satan.²⁷ In union with Adam,²⁸ human beings are sinners by nature and by choice,²⁹ alienated from God,³⁰ and under His wrath.³¹ Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ³² can we be rescued,³³ reconciled,³⁴ and renewed.³⁵

JESUS CHRIST

4. We believe that Jesus Christ³⁶ is God incarnate,³⁷ fully God³⁸ and fully man,³⁹ one Person in two natures.⁴⁰ Jesus, Israel's promised Messiah,⁴¹ was conceived through the Holy Spirit⁴² and born of the virgin Mary.⁴³ He lived a sinless life,⁴⁴ was crucified under Pontius Pilate,⁴⁵ arose bodily from the dead,⁴⁶ ascended into heaven⁴⁷ and sits at the right hand of God the Father⁴⁸ as our High Priest⁴⁹ and Advocate.⁵⁰

THE WORK OF CHRIST

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative⁵¹ and substitute,⁵² shed His blood on the cross⁵³ as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice⁵⁴ for our sins.⁵⁵ His atoning death⁵⁶ and victorious resurrection⁵⁷ constitute the only ground for salvation.⁵⁸

THE HOLY SPIRIT

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁹ He convicts the world of its guilt.⁶⁰ He regenerates sinners,⁶¹ and in Him they are baptized⁶² into union with Christ⁶³ and adopted as heirs⁶⁴ in the family of God.⁶⁵ He also indwells,⁶⁶

illuminates,⁶⁷ guides,⁶⁸ equips,⁶⁹ and empowers⁷⁰ believers for Christ-like living and service.⁷¹

THE CHURCH

7. We believe that the true church⁷² comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone.⁷³ They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ,⁷⁴ of which He is the Head.⁷⁵ The true church is manifest in local churches,⁷⁶ whose membership should be composed only of believers.⁷⁷ The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism⁷⁸ and the Lord's Supper,⁷⁹ 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.⁸⁰

CHRISTIAN LIVING

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose.⁸¹ God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially⁸² and to live out our faith with care for one another,⁸³ compassion toward the poor,⁸⁴ and justice for the oppressed.⁸⁵ With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name,⁸⁶ we⁸⁷, are to combat the spiritual forces of evil.⁸⁸ In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people,⁸⁹ always bearing witness to the gospel⁹⁰ in word and deed⁹¹.

CHRIST'S RETURN

9. We believe in the personal, bodily,⁹² and premillennial⁹³ return of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹⁴ The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God⁹⁵, requires constant expectancy⁹⁶ and, as our blessed hope,⁹⁷ motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.⁹⁸

RESPONSE AND ETERNAL DESTINY

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere⁹⁹ to believe the gospel¹⁰⁰ by turning to Him in repentance¹⁰¹ and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁰² We believe that God will raise the dead bodily¹⁰³ and judge the world,¹⁰⁴ assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment¹⁰⁵, and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord,¹⁰⁶ in the new heaven and the new earth,¹⁰⁷ to the praise of His glorious grace.¹⁰⁸ Amen.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 — Application for Membership

1. This church shall receive as members only those persons who have reached 18 years of age and have by faith accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord and whose lives manifest a born-again experience.

2. No person shall be excluded from membership because of sex, race, national or ethnic origin or color. The Board of Elders shall examine all applicants for membership to discern if they are members of the Body of Christ, and to discern if they sincerely support the purpose of this local church as stated in Article II. If the Board of Elders, in its sole discretion, determines that the moral and spiritual character of an individual does not support the stated purpose of this local church, then his/her application for membership shall be rejected.

3. Any person who qualifies per above and who expresses full agreement and willingness to live in harmony with all articles of the Statement of Faith and agrees to abide by these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and who has completed the membership class as specified by the Board of Elders, shall complete an Application for Membership and return same to the church office or a member of the Board of Elders. Completion of the membership class is recommended but not required for applicants who are members in good standing in another Evangelical Free Church.

4. The applicant shall be interviewed by two or more Board of Elders members or those whom the Board of Elders designate for this purpose. At this interview the applicant will be required to share his/her personal testimony of faith, express agreement with all articles of RCC's Doctrinal Statement (Article III), express their commitment to live in unity and harmony with other members and attendees with respect to RCC's Doctrinal Statement. In addition, the candidate must express a willingness to 1) actively participate in the ministries of RCC, 2) to identify and apply their spiritual gifts to the ministries and needs of RCC, 3) to provide financial support for RCC in accordance with Biblical principles of giving, and 4) to pray for the ministries of RCC.

