



January 30, 2020

Dear WEFC Family,

The leadership of the church is recommending to the congregation that we undertake a process to revise and update our Constitution and Bylaws. This is an important task and we need your support and input in order to accomplish this task.

For the past year, the Bylaw Committee along with the Executive Board have been working on an initial draft of the proposed changes. In addition to the work of these two groups, a focus group of eight members from the congregation were consulted for initial feedback.

Now we are ready to engage the congregation as a whole and we covet your involvement.

Our conversation together will begin with two WEFC Conversations to present some of the major changes being proposed. In April we hope to get the approval from the congregation to then move forward with an official process to revise our Constitution and Bylaws. Upon approval to revise the Constitution and Bylaws, we would have a year to make a final vote on the recommendations. Between April and the final vote, we envision numerous conversations and input from the congregation until we are ready and satisfied with a final draft. Our goal is to take a final vote on this matter in October of this year.

Enclosed in this packet you will find the following documents to get you ready to engage with us on this topic.

- ✓ An Overview of the Purpose and Process for the Constitution and Bylaw Revision
- ✓ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) regarding the proposed changes
- ✓ An initial draft of the Constitution and Bylaws
- ✓ A Flow Chart that reflects the proposed changes
- ✓ A Chart of Responsibilities comparing what is current to what is proposed

Any member of the committee or the Executive Board would be happy to entertain any question of concern you might have. Also, an email account has been set up if you would like to ask a question, make a recommendation or express a concern. You can email us at [Bylaw.Committee@wethefc.com](mailto:Bylaw.Committee@wethefc.com) and we will be sure to respond to your inquiry.

In the meantime, read over the material in this packet and pray that God would guide us through this process.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Peery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" being more prominent than the last name "Peery".

Steve Peery  
Church Chair



# Constitution & Bylaw Revision

January 2020

## Overview

The goal of this process is to produce and adopt a revised Constitution and Bylaws for WEFC. While maintaining a Congregational governance structure, we are proposing to move from an Executive Board to an Elder Board and establishing intentionally trained Elders and Deacons to better care for the spiritual and physical needs of the church family. This new Constitution and Bylaws should continue to reflect a commitment to congregational accountability, biblical leadership roles, and staff who equip and mobilize individuals for the works of ministry service.

## Goals

**Integrity** – We want to develop governing documents that are consistent with Scripture and coherent with the way we operate as a caring church.

**Agility** – We want to develop governing documents that allow for ministry to grow & expand without the need to continually update the documents. We want our documents to set out broad parameters for ministry, providing *flexibility* on details that often adapt over time.

**Ministry** – We want to develop governing documents that do not limit ministry, but instead *empower* our leaders to lead in equipping the saints for the work of ministry. We want governing documents that promote active and effective ministry that does not get bogged down in cumbersome decision-making processes & streamlines the process of governance.

## Process

- Complete and distribute initial draft: February 2, 2020
- WEFC Conversation: Elders – February 9, 2020, 6:00 – 7:30 pm
- WEFC Conversation: Deacons – March 8, 2020, 6:00 – 7:30 pm
- **Goal:** Congregation Vote to Pursue Revision of Constitution and Bylaws – April, 2020
- **Goal:** Ongoing Congregational Discussion – May to September, 2020
- **Goal:** Official Vote of Final Draft by October 2020

## Bylaw Committee

Feel free to approach any of the members of the Bylaw Committee with any questions or concerns you might have. The committee members are Maria Greenslade, Don Jensen, Steve Keller, Steve Peery and Pastor Scott. Or, you can send an email to

[Bylaw.Committee@wethefc.com](mailto:Bylaw.Committee@wethefc.com) and someone will be sure to respond to your inquiry.

## Constitution and Bylaw Revision 2020 FAQ's

### ***What are the major changes to the constitution and bylaws?***

1. Governance Structure: We are moving from an Executive Board to an Elder Board.
2. Shepherding Structure: We are establishing Elders and Deacons to better care for the spiritual and physical needs of the church family.
3. Doctrinal Statement: Officially adopt the doctrinal statement of the EFCA.

### ***Why are we changing our leadership structure to Elders and Deacons?***

Down through the years, God has blessed WEFC with strong spiritual leaders and we have benefited greatly from their leadership. It is a reminder to us that no matter what structure of leadership we use as a church, the most important need we have is for godly leaders who humbly lead and serve the church family.

That being said, structures of leadership are also important in carrying out the function of leadership and that is what is driving us to change our leadership structure to Elders and Deacons. Why?

For starters, this is the structure established in the New Testament for church leadership. This structure of church leadership is seen in Paul's opening greeting in several of his letters. For example, in Philippians 1:1 he writes, "*To all the saints who are in Philippi, with the overseers (elders) and deacons.*"

Secondly, these words have meaning and they shape the role and the tone of church leadership: namely to serve the church and to care for the spiritual and physical needs of the church family.

An Elder is likened to a shepherd, who like the "Great Shepherd of the sheep" cares for the spiritual needs of the church. Elders are described in Hebrews 13:17 as those who "*are keeping watch over your souls.*" The title of "Deacon" comes from the Greek word which means "to serve." It is the role of the deacon to serve the physical needs of the church family. (Acts 6:1-6)

We feel the change to Elders and Deacons will help the leaders of the church better understand and carry out their role as servant leaders.

### ***What is the difference between Elders and Deacons?***

An Elder serves the church by providing governance, direction, teaching, discipleship, discipline and equipping the church to do the work of ministry. 1 Peter 5:2-3 describes the role of an Elder by saying, “*Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.*”

A Deacon facilitates taking care of the physical and practical needs of the church. An example of the focus of their ministry can be found in Acts 6 where the needs of a certain group of widows was being neglected. Whether it means acts of mercy, visitation, facilitating with setting up for baptism and communion the Deacons seek to serve the church through caring for a variety of practical needs that emerge within the church body.

### ***What is the difference between what we currently call Deacons and the role of Deacons under the proposed constitution and bylaw changes?***

To a large extent, currently our Deacons function like biblical Elders in the sense that along with the Executive Board they provide overall governance for the church and they are also responsible for the spiritual care of the church.

Under the proposed constitution and bylaw changes, the role of the Deacons would change. The Deacons would no longer be part of the governance of the church because that would be the role of the Elders. Instead, the sole focus of the Deacons would be to serve the Elders and the congregation by making sure the physical and practical needs of the congregation were being met.

### ***Why can only men serve as Elders but women can serve as Deacons?***

We believe that neither men nor women are above the other in value or importance and that both are integral to the health and growth of the whole church body, which results from each member carrying out in Christ-like manner the role or task for which they have been equipped. We hold a complementarian view of these roles and believe that the responsibility of the shepherding oversight of the church has been tasked to men. We also believe that the men serving in this task, as they shepherd the *whole* Church, must humbly pursue and consider with equal care and validity the concerns, perspective, and understanding of every member alike: women and men, single and married, with and without children, old and young, poor and rich, every culture.



