



The EFCA movement exists to glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people.

The Basics

The **Evangelical Free Church of America** is an association of some 1,300 autonomous churches united by a mutual commitment to serve our Lord Jesus Christ with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the Word of God. We are committed to cooperate with one another in ministry and fellowship as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission which Christ has entrusted to His Church. The growing ministry of the EFCA currently extends to some 45 countries of the world.

What Does "*Evangelical*" Mean?

The term **Evangelical** refers to our commitment to the proclamation of the Gospel and to the authority of Scriptures as being inerrant in the original writings and the only safe and sufficient guide to faith and practice.

What Does "*Free*" Mean?

The term **Free** refers to our form of church government as being congregational. Evangelical Free Churches depend upon the active participation of lay people in the decisions and directions.

Distinctives

Distinctives of The Evangelical Free Church of America

"In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ." -- Chrysostom

1. The Evangelical Free Church of America is inclusive not exclusive.

The great heritage of the Evangelical Free Church people around the world includes the fact that fellowship and ministry opportunities in the local church are based solely on one's personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, trusting in Him alone for salvation. Membership requires commitment to sound doctrine as

expressed in our Statement of Faith. However, a person is not excluded from membership because he or she does not agree on every fine point of doctrine. Within the Evangelical Free Church, there is allowance for legitimate differences of understanding in some areas of doctrine.

2. The Evangelical Free Church is evangelical but not separatistic.

The Evangelical Free Church was born out of a heritage of commitment to the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. We have deep convictions based on the authority of God's Word, but we do not draw battle lines over minor points. Nor do we make minor issues of doctrine a test of fellowship in the local church. We are evangelical. We believe in separated living and personal holiness. But we are not separatistic.

3. The Evangelical Free Church of America is ecumenical in spirit though not in structure.

We believe in the spiritual unity of the church, though not necessarily in structural union. We join with other Christians and other denominations of like precious faith in common goals and ministries to accomplish the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. But we believe that there is strength in diversity and that it is important to preserve our Distinctives. We recognize that union in structure does not guarantee unity of spirit. Our foremost concern is unity of spirit with our Lord, with each other and with other Christians.

4. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in liberty with responsibility and accountability.

We believe in Christian liberty, but freedom always has its limitations. Responsible Christians do not abuse freedom. The Apostle Paul wrote forcefully about Christian liberty in the book of Galatians. He shattered the legalists with the doctrine of grace. But in First and Second Corinthians and Romans, the apostle also rebuked believers when liberty was abused. He declared boldly the principles of Christian liberty but spoke with equal forcefulness about Christian accountability. The Evangelical Free Church desires to preserve our freedom in Christ and encourage our people to be responsible, godly men, women and young people who desire to live under the control of the Holy Spirit, in obedience to the principles and precepts of God's Word and in harmony with God's will for life as revealed in the Scriptures.

5. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in both the rational and relational dimensions of Christianity.

We believe the Scriptures must be applied to our individual lives with warmth of heart, warmth of message and warmth of concern. We believe it is essential to have solid biblical content in our doctrinal understanding of faith, but it is equally important to have a dynamic, vital relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son and to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. Sound Christian doctrine must be coupled with dynamic Christian experience. Ours is a ministry of love and reconciliation.

6. The Evangelical Free Church of America affirms the right of each local church to govern its own affairs.

The Evangelical Free Church is committed to a congregational form of government as stated in Article 10 of our Confession of Faith: "We believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Head of the Church and that every local church has the right, under Christ, to decide and govern its own affairs."

Strong pastoral leadership coupled with discerning and well-equipped Christian lay people can produce spiritual growth as well as significant church growth. The New Testament emphasizes the importance of the Body of Christ ministering through the spiritual gifts that have been given to each believer. "Congregational in government" means that each local church governs its own affairs. Within the local church, the highest human authority rests in the congregation.

Doctrine

Statement of Faith of The Evangelical Free Church of America

The doctrinal position of The Evangelical Free Church of America is summarized in our twelve-article Statement of Faith.

We Believe:

1. The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and the Divine and final authority for Christian faith and life.
2. In one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. That Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He is now our High Priest and Advocate.
4. That the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and, during this age, to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, and indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service.
5. That man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore, lost, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
6. That the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and, thus become children of God.
7. That water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.
8. That the true Church is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are united together in the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.
9. That only those who are, thus, members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.
10. That Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church and that every local church has the right, under Christ, to decide and govern its own affairs.
11. In the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.
12. In the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord; of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.