5. Those candidates who are admitted into membership shall be presented and welcomed as members at a regular worship service.

6. After agreeing with RCC's doctrinal statement, the Senior Pastor and his wife automatically become members with full voting privileges on receipt and acceptance of a call from the church. In the same way, all Associate Pastors and Ministry Staff personnel and spouses, that fulfill all other membership qualifications, also automatically become members with full voting privileges when they begin employment at RCC.

7. Membership in RCC shall be required of all pastoral staff, elected or appointed corporate officers, committee chairpersons, and those responsible for the assignment of teachers. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted only by a unanimous vote of the Board of Elders.

8. Water baptism, though not required for church membership, is an ordinance of the church which all members of the Body of Christ are instructed to follow. Willingness to observe this ordinance in baptism by immersion shall be considered important but not irrefutable evidence of a person's faith in Jesus Christ.

Section 2 — Membership Roll

1. The membership roll shall be supervised by the Board of Elders.
2. The membership roll shall be reviewed by the Board of Elders, or those selected by the Board of Elders, at least once each year to determine if the needs of any members have been neglected, or if any names should be removed from the roll.
3. If any member is absent from the ministries of RCC for a period of six months without communicating to RCC an acceptable reason for such absence, the Board of Elders shall endeavor to contact such member, and unless he/she has an acceptable reason for the absence, the Board of Elders shall, at their option, direct that the name of the member be removed from the membership roll and the member shall be notified of this action.
4. A member may remove his or her name from the membership roll by submission of a letter of resignation to RCC.
5. Upon the death of a member, the member's name shall be removed from the membership roll.
6. The name of a member may be removed from the membership roll by the Board of Elders as a result of Church Discipline pursuant to Section 3 of Article IV of these Bylaws.

Section 3 — Discipline

1. RCC members' lives are to be consistent examples of authentic Christianity as demonstrated by their words and actions,¹⁰⁹ emulating the character of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁰
2. The Board of Elders shall consider no accusation against any member unless supported by at least two witnesses.¹¹¹
3. If any member of RCC or non-member who claims to be a Christian and regularly attends this church is found to be living or teaching contrary to the Word of God and the Statement of Faith of this church, he/she shall be counseled in love by the individual aware of the matter or by the Senior Pastor or by a member of the Board of Elders for the purpose of leading the erring individual to repentance and, ultimately, to full restoration. The procedures set forth in Matthew 18:15-17 shall be followed in a continuing effort to achieve repentance and full restoration. If efforts to bring repentance and restoration fail, then the Board of Elders will be guided by the procedures outlined in the following passages of Scripture: 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; Galatians 6:1-2.

4. Under the authority of Scripture, and within the guidelines of this Section, the Board of Elders may discipline members by suspending any or all of their membership rights and privileges for the purpose of restoration.

ARTICLE V – AUTONOMY AND DENOMINATIONS

Section 1 — Local Autonomy

This church is independent and free so far as it relates to its internal organization and the regulation of its own affairs. It is in subjection to no ecclesiastical body, except by its own consent. It controls the admission, discipline and removal of its members according to its own understanding of the Word of God.

Section 2 — Denomination

Realizing the necessity and advantage of united effort, and being in general accord with the aim and scope of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA), this church, by vote of the congregation, has applied for and has been accepted for membership in such, and endeavors to cooperate with the Evangelical Free Church at large and its various functions that prove to be in accord with the purpose of RCC as stated in Article II. In order to maintain its membership in the Evangelical Free Church of America, this church understands that : (1) Its Statement of Faith must be verbatim that of the EFCA and the Rocky Mountain District (RMD) (2) its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws must conform to the policies and practices of the EFCA and the RMD, (3) individuals applying for membership in this church must express full agreement and willingness to live in harmony with all articles of the Statement of Faith, and (4) its senior pastor must have his credentials with the EFCA or have his credentials transferred to the EFCA within two years of accepting the senior pastor call of this church.

Section 3 — Delegates

1. This congregation shall be entitled to send delegates to the EFC Annual Conference in accordance with the rules and guidelines established by the Evangelical Free Church of America.