As the Deacons are not tasked with the same general oversight but serve under the Elders in meeting the practical needs and engaging intimately in the life of the church, we welcome, strongly encourage, and *need* women in this role. We all belong to each other as one body, and we all need each other serving in the places to which we have been called. Without the perspective, insight, and wisdom that the women of the church steward, we would be incomplete, unable to fully grow and mature. We need a diverse set of people to meet a diverse set of needs.

***Are we still a congregational form of government?***

Yes. Under the new constitution and bylaws, the congregation will continue to approve budgets, elect leaders, call pastors and decide other important church matters. In addition to that, the Elders will be accountable to the members of the congregation.

***What other changes are we making to the bylaws?***

1. *Number of Congregational Meetings:* We are reducing the number of regular congregational meetings from four to three. We are eliminating the July meeting because of the timing of the meeting in summer. The three regular congregational meetings will be October, January and April and the annual meeting will be in April.
2. *Eliminating the Nominating Committee:* We are eliminating the Nominating Committee that currently consists of members of the Executive Board and the congregation. The responsibility of this committee is to recommend names to the Executive Board to serve on various boards and positions within the church. The problem with this process is the number of people in our membership who are not known to those on the committee. So even now, their role is not the most effective way of nominating qualified members to serve.

Under the proposed bylaws, the Elder Board will function as the Nominating Committee. Through an intentional training process for Elders and Deacons, the Elder Board will have a more thorough process of identifying and equipping leaders to serve. Members of the congregation are welcome to recommend candidates to the Elders to be considered. Members of the congregation will also be asked to affirm by vote those who are presented to serve in the various leadership positions.

3. *Eliminating the Spiritual Care Committee:* Currently, the Spiritual Care Committee is a committee of four Deacons and the Lead Pastor and they are responsible for the doctrine of the church, the discipline of the church members and the personal care of the Pastoral Staff. This is now going to be the function of the Elders.

4. *Staff Directors:* Currently, Staff Directors are recommended by the Lead Pastor and voted on by the congregation. They have to come from the church membership and they are voted on every two years. Most often the Directors are paid staff positions.

We are recommending that the pool of candidates not be limited to those who are members of our church and that they be treated like any other employee of the church and not subject to being voted on every two years.

# **CONSTITUTION 1-29-2020**

## **ARTICLE I**

### **Church Name**

**[in current Constitution Article I]**

This church shall be known as The Wethersfield Evangelical Free Church of Wethersfield, Connecticut.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Statement of Faith**

**[in current Constitution Article II]**

#### ***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.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Affiliation**

**[NEW]**

Wethersfield Evangelical Free Church (WEFC) shall maintain membership with the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) and with the New England District Association (NEDA) of the Evangelical Free Church of America. WEFC supports the EFCA and NEDA in its work to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Purpose**

**[in current Constitution Article III]**

The purpose of this church is to glorify God through the worship of Jesus Christ, through the spiritual growth of its church members and through the equipping of church members to make Jesus known in the Central CT River Valley and beyond.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Covenant of Membership**

**[in current Constitution Article IV]**

At the reception of new members they shall be required, along with all members present, to publicly enter into the following Covenant:



We do, in the presence of each other, confess Christ as our Savior and Lord. We do heartily give ourselves to His service, and take His Word as the rule of our lives. Having been united with Him by faith, we do now, as a church of Christ, humbly rely on His grace and unite with one another in this Covenant.

We shall habitually observe private prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, earnestly seeking therein the help of the Holy Spirit.

We who are heads of families shall maintain the worship of God in our homes, and shall endeavor to lead our children and others committed to our charge to faith in Christ and growth in the Christian life.

We shall attend regularly, as far as Providence will permit, the public worship of God on the Lord's Day, and other meetings of worship as the church may appoint, and we shall faithfully observe together the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

We shall walk together in brotherly love, with Christian sympathy and kindness, and shall tenderly and faithfully admonish and help one another as may be needful. We shall not bring to the church a complaint against any member for personal trespass or offense until we have taken the first and second steps pointed out by Christ, Matthew 18:15-17, thus endeavoring to settle all private offenses without publicity.

We shall participate, as the Lord shall enable us, in supporting a faithful Christian ministry among us, proclaiming the gospel to the whole human family; and as we have opportunity we shall seek, by example and word, to lead men to Christ.

We shall endeavor to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, abstaining from whatever is unbecoming the Christian character. As baptism signifies death to sin and resurrection to holiness, so we shall seek to walk in newness of life.

## **ARTICLE VI Membership**

**[in current Constitution Article V – moving majority of membership section to bylaws]**

Only those persons who have reached the age of thirteen years, who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, who embrace the church's Constitution and Bylaws, and who are not members of another church may be admitted to membership in this church. All persons seeking membership will be required to attend a membership class.

**[removed Article VI (Ordinances) from old constitution in its entirety this section is covered under the Statement of Faith section]**

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Bylaws**  
**[in current Constitution Article VII]**

The bylaws of the church shall be a part of this Constitution.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Governance**  
**[NEW]**

The ultimate authority of WEFC lies in Christ as the head of the church and in Scripture as the basis for all faith and practice. WEFC operates under a congregational form of governance. The members of the congregation approve major decisions in the life of the church. The Elders shepherd and oversee the ministry of the church.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**Amendments**  
**[in current bylaws Article VIII]**

Any article of the constitution may be amended at a congregational meeting by a ballot vote of two thirds of the voting members present at a duly-called meeting. The proposed amendments must have been discussed at a previous congregational meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose of amending the constitution. No proposed changes shall be presented to the congregation for approval unless three months have passed since it was discussed at a previous regular or special congregational meeting.

If action regarding a proposed change to the Constitution is not taken within one year after the date of a formal motion at a duly-called congregational meeting, the motion shall be dropped and may not be initiated again for a period of at least one year.

**ARTICLE X**  
**Dissolution**  
**[NEW]**

Should the WEFC church membership vote to dissolve and cease to function as a church, all buildings, real property and all other assets belonging to WEFC shall be transferred to the New England District Association of the Evangelical Free Church of America as long as WEFC maintained an affiliation with the New England District Association. If an affiliation was not maintained then all buildings, real property and all other assets belonging to WEFC shall be transferred to the Evangelical Free Church of America. Such entities must be qualified as tax-exempt under section 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax law.