2. This congregation shall be entitled to send delegates to the Rocky Mountain District Conference in accordance with the rules and guidelines established by the Rocky Mountain District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

ARTICLE VI — PROPERTY RIGHTS

1. This church shall have the power to buy, own, and sell property in its corporate name.

2. Conveyance or encumbrance of all or any church property may be made, provided, however, that any such action must receive at least two-thirds majority vote of the membership of the church present at a meeting duly called pursuant to Article X of these Articles of

Incorporation and Bylaws. Instruments of conveyance or encumbrance so authorized at any such meeting shall be executed in the name of the church by the President and Secretary of the church.

3. In the event of disagreement and division in the church membership (which God forbids), the church name and all church property shall be retained by those members remaining and adhering to these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws; provided, however, that should the withdrawing faction ever comprise seventy-five percent or more of the entire church membership, then and in that event, the church name and all church property shall be deemed to be in the control of the withdrawing faction, and subject to such faction's use and ownership.

4. In the event the church ceases to function or should the corporation be dissolved, the right, title, and interest in and to all of the real and personal property of the church shall accrue to the benefit of, and be vested in the Rocky Mountain District of the Evangelical Free Church of America or its successor organization shall at the time of designation, be exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, or under such successor provision of the Code as may then be in effect. If the Rocky Mountain District of the Evangelical Free Church of America is not so exempt from federal income tax at the time of dissolution of the church, then all of the real and personal property of the church shall be distributed to the Evangelical Free Church of America.

5. No member of RCC or non-member shall have any right or claim upon any RCC property, real or personal.

ARTICLE VII -- GOVERNMENT

Section 1 — Statement of Government

1. Ultimate authority in the church lies in the Scriptures and Jesus Christ as the Head of the church. Under Him the government shall reside in the membership of this church. They shall as necessary approve biblically qualified lay elders. The Board of Elders shall carry out the routine operation and government of the church as delegated by the membership at congregational meetings.

2. The Board of Elders will elect from its members the following officers each year: a Chairman who shall be the President of the Corporation, Chairman of the Board of Elders, presiding officer at all congregational meetings, a Vice Chairman who shall be the Vice President of the Corporation, Vice Chairman of the Board of elders and who shall perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities of the Chairman in the absence or incapacity of the Chairman; and a Secretary for the Corporation and the Board of Elders. These men shall serve as the corporate officers/trustees of the church. The Chairman is an ex-officio member of all other boards, committees, auxiliary bodies, and all other organizations of RCC. In this capacity, he may participate in any such function or activity, but he is not required to do so, nor shall he be entitled to a vote in any such function or activity.

3. The Board of Elders shall appoint committees and personnel needed to effectively and efficiently carry out the purpose of this church.

Section 2 — Board of Elders

1. Composition

The Board of Elders shall consist of the senior pastor and lay elders of RCC who shall be elected by the membership. At the beginning of each calendar year, or at other times when necessary, the Board of Elders shall determine the number of lay elders to be elected or re-elected. The number of lay elders shall be at least six if there are adequate qualified male members available. Associate Pastors shall be ex-officio members of the Board of Elders without voting rights.

2. Qualifications

The Elders shall be male members of this church who are mature, godly, and who fully support the Bible and these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. They must manifest the qualifications stipulated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. In case of questions as to whether a prospective elder meets these requirements, the Board of Elders may rule, subject to review by the membership.

3. Selection

- A. Concerning the selection of leaders, Scripture seems to give latitude in that no consistent process for selection is spelled out. Paul instructs Titus to appoint elders and deacons based on certain qualifications, but he doesn't mention any role for the congregation in the process.¹¹² On the other hand, in the book of Acts many decisions about who was qualified or fit to lead were subject to congregational approval.¹¹³ Since elders were typically appointed by apostles or their delegates,¹¹⁴ elders should take the initiative in recognizing and appointing our leaders; yet both wisdom¹¹⁵ and Scriptural precedent dictate having the congregation involved in affirming leadership.
- B. It is the Holy Spirit who must select men for leadership. Only He knows the hearts and motives of men. His choices, however, must be expressed through human agency.¹¹⁶
- C. Selection will be made on the basis of spiritual qualifications, leadership qualifications, commitment to this church and to the Evangelical Free Church of America.
- D. At the beginning of each calendar year and at other times when new or additional elders are needed, the Board of Elders will ask the congregation for recommendations of men who, in their estimation, meet the qualifications of an elder. Then a Board of Elders shall prayerfully evaluate and screen those who receive three or more recommendations. The Board of Elders will prayerfully select from among these men those who meet the qualifications of an elder. The result of a candidate's evaluation shall be privately shared with him by the Senior Pastor. Elder candidates' names shall be in the weekly bulletin for at least two Sundays prior to the congregational meeting

at which they will be voted upon. The Board of Elders will submit their selections to the congregation for approval by ballot at a congregational meeting, absentee voting will be allowed.

- E. In the event that the Board of Elders is unable to fulfill its duties, an emergency congregational meeting will be held to appoint an interim Board of Elders who shall function until such time as a new Board of Elders may be nominated and elected in accordance with these Bylaws, such time not to exceed 60 days.

4. Terms of Service

- A. Each Lay Elder shall serve a term of three years. There shall be no limit to the total number of terms an Elder may serve if he serves well and does not disqualify himself. However, no person shall serve more than two consecutive terms. The terms of the Elders shall be staggered to assure that no more than one-third of the terms expire in the same year.
- B. Any Elder who does not fulfill the qualifications or duties of his office, fails to attend three consecutive Board of Elders meetings without good reason, as determined by the Board of Elders, or does not regularly attend the services of the church shall, after notice and attempt to restore said elder, be asked by the Board of Elders to resign from the Board of Elders. If the Elder does not resign, and continues in his errant conduct, that Elder may be removed from the Board of Elders by at least a two-thirds vote of the remaining Elders.

5. Evaluation, Discipline and Accountability

The Board of Elders shall evaluate itself and its members and act in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; and 1 Timothy 5:19-21. The Elders are directly accountable to the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, for all their actions and decisions.¹¹⁷ They are also accountable to the congregation and to each other. Therefore, the membership by written request of ten or more church members, may call a special congregational meeting to discuss and affirm or overrule the actions and/or condone or censure the conduct of the Board of Elders or individual members thereof.

6. General Operating Rules

- A. The Board of Elders shall meet at least once each month. The chairman shall schedule regular board meetings.
- B. Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called by the chairman, the Senior Pastor or by vote of the Board of Elders. It shall be the duty of the chairman to notify the rest of the board members of such special meetings.

7. Function

The Elders will have essentially a three-fold function: (1) to build and develop their own families in the Lord;¹¹⁸ (2) to feed and shepherd the flock of God.¹¹⁹ This involves

positive teaching and modeling of truth, refutation of error, and administration of discipline; and (3) to oversee and manage the entire ministry of this church.¹²⁰ This involves assessing the needs of the entire body, planning, evaluating, and appointing those to assist in various areas of responsibility.

8. Basis of Authority

The basis of authority for all the deliberations and activities of the Board of Elders shall be the Scriptures and these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

9. Decision Making Process

The Board of Elders shall approach decisions in prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit. They shall earnestly seek to reach a unanimous decision without coercion. As a last resort, the board shall take a vote to reach a decision with a three-quarter majority of those elders present and voting required.

10. Quorum for Board of Elders Meetings

A quorum for a Board of Elders meeting shall consist of a simple majority of the members of that Board.

11. Organization

The Board of Elders shall be self-organizing. That is, the various functions and areas of responsibility of the Board of Elders shall be delegated among the board members on an annual basis. A Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Elders shall be selected each year by the Board of Elders.

12. Annual Budget

The Board of Elders shall prepare an annual budget and submit it to the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VIII — BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Section 1

Adequate committees and personnel shall be appointed and maintained by the Board of Elders as needed for effective and efficient service in the church. A list of existing boards and committees and their chairs shall be maintained by the Board of Elders.

Section 2

The chairperson of each committee shall be designated by the Board of Elders and must be a member of this church.

Section 3

All boards and committees shall use the Holy Scripture and these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws as the basis for all deliberations, decision making and activity. All boards and committees shall prayerfully seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all matters. They shall earnestly seek to reach a unanimous decision without coercion. As a last resort, the board shall take a vote to reach a decision with a three-quarter majority of the board or committee present and voting.