**Wethersfield Evangelical Free Church in Wethersfield CT**

**Bylaws**

We, the Members of Wethersfield Evangelical Free Church in Wethersfield, are called into fellowship with each other and with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, using the Bible as our guide to strengthen our understanding and deepen our commitment to the Christian faith. To help in achieving our goals, we establish these Bylaws, recognizing God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – and the Bible as our ultimate authority.

**Article 1 Identity**

**Section 1.01: Name:** The Wethersfield Evangelical Free Church (WEFC) in Wethersfield, CT is a prayerful Christian congregation whose members confess Christ as their Savior and Lord. Members give themselves to His service, and take His Word as the rule of their lives and believe in the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, as the supreme and final authority in faith and life.

**Section 1.02: Applicable Laws** WEFC is incorporated under Connecticut State law for charitable, religious and educational purposes and recognized as a charity under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. No part of WEFC’s net income shall inure to the benefit of its members, employees, officers or other private persons except as reasonable compensation for services rendered or as payments in furtherance of the purposes of WEFC. No substantial part of WEFC’s activities shall involve influencing legislation or political campaigns for public office, nor shall WEFC engage in any other activity lawfully prohibited for corporations qualified under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax law.

**Article 2 Membership**

**Section 2.01: Purpose:** WEFC members voluntarily use their gifts to both serve the church body and give financial support for the ministry of the church according to their ability and even beyond their ability (II Corinthians 8:3) as God would direct and supply, “for God loves a cheerful giver” (II Corinthians 9:7; I Corinthians 16:1-12).

**Section 2.02: Qualifications:** Only persons that have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, who embrace the church’s Constitution and Bylaws, who are not members of another church, and who have reached the age of thirteen may be admitted to membership in this church.

The term member as used in the Constitution and the Bylaws shall not include an associate member.

**Section 2.03: Receipt into Membership:** Application for membership shall be made by completing a Church Membership Application which is submitted to the Board of Elders. All persons seeking membership shall be required to attend a membership class. It is the duty of representatives of the Board of Elders to ascertain, to the best of their ability, each applicant’s relationship to God. The Board of Elders shall affirm, by a two thirds vote, qualified applicants into church membership.

The Board of Elders shall report approved member(s) at the next duly-called congregational meeting. The approved members must be presented at a worship service to be publicly welcomed into church membership.

When any pastor or member of the pastoral staff assumes his office, he and his wife automatically become members of the church for the duration of his office. Their entrance into membership shall be recognized publicly at a worship service.

**Section 2.04: Voting Members:** Each member of WEFC who has attained the age of 18 is entitled to one vote.

**Section 2.05: Associate Members:** A member who is in full-time Christian service or is retired and residing outside the local church area is eligible for associate membership. A church member in good standing, as defined by Church policy, may submit a written request to become an associate member to the church Clerk. The Board of Elders may, by a vote of two-thirds, grant associate member status. A member of WEFC may be an associate member of another church, and an associate member of WEFC may be a member of another church. An associate member of WEFC is not eligible to vote.

An associate member, who was previously a church member in good standing, may be reinstated as a full church member by submitting a written request to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders, by a two-thirds vote, shall reinstate the associate member to a full church member.

An associate member, who was never a church member, shall be required to complete a Church Membership Application which is submitted to the Board of Elders. All associate members seeking church membership shall be required to attend a membership class. It is the duty of representatives of the Board of Elders to ascertain, to the best of their ability, each applicant's relationship to God. The Board of Elders shall affirm, by a two thirds vote, qualified applicants into church membership. The Board of Elders shall report approved member(s) at the next duly-called congregational meeting. The approved member(s) must be publicly welcomed into church membership at a worship service.

**Section 2.06: Holding Office or Positions:** Unless otherwise stated within the Constitution or Bylaws only church members qualified to vote shall be an Elder, Deacon or a church officer.

**Section 2.07: Withdrawal from Membership:** A request for withdrawal from membership shall be made by written or electronic letter, which may be accepted by the Board of Elders and reported at the next duly-called congregational meeting.

A member in good standing may request a letter of recommendation to join another church. Such request must be made by written or electronic letter to the Board of Elders. Upon an affirmative vote by a majority of the Board of Elders a letter of recommendation to join another church shall be issued to the member. Once the letter of recommendation is issued the individual shall no longer be considered a member of the church and the name shall be removed from membership. The Board of Elders shall report such action at the next duly-called congregational meeting.



**Section 2.08: Removal from Membership:** If a member joins another church the Board of Elders shall request the Clerk remove the name from church membership and report its action at the next congregational meeting.

Any person who fully separates from the fellowship of this church and its worship for a period of one year or more and who fails to communicate with this church for a period of one year or more can be removed from church membership upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Board of Elders. Such removal shall be reported at the next duly-called congregational meeting.

**Section 2.09: Reports:** At the first congregation meeting of each fiscal year the Clerk shall submit a written report regarding membership.

### **Article 3                      Board of Elders**

**Section 3.01: Purpose:** The Elders provide oversight on all matters pertaining to the life of the church. As “overseers” Elders have general oversight, responsibility and authority over the church. As “stewards” Elders carry the authority and responsibility of caring for God’s church. As “shepherds” Elders are responsible to watch over the spiritual well-being of the church.

**Section 3.02: Duties and Responsibilities:** The Board of Elders provides oversight to the congregation of WEFC. It is the duty of the Board of Elders to provide servant leadership to the church in line with Mark 10:42-45. It is the duty of the congregation to recognize and support those who have been called to the office of Elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), those who could function with the Board of Elders as part of the Body of Christ, and those who will use their gifts to help others to grow to spiritual maturity.

The Board of Elders responsibilities will primarily be in these areas:

- Dependence: A collective commitment to seek the Lord through extraordinary prayer and to lead the church to become a house of prayer through their example.
- Doctrine: A collective resolve to study God’s Word and engage in the teaching of the Scriptures to nurture the fellowship with care as shepherds of the flock.
- Direction: A collective responsibility to discern the direction of the Holy Spirit and guide the church toward his plans for ministry.
- Discipline: A responsibility to engage in the process of spiritual restoration of believers as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20.
- Deployment: A commitment to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry of the church for the building up of the body of Christ.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Elders to identify, recruit and train mature disciples of Christ, who, in imitation of Christ long to reach, serve and disciple others by using their spiritual gifts in the elected position of Elder.

The Board of Elders shall prayerfully endeavor to reach unified decisions, and shall make decisions by majority vote unless otherwise specified within these bylaws.

The Board of Elders should seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in developing and encouraging new and innovative programs.

The Board of Elders shall work with church staff to ensure that spiritual growth needs are being met throughout the church.

When the Board of Elders makes a decision all Elders shall support that decision.

An individual Elder's authority is limited to the specific authority delegated to him by the Board of Elders.

Each member of the Board of Elders shall have one vote.