Section 4

A quorum for a meeting shall consist of a majority (unless other specific provisions are included in these Bylaws) of the members of that board or committee.

Section 5

Before an organization not established by these Bylaws or by the Board of Elders may be formed within RCC, a written outline of its purpose, organizational structure and plan of operation shall be presented to and must be approved by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall designate the entity to which the organization shall report.

Section 6

Methods of raising funds by any group or organization within RCC shall be subject to the prior approval of the Board of Elders.

Section 7

The Board of Elders shall maintain a current manual which shall include job descriptions, policies, and all pertinent information and instructions for efficiency in the day-to-day operation of the church. The information contained in this manual may be amended or changed by the Board of Elders as needed. This manual shall be available to the congregation upon request.

ARTICLE IX — AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Auxiliary organizations are those which are not related to or organized by RCC. All auxiliary organizations are encouraged to function within the framework and principles of these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. The Board of Elders shall designate the entity to which the organization shall report.

ARTICLE X — CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1 — Scheduled Meetings

The congregation as a whole shall have at least one scheduled meeting during the year. This will be the Annual Congregational Meeting held on a date set by the Board of Elders. This meeting shall be announced, and its purpose stated, on two consecutive Sundays (which may include the Sunday on which the meeting is called) at all regular worship services and/or by written notice to the membership of RCC.

Section 2 — Special Meetings

Special congregational meetings may be called at any time by the Board of Elders, the Chairman of the Board of Elders, or by a written request of ten or more church members presented to the Chairman of the Board of Elders or the Senior Pastor. Upon receipt of such written request, the Board of Elders shall call a Special Congregational Meeting within thirty (30) days. This meeting shall be announced, and its purpose stated, on two consecutive weeks at all regular worship services and/or by written notice to the membership of RCC. The announcement shall be made no less than two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 3 — Voting Rights/Absentee Voting

All members shall be eligible to vote. Absentee ballots may be cast via paper or e-mail ballot and must be received prior to the vote taking place. If video or other remote link to the meeting is available an e-mail vote during the meeting is acceptable but must be received prior to the results of the vote being announced. All e-mail and paper ballots must contain the members name and if the member attends the meeting, the absentee ballot will be null and void.

Section 4 — Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall begin on January 1st and end the following December 31st.

Section 5 — Parliamentary Procedures

All parliamentary procedures not herein set forth shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 6 — Decisions

All questions shall be decided by simple majority vote of members voting including absentee ballots except where the provision of these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws otherwise prescribe.

Section 7 — Quorums

The members attending any congregational meeting which has been properly announced and is at least 25% of the total membership, shall constitute a quorum to conduct congregational business.

Section 8 — Reports

The Pastors, Elders, Chairpersons of all boards and committees, and others specified by the Board of Elders shall submit to the congregation a written report of their respective office. These shall be included in the minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Section 9 – Matters Decided by Membership Vote

An annual budget shall be approved by a membership vote at a congregational meeting. Any matters pertaining to debt and other matters specified by these Bylaws must also be approved by a membership vote at a congregational meeting.

ARTICLE XI – SENIOR PASTOR

Section 1 — The Selection of the Senior Pastor

1. In order to fulfill its stated purpose, the membership shall select a man to be its Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor's primary responsibility shall be the teaching and preaching of God's Word. Secondary responsibilities shall be established by the Board of Elders in the terms of call and subsequent directions.

2. A Pastoral Search Committee consisting of three elders, and at least two male and two female members at large shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. The names of those on the committee shall be promulgated in the bulletin for two weeks. Any member of RCC objecting to a candidate's inclusion on the list must give to a member of the Board of Elders a written statement as to why this candidate should not be presented for election to the Pastoral Search Committee. The Board of Elders shall determine whether the objection warrants the removal of that candidate's name from the committee list, and if so, the name will be removed. Once there are no further objections, the Board of Elders shall present the final list to the membership for a vote at a congregational meeting.

3. The Pastoral Search Committee shall screen all applications and nominations for the position of Senior Pastor and develop a list of qualified applicants following the guidelines established by the Board of Elders.

4. Qualified applicants for Senior Pastor must be a member of, or willing to become a member of, the Ministerial Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America. Any qualified applicant not currently a member of the EFCA Ministerial Association must agree to become a member within two years of his acceptance of the position of Senior Pastor.