The Board of Elders shall recommend to the congregation qualified church members to become deacons and to oversee or operate the permanent committees of the church.

The Board of Elders shall direct the preparation of policies for the operation of the church. No such policy shall be effective without approval of the Board of Elders.

The Board of Elders shall allocate undesignated offerings at their discretion.

The Board of Elders may establish, reconstitute or disband committees, groups and organizations as needed.

The Board of Elders shall recommend to the congregation the person that will take over the responsibilities of the Lead Pastor in his absence.

The Board of Elders shall direct the presentation of budgets to the congregation at the annual congregational meeting. No budget shall be presented to the congregation without the approval of the Board of Elders.

The Board of Elders may, at any time, request an examination and issuance of a report of the financial records of the church. Such examination shall be completed by the church auditors or independent outside auditing firm, as the Board of Elders may direct.

The Board of Elders shall appoint delegates to Evangelical Free Church of America conferences and to other councils and bodies.

The Board of Elders shall be the legal trustees of the Church. The Board of Elders shall have the power to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, lease, convey, mortgage, deed or otherwise transfer or grant an interest in real property of the church, but only after having been duly authorized by the Church at a congregational meeting.

No disposition of real or personal property valued at more than 1 percent (1%) of the then current annual general fund budget shall be effective unless the disposition has been approved by the Board of Elders and the congregation notified prior to the disposal. No disposition of property valued at more than 10 percent (10%) of the then current annual general fund budget shall be

effective unless it has been approved by the Board of Elders and by a majority of church members present at a duly-called congregational meeting.

All property shall be held in the name of WEFC.

The Board of Elders shall engage Church staff and prescribe their duties and responsibilities in accordance with these bylaws, church policies and within budget limitations. The Board of Elders shall perform such other duties as are prescribed by the statutes of the State of Connecticut governing religious corporations.

**Section 3.03: Qualities:** An Elder shall have the spiritual qualities outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, function with the Board of Elders as part of the Body of Christ, and use their gifts to help others grow to spiritual maturity.

Each member of the Board of Elders shall be a male member of the church who exemplifies the spiritual qualifications of an Elder found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Each Elder must be recognized for godliness in character, for consistent support of the ministry of WEFC through regular attendance and financial giving, and for strengthening the unity and spiritual growth of the church. Each Elder must exhibit irreproachable Christian character. Each Elder must feel called to this honorable office, clearly articulate his calling and be willing and able to serve.

No one under the age of twenty-one years may be a member of the Board of Elders.

An Elder shall not simultaneously serve as a Deacon.

The Lead Pastor shall be an Elder and a member of the Board of Elders.

**Section 3.05: Number of Members:** The Board of Elders shall consist of no less than seven but no more than eleven Elders, including the Lead Pastor.

**Section 3.06: Selection of Elders:** The Board of Elders shall identify qualified candidates for the office of Elder, to be presented to the congregation. Elder candidates may also be recommended to the Board of Elders by any church member, according to the process set forth in church policy.

No candidate for Elder shall be nominated to the congregation unless approved by 75% of the Board of Elders. The names of those nominated as Elders shall be presented in writing to the congregation and published at least two Sundays prior to the congregational meeting at which they will be considered for office. Confirmation of candidates for Elder shall require an affirmative ballot vote of 75% of the members of the congregation present at a duly-called congregational meeting.

**Section 3.07: Term:** Except as set forth in Section 3.08 below, the term of each Elder shall be three years commencing on July 1. Any Elder (other than the Lead Pastor) who has served two consecutive full three-year terms shall not be eligible for reelection to the Board of Elders until one year after the close of the second full term.

An Elder may resign by submitting a written or electronic letter to the Board of Elders.

**Section 3.08: Vacancy:** Whenever a vacancy occurs on the Board of Elders, the remaining Elders shall nominate a qualified candidate for the remaining unexpired term by a vote of 75% of the Board of Elders. Such candidate shall be confirmed by a ballot vote of 75% of the congregation present at the next duly-called congregational meeting.

**Section 3.09: Meetings:** The Board of Elders shall meet no less than once per quarter of each fiscal year.

Attendance at meetings of the Board of Elders shall normally be limited to Elders and the Clerk. The Board of Elders may invite Pastors, permanent committee chairs, members of permanent committees, church members or other individuals to meetings, if appropriate.

Any Board of Elders voting threshold set forth in these Bylaws shall be based on the total number of Elders on the Board, not merely those present at a meeting.

**Section 3.10: Reports:** At the first congregation meeting of each fiscal year the Board of Elders shall submit a written report of its activities during the past year.

#### **Article 4                      Officers**

**Section 4.01: Eligibility:** The officers of WEFC shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Clerk.

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer shall be members of the church and shall be Elders. The Clerk shall be a member of the church, but may or may not be an Elder. A Clerk that is not an Elder shall not be a member of the Board of Elders.

All members of the Board of Elders except for the Lead Pastor are eligible to hold any office. The Lead Pastor shall not serve as an officer.

**Section 4.02: Selection of Officers:** A Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer shall be annually nominated by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders.

The Clerk shall be appointed annually by a two thirds vote of the Board of Elders.

The names of nominated candidates for office shall be presented, in writing, to the congregation and posted at least two Sundays prior to a duly-called congregational meeting. The candidates shall be confirmed by a two thirds ballot vote of the church members present at the congregational meeting. The Clerk shall be affirmed by a two thirds ballot vote of the church members present at a duly-called congregational meeting.

**Section 4.03: Term:** The term of office for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer shall be one year.

The term of office for the Clerk shall be one year. No term limits are set for the position of Clerk.

The term of office for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Clerk shall begin July 1<sup>st</sup>.

An officer may resign by submitting a written or electronic letter of resignation to the Board of Elders.

**Section 4.04: Duties:**

**a. Chairman:**

The Chairman shall preside over all Board of Elders meetings and all congregation meetings except when the meeting relates to the Chairman. The Chairman determines the agenda for each such meeting.

All papers, contracts, notes, mortgages, conveyances, assignments, leases and releases for the church shall be executed by the Chairman. Alternatively, the Board of Elders may designate an Elder, by majority vote, to execute such papers.

The Chairman is an ex-officio member of all committees and organizations in the church. The Board of Elders may designate an Elder, by majority vote, to represent the Chairman on a committee or organization within the church.

In the event the Chairman is absent or temporarily unable to serve as such, the Vice-Chairman shall take his place.

**b. Vice Chairman**

In the absence of the Chairman or at the request of the Chairman the Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman.

**c. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall serve as the chair of the Finance Committee. In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman or at the request of the Chairman the Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Chairman.

**d. Clerk**

The Clerk shall take minutes and maintain a written record of all business transacted at Board of Elders and congregational meetings.