5. The Pastoral Search Committee shall select up to five candidates from the qualified applicants and conduct personal interviews of each of them. Following the interview process the committee shall present the names of those considered to be the best candidates to the Board of Elders in priority order. The Board of Elders will carefully review these candidates and prioritize them in order of how they will be presented to the congregation. If the Board of Elders does not concur with the Search Committee recommendations, the Board of Elders shall instruct the Search Committee to continue work and present another slate of candidates, if possible.

6. Candidates shall be presented to the congregation one at a time. The candidate shall have opportunity to preach at a church service(s) as the Board of Elders may direct, and will be interviewed by that board. The candidate will meet with various boards and committees as scheduled by the Board of Elders and a question and answer period will be scheduled to enable maximum exposure of the candidate to the leadership and congregation of the church.

7. Once the Board of Elders determines it has a man to recommend as a candidate for the position of Senior Pastor, the congregation shall be assembled for a special congregational meeting where the Board of Elders shall state the reasons they consider the candidate suitable for the position. The membership shall then vote as to whether it desires to offer the position to the recommended candidate. If the candidate receives at least a three-fourths majority vote of the members, the candidate shall become the Senior Pastor-elect. If the candidate does not receive a three-fourths vote of the members, the matter goes back to the Board of Elders and Pastoral Search Committee for the presentation of a new candidate. No candidate may be presented to the membership for a vote a second time until at least two other candidates have been voted upon. Each candidate shall be voted upon separately following his meeting with the Board of Elders and the church. Absentee voting will be allowed.

8. When a candidate becomes the Senior Pastor-elect, the Board of Elders shall notify the candidate that he has been elected, and the position of Senior Pastor shall be offered to him. This notice will be made by phone and will be followed up with a written statement offering the position of Senior Pastor to the Pastor-elect. This written statement will also include the Position Description and Terms of Employment for the Senior Pastor position.

9. Should the Senior Pastor-elect not accept the call to the position of Senior pastor, the Board of Elders shall so inform the congregation and take steps to present the next candidate for consideration. If the Senior Pastor-elect accepts the position, the Board of Elders shall make arrangements for his relocation and installation as the Senior Pastor of RCC at a mutually-agreed-upon date.

Section 2 — The Duties of the Senior Pastor

1. The Senior Pastor shall serve an unlimited term of service unless other arrangements are made at the time the position is accepted, or unless he resigns or is removed from office by the membership. He shall perform all of the Scriptural duties of this office, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have freedom in the pulpit. These shall include leading and preaching at the stated services of the church, overseeing the entire ministry of the church, administering the ordinances of the church, caring for the spiritual welfare of the members of the church and visiting all of the congregation as far as time permits.

2. The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Board of Elders, but he shall not be eligible for the positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman or Secretary.

3. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all other boards, committees, auxiliary bodies, and all other organizations of RCC. In this capacity, he may participate in any such function or activity, but he is not required to do so, nor shall he be entitled to a vote in any such function or activity.

4. He shall also perform such other duties in connection with the work of the church as shall be delegated to him by the Board of Elders and are accepted by him.

5. He shall abide by the Word of God in his life, teaching and preaching, taking great care in all his conduct so as to be esteemed a man of respect in the congregation and community.

6. He shall present a written report covering the activities of the church at each Annual Congregational Meeting.

7. If it is foreseen that the Senior Pastor will be away for an extended period of time (e.g., on sabbatical), the Board of Elders may appoint a temporary replacement. The temporary replacement shall fulfill the duties of the Senior Pastor until the Senior Pastor's return, however, all significant decisions made by the temporary replacement must be approved by the Board of Elders.

8. If the position of Senior Pastor is vacant, or if the Senior Pastor is absent or incapacitated, the Board of Elders shall ensure that the duties of the Senior Pastor are fulfilled by delegating such duties as it sees fit.

Section 3 — Resignation, Discipline and Removal of the Senior Pastor

1. If the Senior Pastor should desire to resign, he must faithfully continue his service for three months after giving written notice of his intent to resign. This notice period may be reduced by mutual consent between the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders. Normal compensation shall be continued during the notice period, unless waived by mutual consent between the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders.

2. To be considered by the Board of Elders, an accusation brought against the Senior Pastor must be supported by the testimony of at least two witnesses.¹²¹ Upon the presentation of such an accusation, the Board of Elders, exclusive of the Senior Pastor, shall commence an investigation and seek resolution. If the accusation is not resolved by the Board of Elders, either the Board of Elders or the Senior Pastor shall request a special congregational meeting for the express purpose of resolving the accusation.

3. If the Senior Pastor fails in his responsibilities or departs from the moral teachings of the Word of God in his conduct, lifestyle or in doctrine as contained in the Scriptures and the RCC Doctrinal Statement (Article III), the Board of Elders shall admonish him following the example set forth in Matthew 18:15-18. Should this admonishment not cause correction or return to the

moral teachings of the Word of God, the Senior Pastor may be removed by action of the membership of RCC at a special congregational meeting called for that purpose.

4. The Senior Pastor may be removed from the position of Senior Pastor by the membership of RCC subject to the following conditions:

- A. The Senior Pastor may only be removed by the membership at a properly called congregational meeting where the Board of Elders or petitioning member(s), shall state the reasons for their recommendation for removal.
- B. After hearing the reason(s) for the recommendation for removal, the Senior Pastor shall be accorded the right to state his position before the membership.
- C. After hearing the reason(s) for the recommendation for removal, and, if he should so choose, after hearing the Senior Pastor state his position, the membership shall vote on the recommendation for removal. This vote will be taken by written ballot. Neither the Senior Pastor nor his family shall be present during the voting. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting members present and voting shall be effective to remove the Senior Pastor from his office. Absentee voting will not be accepted.

ARTICLE XII – ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Section 1 — The Selection of Associate Pastors

- 1. Associate pastors are those paid staff personnel who by virtue of their position and responsibility will normally be required to pursue licensure and/or ordination in the Evangelical Free Church of America.
- 2. The Senior Pastor shall determine the need, number and nature of Associate Pastor positions necessary to facilitate the ministries of RCC.
- 3. When the Senior Pastor determines that there is a need to fill an existing position or to establish new Associate Pastor position, he shall present to the Board of Elders a detailed position description listing those duties to be performed, a list of qualifications required of the person filling the position, and the compensation and benefits to be offered to the person filling the position. (The compensation and benefits shall be determined in conjunction with the Elder of Personnel and the Elder of Finance.)
- 4. If the Board of Elders concurs with the Senior Pastor recommendations regarding the need for a new Associate Pastor position, the Board of Elders shall present a motion to that effect at a congregational meeting, specifying the position description listing those duties to be performed, the qualifications required of a person filling the position, and the impact on the budget of the new position. After review, and modification, if appropriate, the membership shall vote whether or not to approve the establishment of the new Associate Pastor position.

5. When the Senior Pastor deems it appropriate to fill an established Associate Pastor position, he shall appoint a search committee of between four (4) and nine (9) interested members and/or regular attendees of RCC (including himself) to assist in the search process. The Senior Pastor, in conjunction with the search committee, shall select a candidate who meets the qualifications specified in the position description and present the candidate to the Board of Elders for preliminary approval. The candidate will also be introduced to those groups or individuals within RCC who will be most directly affected by his ministry and anyone else and their input concerning the candidate will be solicited. Such input will be given in writing to the Senior Pastor. After the Board of Elders and Senior Pastor have prayerfully reviewed all input received the Board of Elders will vote whether or not to allow the Senior Pastor to hire the candidate. The Elder vote must be decided by at least three-fourths of the full Board of Elders. To assure full elder participation in this vote, absentee voting will be accepted. Thereafter, the Senior Pastor may extend an offer to the candidate for the Associate Pastor position.

Section 2 – Duties of an Associate Pastor

1. An Associate Pastor shall serve an unlimited term of service unless other arrangements are made at the time the position is accepted, or unless he resigns or is removed from office in accordance with Article XII. Section 3.

2. He shall perform all of the duties of his office as set forth in the position description and such other duties in connection with the work of the church as shall be delegated to him by the Senior Pastor.

3. An Associate Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Elders without voting rights.

4. He shall abide by the Word of God in his life, teaching and performance of his duties, taking great care in all his conduct so as to be esteemed a man of respect in the congregation and community.