The Clerk shall oversee the maintenance of a current and correct copy of the membership registry.

The Clerk shall serve as the official custodian of the records of the Church and the Board of Elders – physical and electronic. As such the Clerk oversees the custody, preservation and retention of records, documents, drawings, papers, photographs, books, articles, oral and written stories of WEFC by physical or electronic means. The only exception are Finance Committee papers, records, and documents.

The Clerk handles all Board of Elders correspondence; notifies church members of date and time of congregation meetings; notifies Elders of date and time of Board of Elders meetings; distributes meeting agendas and committee reports at least two Sundays in advance of congregation meetings; and, distributes minutes of each such meeting. The Clerk may use the most efficient electronic methods available to notify, distribute and maintain records.

At the first congregation meeting after the start of each fiscal year the Clerk shall present a written report covering the work of the Clerk during the preceding fiscal year.

**Section 4.05: Vacancy:** Whenever a vacancy occurs for Chairman, Vice Chairman or Treasurer, the Board of Elders shall nominate a replacement for the remaining unexpired term. Such candidate shall be confirmed by a vote of two thirds of the Board of Elders.

Whenever a vacancy occurs for the position of Clerk the Board of Elders shall appoint a replacement by a vote of two thirds for the remainder of the term.

## **Article 5                      Deacons:**

**Section 5.01: Purpose:** The Deacons assist the Board of Elders in caring for the congregation by overseeing and developing ministries to meet the physical and practical needs of those within the church and the surrounding community.

**Section 5.02: Duties and Responsibilities:** Deacons shall oversee and develop ministries of the church in accordance with the needs of the congregation. Such ministries may include, but are not limited to:

- Caring Ministry: Identify and oversee the physical and practical needs of the congregation.
- Visitation Ministry: Oversee care for the sick, the homebound, the elderly and those in need.
- Helps Ministry: Oversee the practical tasks entailed in the ongoing program of the church such as: setting up communion, assisting with baptisms, ushers and greeters.

- **Mercy Ministry:** Identify and oversee the meeting of physical and economic needs inside and outside of the church. This includes overseeing the appropriate distribution of the Deacon Fund.

Deacons may perform other duties as requested by the Board of Elders.

**Section 5.03: Qualities:** Deacons shall be men and women who exemplify spiritual qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Collectively the Deacons shall exhibit the spiritual gifts of service, giving, helps and administration (Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28).

Only members of the church who have attained the age of twenty-one (21) shall be eligible to be deacons. A Deacon shall not simultaneously serve as an Elder.

**Section 5.04: Number of Members:** There shall be no less than seven (7) Deacons plus a pastor. The total number of Deacons may fluctuate.

**Section 5.05: Selection:** The Board of Elders shall seek qualified candidates from church membership to become Deacons. No candidate for Deacon shall be nominated to the congregation unless approved by two-thirds of the Board of Elders.

The Board of Elders shall present, in writing, candidates nominated as Deacon to the congregation. Such names shall be published at least two Sundays prior to the congregational meeting at which they will be considered. Confirmation of candidates for Deacon shall require an affirmative ballot vote of two-thirds of church members present at a duly-called congregational meeting.

**Section 5.06: Term:** Except as set forth in section 5.07 below, the term of each Deacon shall be three years commencing on July 1. Any Deacon who has served two consecutive full three-year terms shall not be eligible for reelection as a Deacon until one year after the close of the second full term.

A Deacon may resign by submitting a written or electronic letter to the Board of Elders.

**Section 5.07: Vacancy:** Whenever a vacancy occurs for Deacon, the Board of Elders may nominate a qualified candidate for the remaining unexpired term by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders. Confirmation of such candidate requires an affirmative ballot vote of two-thirds of church members present at the next duly-called congregational meeting.

Whenever a vacancy occurs for Head Deacon or Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund the Board of Elders shall appoint a Deacon for the remaining unexpired term. Such appointment requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board of Elders.

**Section 5.09: Administration:** There shall be a Head Deacon and an Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund.

All Deacons, except for the Pastor, shall be eligible to become Head Deacon or Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund.

The Head Deacon shall be selected annually by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board of Elders and shall serve a one year term.

**a. Head Deacon**

The Head Deacon presides over all Deacon meetings except when the meeting relates to the Head Deacon. The Head Deacon determines the agenda for each such meeting, assures minutes of each meeting are taken and submitted to the Clerk in a timely fashion.

In the event the Head Deacon is absent or temporarily unable to serve as such, the Head Deacon or the Board of Elders may designate a Deacon to perform the duties of Head Deacon.

**b. Assistant Treasurer – Deacon Fund**

The Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund oversees the disbursement of the Deacon fund as directed by the Deacons and shall be responsible for maintaining a record of all such disbursements as prescribed by the Finance Committee.

The Assistant Treasurer shall submit a report to the Finance Committee prior to all regular Board of Elder and congregation meetings.

**Section 5.10: Meetings:** Deacons shall meet no less than once per quarter.

**Section 5.11: Reports:** At the first congregational meeting of each fiscal year the Head Deacon shall submit a written report of activities during the past year.

**Article 6 Church Staff**

**Section 6.01: Pastors:**

**A. Qualifications**

Pastors called by the church shall complete their assigned responsibilities within the agreed upon job descriptions and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Pastors shall cooperate with and support the program of the New England District Association (NEDA) and the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA). Each Pastor, if not already a member, shall seek membership in the EFCS Ministerial Association, and if not so licensed or ordained shall seek license or ordination with the EFCA within 5 years, if possible.

When the Board of Elders makes a decision all pastors shall support that decision.

**i. Lead Pastor**

The Lead Pastor shall be a male whose character reflects the scriptural qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7. He shall be a mature Christian who possesses the gift of teaching and is

experienced in church leadership. He shall be an example in his life and teaching and shall uphold the WEFC Constitution and Bylaws.

He shall be the leader in setting direction, casting vision and leading the church to accomplish its mission. He leads the congregation by teaching biblical truth and modeling a godly life. The Lead Pastor preaches the Word of God, administers the ordinances of the church and leads the church's public worship. The Lead Pastor, in conjunction with the Board of Elders, watches over the church's spiritual welfare, and leads church members in Christian activity. The Lead Pastor is accountable to the Board of Elders and periodically reports his work to the Board of Elders. He is an ex-officio member of all groups within the church.

The Lead Pastor oversees the keeping of a ministerial history for the church, containing a record of baptisms, weddings, deaths, and other pastoral work. These records shall be the property of the church.