5. He shall present a written report covering the activities of his ministry at each Annual Congregational Meeting.

Section 3 – Resignation, Discipline and Removal of an Associate Pastor

1. If an Associate Pastor should desire to resign, he must faithfully continue his service for three months after giving written notice of his intent to resign. This notice period may be reduced by mutual consent between the Associate Pastor and the Senior Pastor. Normal compensation shall be continued during the notice period, unless changed by mutual consent between the Associate Pastor and the Board of Elders.

2. To be considered by the Board of Elders, an accusation brought against an Associate Pastor must be supported by the testimony of at least two witnesses.¹²² Upon the presentation of such an accusation, the Board of Elders shall commence an investigation and seek resolution. If the accusation is not resolved by the Board of Elders, either the Board of Elders, the Senior

Pastor or the Associate Pastor in question shall request a special congregational meeting for the express purpose of resolving the accusation.

3. If an Associate Pastor fails in his responsibilities or departs from the moral teachings of the Word of God in his conduct, lifestyle or in doctrine as contained in the Scriptures and the RCC Doctrinal Statement (Article III), the Senior Pastor shall admonish him following the example set forth in Matthew 18:15-18; he may also be suspended or terminated in accordance with Article XII, Section 3, Paragraph 5 of these Bylaws. Should this admonishment not result in correction or return to the moral teachings of the Word of God, the Associate Pastor may be removed by action of the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders.

4. An Associate Pastor may also be removed if he is otherwise determined by the Senior pastor and the Board of Elders not to be suitable for his job.

5. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the termination of Associate Pastors, as warranted subject to the concurrence of the Board of Elders by an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of the full Board of Elders, excluding the Senior Pastor. To assure full elder participation in this vote, absentee voting will be accepted.

ARTICLE XIII– OTHER MINISTRY STAFF AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

1. The Senior Pastor shall determine the need, number and nature of paid Ministry Staff and Administrative Staff positions necessary to facilitate the ministries of RCC.

2. When the Senior Pastor determines that there is a need to establish a new Ministry Staff or Administrative Staff position, he shall present to the Board of Elders a detailed position description listing those duties to be performed, a list of qualifications required of the person filling the position, and the compensation and benefits to be offered to the person filling the position. (The compensation and benefits shall be decided in conjunction with the Elder of Personnel and the Elder of Finance.)

3. If the Board of Elders concurs with the Senior Pastor recommendations regarding the need to establish a new Ministry Staff or Administrative Staff position, the Board of Elders shall present a motion to that effect at a congregational meeting, specifying the position description listing those duties to be performed, the qualifications required of a person filling the position, and the impact on the budget of the new position. After review, and modification, if appropriate, the membership shall vote whether or not to approve the establishment of the position.

4. When the Senior Pastor deems it appropriate to fill an established Ministry Staff or Administrative Staff position, he shall select a candidate who meets the qualifications specified in the position description and present the candidate to the Board of Elders for approval.

5. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the termination of Ministry Staff and Administrative Staff, as warranted, subject to the concurrence of the Board of Elders by a majority vote of the Board of Elders, excluding the Senior Pastor.

ARTICLE XIV – AMENDMENTS

These Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws may be amended by a three-fourths majority vote of the members present at any congregational meeting provided that the proposed amendments, additions or changes have been presented in writing, seconded and provisionally accepted by a simple majority at any previous congregational meeting held at least two months prior to the presentation of the amendment for a vote. Voting shall be by ballot.

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of Heritage Evangelical Free Church (DBA) Ridgeline Community Church

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³ Ex. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 57:15
⁴ Deut. 32:4; Job 1:7-10; Ps. 18:30; 50:2; 90:2; 145:3; Matt. 5:48
⁵ Ps. 33:11; 102:25-27; 115:3; Dan. 4:34-35; John 5:26; Acts 17:24-25
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⁷ John 17:11; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:2
⁸ Deut. 32:6; Matt. 6:6; Rom. 8:15; 1 Cor. 8:6
⁹ Matt. 3:17; John 1:14; 3:16; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 1:5
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²⁸ Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5; John 3:6; Rom. 3:12; 5:12-14; 1 Cor. 15:22a; 1 John 1:8
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³³ 1 Thess. 1:10
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- ⁴⁵ Deut. 21:23; Ps. 16:10; Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:16; John 19:16; Acts 2:27, 37
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