*ii. Additional Pastors*

Additional Pastors may be called from time to time. The additional Pastors shall be male whose character reflects the scriptural qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. They are primarily responsible for certain major task areas within the church. The additional Pastors shall serve as leaders in assigned areas and they coordinate all tasks and administrative responsibilities assigned by the Lead Pastor. They disciple, enable, encourage, develop and assist those serving in their assigned areas. They are ex-officio members of all groups within their assigned areas. The additional Pastors are accountable to the Lead Pastor.

**B. Selection**

The call of a Pastor requires a duly-called congregational meeting where every church member is notified, in writing, at least fourteen days prior to the meeting. The call requires an affirmative ballot vote of 75% of the church members present at the duly-called congregational meeting.

A Pastor shall remain in office so long as the church desires or until the Pastor submits a written or electronic letter of resignation to the Board of Elders.

**C. Removal**

A Pastor can be recommended for removal because of moral misconduct, theological heresy, or ineffectiveness by an affirmative vote of 75% of the Board of Elders. The Lead Pastor shall not be permitted to attend such meeting.

The Board of Elders shall present a recommendation for removal at a congregational meeting called solely for this purpose. Such recommendation requires an affirmative ballot vote of 75% of the church members present at the meeting. Upon such a vote the Clerk shall remove the Pastor's name and his wife's name from church membership.

A Pastor may be given 30 days' notice prior to removal. However, the congregation reserves the right to immediately terminate the services of a Pastor. If removal of a Pastor is immediate a one-time lump sum payment equal to one month's salary is issued to the Pastor and his services are immediately severed.

## **D. Reports**

At the first congregation meeting of each fiscal year each pastor shall submit a written report of his activities during the past year.

**Section 6.02: Staff:** The Board of Elders shall hire staff for the Church and prescribe their duties and responsibilities in accordance with these bylaws, church policies and within approved budgets.

**Section 6.03: Staff Directors:** The Board of Elders shall identify qualified candidates to be hired as Staff Directors, and to be presented to the congregation. Candidates may also be recommended to the Board of Elders by any church member, according to the process set forth in church policy.

No candidate for Staff Director shall be nominated to the congregation unless approved by a majority of the Board of Elders.

The names of those nominated as Staff Director shall be presented, in writing, to the congregation and published at least two Sundays prior to the congregational meeting at which they will be considered for office.

Confirmation of candidates for Staff Director shall require an affirmative ballot vote of a majority of Church members present at a duly-called congregational meeting. Any person hired as a Staff Director that is not a member of WEFC shall ascribe to the WEFC Constitution and Bylaws.

## **Article 7**

### **Permanent Committees**

**Section 7.01: Purpose:** There shall be three permanent committees: Finance Committee; Mission Committee; Property Committee. Permanent committees shall assist the Board of Elders in meeting the needs of the church. The Board of Elders may constitute additional permanent committees as needed.

**Section 7.02: Duties and Responsibilities:** Permanent committees shall function under the authority of the Board of Elders.

**Section 7.03: Qualities:** Each person serving on a permanent committee shall be a member of the church. No one under the age of eighteen (18) shall become a member of a permanent committee.

No person shall be a candidate for chair of a permanent committee unless he or she has been a church member, in good standing, for at least one year.

No person shall be approved as chair of more than one permanent committee at the same time.

The chair of a permanent committee shall be selected from the membership of such committee

**Section 7.04: Number of Members:** Each permanent committee shall be made up of the appropriate number of men and women to carry out the purpose of that committee. This number



may fluctuate depending on projects, assignments, mission and/or obligation(s) of each permanent committee as determined by the Board of Elders.

Each permanent committee shall be made up primarily of men and women experienced or gifted in areas overseen by the committee.

**Section 7.05: Selection of Members:** The Board of Elders selects qualified candidates from church membership to serve on permanent committees and nominates candidates by two thirds vote.

The Board of Elders shall present, in writing, to the congregation the names of approved candidates for membership to each permanent committee, and such names shall be posted at least two Sundays prior to a duly-called congregational meeting. Each candidate must be confirmed by a two-thirds ballot vote of church members present at the meeting.

Each Chair of a permanent committee shall be annually approved by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders.

**Section 7.06: Term:** Except as set forth in Section 7.07 below, the term of each member of a permanent committee shall be three years commencing on July 1. Any member who has served two consecutive full three-year terms shall not be eligible for reelection until one year after the close of the second full term.

A permanent committee member may resign by submitting a written or electronic letter to the Chair of that permanent committee.

The only exception to these term limits is the position of Assistant Treasurer. There are no term limits for Assistant Treasurer.

Permanent committee members shall be organized in annual classes, such that at least one and no more than half shall finish their term each year.

Any member of a permanent committee may resign by submitting a written or electronic resignation to the Chair of the permanent committee.

**Section 7.07: Vacancy:** Whenever a vacancy occurs on a permanent committee, the Board of Elders shall approve a replacement for the remaining unexpired term by two thirds vote of the Board of Elders. Such candidate shall be confirmed by a ballot vote of two thirds of the congregation present at the next regular duly-called congregational meeting.

Whenever a vacancy occurs for Chair of a permanent committee, the Board of Elders shall approve a replacement for the remaining unexpired term by two thirds vote of the Board of Elders.

**Section 7.08: Administration:** The Chair of a permanent committee presides over all meetings. The Chair determines the agenda for each such meeting, assures minutes of each meeting are taken and submitted to the church Clerk in a timely fashion.

**Section 7.9: Meetings:** Permanent committees shall meet as frequently as necessary to conduct business, but shall meet no less than once per quarter of each fiscal year.

**Section 7.11: Reports:** At the first congregation meeting of each fiscal year each Permanent Committee shall submit a written report of its activities during the past year.

## **Article 7A                      Finance Committee**

**Section 7A.01: Purpose:** The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the financial matters of the church.

### **Section 7A.02: Duties and Responsibilities:**

- a. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for creating policies, procedures and controls for the receipt, disbursement and investment of church money.
- b. All budget proposals shall be submitted to the Finance Committee for review and approval.
- c. The Finance Committee shall submit all approved budget proposals to the Board of Elders for approval.
- d. The Finance Committee shall call for compliance audits of such policies, procedures and controls for the receipt, disbursement and investment of church money.
- e. Funds held or received by permanent committees or other organization within the Church shall be considered property of the church.
- f. Unless specifically designated otherwise all church offerings shall be deposited into the General Fund.
- g. The Finance Committee shall oversee the custody, preservation of documents, spreadsheets and papers the Finance Committee creates or receives from other permanent committees or organizations within the church. The Finance Committee may use the most efficient methods available to distribute and maintain such records. At the end of each fiscal year the Finance Committee shall submit such records and documents to the Clerk.
- h. The Finance Committee may appoint or hire bookkeeper(s). Funding of bookkeepers must be in line with the approved budget.

**Section 7A.03: Number of Members:** The Finance Committee shall consist of five members: the Treasurer; the Assistant Treasurer of the General Fund, a Pastor, and two church members that are selected and approved by the Board of Elders and the congregation.

## **Section 7A.04: Administration:**

### **a. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be the Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Treasurer presides over all Finance Committee meetings except when the meeting relates to the Treasurer. The Treasurer determines the agenda for each such meeting, assures minutes of each meeting are taken and submitted to the church Clerk in a timely fashion, and the Treasurer may assign additional duties to members as may be deemed necessary.

### **b. Assistant Treasurers**

Assistant Treasurers shall be members of the church and shall oversee disbursements; perform reconciliation of bank activity; and perform other related duties.

The Finance Committee shall annually nominate an Assistant Treasurer of the General Fund, an Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund and an Assistant Treasurer of the Missions Fund by a two thirds vote. The Finance Committee shall present, in writing, the names of candidates nominated as Assistant Treasurer of the General Fund, Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund and Assistant Treasurer of the Missions Fund to the Board of Elders. Confirmation of candidates shall require an affirmative vote by two thirds of the Board of Elders.

The Assistant Treasurer of the General Fund, the Assistant Treasurer of the Deacon Fund and the Assistant Treasurer of the Missions Fund shall each serve a one year term; however, there is no limit on the number of terms.

### **c. Financial Secretary**

The Finance Committee shall nominate the Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary(s) annually by a two thirds vote. The Finance Committee shall present, in writing, to the Board of Elders candidates for Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary(s). The Board of Elders must approve such candidates by a two-thirds vote.

The Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary(s) shall be members of the church and are responsible for receiving and depositing all funds, and for recording such funds at the donor level; preparing tax statements; and, performing other related duties.

Any records identifying donors and associating donation amounts with identifiable donors shall be accessible only to the Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary(s). Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, the Board of Elders shall have authority to grant access to Church Auditor(s).

No term limits are set for the position of Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary(s).

The Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary(s) shall prepare and submit written reports to the Finance Committee.

**d. Church Auditor**

Each fiscal year the Finance Committee shall nominate, by two thirds vote, no less than two (2) qualified candidates for Church Auditor. The Finance Committee shall recommend, in writing, candidates for Church Auditor to the Board of Elders. Approval of such candidates requires a two thirds vote of the Board of Elders.

No term limits are set for the position of church auditor.

Finance Committee members, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary(s), Assistant Treasurers, Bookkeepers or their immediate family shall not serve as church auditors.

Church Auditors shall annually examine the financial records of the church; and, shall perform periodic compliance review of policies, procedures and controls. Church Auditors shall submit reports and findings directly to the Board of Elders.

The Board of Elders shall submit the audit report at a regularly scheduled congregation meeting.

The Board of Elders may at any time request an examination and issuance of a report of the financial records of the church. Such examination and report shall be completed by the church auditors or independent outside auditing firm as the Board of Elders may direct.

**e. Bookkeeper(s)**

Bookkeeper(s) shall record all deposits received by the church, at the account level; record disbursement of church funds; prepare and issue 1099 tax forms; maintain accounting records; process invoices; and, perform other related duties.

**Article 7B                      Mission Committee**

**Section 7B.1: Purpose:** The Missions Committee shall promote and oversee the worldwide mission outreach of the church.

**Section 7B.02: Duties and Responsibilities:** The Missions Committee shall be responsible for the administration of the missions program; and, shall maintain open communications with missionaries supported by the church.

The Missions Committee shall oversee the Missions Fund.

**Section 7B.03: Number of Members:** The Missions Committee shall consist of no less than five and no more than seven members including a Chair, Assistant Treasurer of the Missions Fund, a pastor and church members approved by the Board of Elders and confirmed by the congregation.

**Section 7B.04: Administration:**

**a. Chair**

The Chair presides over all Missions Committee meetings except when the meeting relates to the Chair. The Chair determines the agenda for each meeting, assures minutes of its meetings are taken and submitted to the Church Clerk in a timely fashion.

In the event the Chair is absent or temporarily unable to serve as such, the Chair or the Board of Elders may designate a Missions Committee member to perform the duties of Chair.

**b. Assistant Treasurer – Missions Fund**

The Assistant Treasurer shall be a member of the Missions Committee and shall manage the Missions Fund.

The Assistant Treasurer oversees the disbursement of the missions' funds as directed by the church and shall be responsible for maintaining a record of all such disbursements as prescribed by the Finance Committee.

The Assistant Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing an annual budget. The annual budget must be approved by the Missions Committee and then submitted to the Finance Committee for review and approval.

The Assistant Treasurer shall submit a Missions Fund report to the Treasurer prior to all regular Board of Elder and congregation meetings.

**Article 7C                      Property Committee**

**Section 7C.01: Purpose:** The Property Committee shall administer and care for all church property.

**Section 7C.02: Duties and Responsibilities:** The Property Committee shall oversee the property of the church; the maintenance and repair of such church property; maintain an inventory of church property; prescribe the duties of and engage custodial and maintenance personnel; and, execute maintenance contracts within budgetary limitations.

The Property Committee shall have the power to receive by gift tangible, intangible or mixed personal property deemed necessary for the business of the church and as may be authorized by the Board of Elders and by state and federal laws.

All property shall be held in the name of the church.

The Property Committee may lend church property, for a short term, to church members or other organizations within the Church.

The Property Committee shall have the power to dispose of personal property belonging to the church. The disposal of personal property valued at more than 1% of the then current annual general fund budget requires an affirmative vote by Board of Elders and notice to the congregation prior to disposal. The disposal of personal property valued at more than 10% of the

then current annual general fund budget requires an affirmative vote by the Board of Elders and the congregation prior to disposal.

**Section 7C.03: Number of Members:** The Property Committee may consist of no less than four and no more than six members including a Chair, Vice-Chair and additional members approved by the Board of Elders and confirmed by the congregation.

**Section 7C.04: Administration:** The Chair presides over all Property Committee meetings except when the meeting relates to the Chair. The Chair determines the agenda for each meeting, assures minutes of its meetings are taken and submitted to the Church Clerk in a timely fashion.

In the event the Chair is absent or temporarily unable to serve as such, the Chair or the Board of Elders may designate a Property Committee member to perform the duties of the Chair.

## **Article 8                      Discipline**

A Church member may be recommended for discipline to the Board of Elders.

Church policy shall set forth a discipline process that is in accordance with Biblical principles. Prior to the Board of Elders taking a vote regarding discipline church policies and procedures must have been followed.

Discipline of a church member requires an affirmative vote of 75% of the Board of Elders. Such action shall be presented to the congregation by the Board of Elders at a duly-called congregational meeting. Such discipline requires a ballot vote of 75% of church members present at a duly-called congregational meeting. Upon such vote the Clerk shall remove the name from membership.

## **Article 9                      Grievances and Concerns**

Any member of the church with a grievance or concern about the church shall follow the method outlined in Matthew 18:15-35 and affirmed in the Covenant of Membership, and shall follow the process prescribed within church policy prior to bringing such grievance or concern to an Elder. Such grievance or concern must be submitted, in writing, to an Elder. The Elder shall prayerfully bring such matters to the next Board of Elders meeting.

## **Article 10                    Congregational Meetings**

**Section 10.01: Regular Congregational Meetings:** There shall be no less than three (3) congregational meetings of church members per fiscal year. Such meetings shall be held during the months of October, January and April.

The annual congregational meeting shall be held during the month of April.

The Board of Elders shall call all regular congregational meetings.

The Board of Elders may reschedule congregational meetings.



**Section 10.02: Special Congregational Meetings:** The Board of Elders may call special congregational meetings.

**Section 10.03: Matters for Meetings:** At the annual congregational meeting elections are held, budgets are voted on, and other appropriate business is conducted.

Matters upon which a church member desires action at a congregational meeting shall be sent to the church Clerk, in writing, and the Clerk shall present the matter to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders decides whether such matters will be placed on a congregational meeting agenda.

Matters presented to the church Chairman, in writing, signed by ten voting members of the church, shall be placed on the next congregational meeting agenda unless withdrawn by the petitioners.

All such written requests shall be received no less than thirty days prior to the congregational meeting. Requests received after thirty days may be delayed until the following regular congregational meeting.

**Section 10.04: Meeting Notice:** Notice of all regular, special and rescheduled congregational meetings shall be published at least two Sundays prior to the meeting. Such notices shall state the date, time, location and agenda of the meeting.

**Section 10.05: Participants:** Congregational meetings are open to all; however, only church members may speak and vote.

The Chairman or any member of the church may request the congregational meeting or part of a congregational meeting be closed to nonmembers by making a motion from the floor. If the motion is approved the meeting shall be closed.

The Board of Elders may invite associate members and non-church members to speak at any congregational meeting with such conditions as the Board of Elders deems appropriate.

**Section 10.06: Quorum:** A quorum at the congregational meeting shall consist of the greater of twenty-five voting members or ten (10) percent of the voting members as determined on July 1 of each year.

**Section 10.07: Voting:** Church members eighteen (18) years or older are entitled to one vote. Associate members and non-members are not entitled to vote.

The vote of a majority of the members present at a congregational meeting decides all matters unless the Constitution or these bylaws specifies otherwise.

In non-ballot votes the Chairman shall have voting power only in the case of a tie vote. In a ballot vote the Chairman may vote. Anyone serving as the Chairman shall be subject to the provisions of this section.

Election to office shall be by ballot. Church members shall cast only one vote per candidate on a ballot.

**Section 10.08: Proxy Voting:** Vote by proxy shall not be permitted.

**Article 11                      Other Church Organizations**

No group or organization shall claim affiliation with or sponsorship by WEFC without approval of the Board of Elders.

Other church organizations within the Church are directly responsible to church staff assigned to oversee the organization and the organization receives overall guidance from the Board of Elders.

The leader of each such organization shall be a member of the church or shall be selected and approved by the Board of Elders.

All property or funds such other church organizations hold, or may hold, shall be the property of the church.

Church organizations are required to follow church policies and procedures.

**Article 12                      Miscellaneous Provisions**

**Section 12.01: Robert's Rules:** Congregational meetings shall conform to Robert's Rules of Order, except when otherwise prescribed by the Constitution or these bylaws.

**Section 12.02: Fiscal Year:** The WEFC Fiscal Year shall be the twelve (12) month period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

**Section 12.03: Unspecified Term of Office:** When the bylaws do not specify the term of office, the candidate shall serve a term of one year.

**Section 12.04: Church Property:** Members of the church have no claim upon the church's property. The Church shall be the membership which retains the WEFC Constitution and Bylaws. If the Church ceases to function and dissolves, all WEFC property, real and personal, shall go the New England District Association (NEDA) of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA).

**Article 13                      Confidentiality**

To effectively carry out their responsibilities Pastors, Elders, Deacons, staff members and members of church committees will be exposed to sensitive information related to pastoral matters as well as church finance and administration. Recognizing that scripture calls Christians to avoid gossip, church members holding these positions must refrain from disclosing sensitive information about the church and members of the congregation.

Church members holding these positions within the church shall not discuss or divulge sensitive information concerning any of the above except to: (1) the extent necessary for the normal

conduct of business; and (2) those specifically authorized to receive such information such as Church Auditors.

Notwithstanding the restrictions set forth in this section, Pastors, Elders, Deacons, Staff members, members of church committees and members of the congregation are not prohibited from reporting criminal activity to appropriate civil authorities.

**Article 14                      Amendments**

The bylaws may be amended at any congregational meeting by a two-thirds ballot vote of church members present at a duly-called congregational meeting. No proposed change shall be presented to the congregation for approval unless two months have passed since it was discussed at a previous regular or special congregational meeting.

If action regarding a proposed change to the bylaws is not taken within one year from the date of introduction by formal motion at a duly-called congregational meeting, the motion shall be dropped and may not be initiated again for a period of at least one year.

**Article 15                      Transition**

Christ

Congregation

Elder Board

Dependence  
Doctrine  
Direction  
Discipline  
Deployment

Deacons

- Visitation
- Mercy Ministry
- Helps (ushers, communion, Baptisms, greetings, etc.)
- Caring Ministry
- Stephen Ministry

Property Committee

- Building
- Property

Missions Committee

- Missions Programs
- Missionaries

Finance Committee

- Budgets
- Accounting
- Offerings
- Auditors

Pastoral Staff

Lead Pastor\*

- Associate Pastor
- Youth Pastor
- Admin
- Music

\*Lead Pastor is an elder

# Comparison of Responsibilities

	Members	Members	Church Board	Elders	Deacons	Deacons	Staff	Staff
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
Preaching							√	√
Voting on matters of the church	√	√						
Doctrine, discernment and teaching				√			√	
Ministries guidance and direction				√				
Restoration and discipline			√	√	√			
Shepherding and deployment				√				
Intentional equipping and training				√		√	√	√
Caring of spiritual needs			√	√	√			
Review & approval of church policies				√				
Reconcillation of greivences/concerns				√				
Caring of physical & practical needs	√		√		√	√	√	
Visitation	√					√	√	
Helps Ministries	√					√	√	
Mercy Ministries	√					√	√	
Financial oversight			√	√	√			
Property oversight			√	√				
Missions oversight			√	√				
Note: Blank indicates that no one has designated, primary responsibility								