

Alberta Parkland District of the EFCC

Our Mission:

"The Mission of the Alberta Parkland District of the Evangelical Free Church of Canada is to glorify God by encouraging the churches in their God-given task of evangelizing the unsaved, equipping believer's and establishing additional churches." Article II A

What It Means to be an EFCC Church in the APD.

As the Alberta Parkland District, our greatest joy is to see your church flourishing, witnessing and being used to both make and grow obedient disciples of Christ. We are here to be an encouragement and resource to you and our longing is to see Christ honoured and reflected in our lives, churches and relationships!

While our district is here to be an encouragement and resource to your church, our local churches are also called to both work together and to work in the spirit and purposes of the EFCC. Our relationship is both "autonomous and interdependent."

This document describes foundational principles that our district has as expectations for our individual churches. While this is not an exhaustive list, it is our conviction that there is alignment in the following descriptive areas for both unity and mission fulfillment.

THEOLOGY

An Evangelical Free Church (**EFC**) accepts and adopts without reservation, revision, deletion or addition, the Statement of Faith of the EFCC as its Statement of Faith. *(As the EFCC National Conference of 2008 adopted a revised Statement of Faith, this may be either the new or the former).*

EFC pastors and elected leaders accept and communicate without reservation the Statement of Faith, and the membership accepts and lives in harmony with the Statement of Faith.

An **EFC** acknowledges differences in areas of evangelical theology not specifically addressed by the Statement of Faith and embraces with grace those within their fellowship and the denomination that may hold differing views.

SENSE OF MISSION

The mission of the EFCC is to "glorify God by serving in the birth and growth of healthy churches across Canada and around the world."

An EFC evidences a partnership in this mission by:

- A focus on the Great Commission and the great Commandment.
- Multiplying healthy churches among all cultural groups, both at home and abroad, in obedience to Christ's call to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

ATTITUDE

The EFCC in addition to a common theology also has a commitment to a common attitude. This common attitude is characterized by:

- A unity based upon the essentials coupled with freedom and charity in non-essentials.
- Being evangelical in theology and practice.
- Cooperating with others who are advancing the cause of Christ.
- Teaching liberty in Christ with responsibility and accountability.
- A balanced teaching ministry that engages both the mind and the heart.
- Interdependence through working with the larger body of the EFCC.
- Respect, appreciation and acceptance of people from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Sensitivity to those in our congregations who suffer from social destitution and compassionately addressing their needs to the best of our abilities.

These values are more fully articulated in the EFCC document, "Our Character and Calling." Please see Appendix "A."

POLITY

An EFC has the freedom under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to govern its own affairs in accordance with both the mind of Christ and the Word of God.

An EFC develops a local church polity that fits within the following parameters of congregationalism:

- The membership includes only those who have a personal faith in Christ (a believers church).
- The collective membership in a duly called meeting is the highest authority in the local church, exhibiting both a willingness to be scripturally accountable to the elected leadership and encouraging elected leadership to be mutually accountable to them as the ultimate authority in the local context. Moreover, members and leaders unitedly subscribe to a relationship covenant based on Mathew 18, giving priority to biblical patterns of conflict resolution, and exercising biblical discipline within the context of Christian love and cultural sensitivity.
- Congregationalism is that form of government wherein the highest authority under Christ in a local church resides in the corporate will of the church membership and in which a realistic process and reasonable opportunity exists by which that corporate will is determined and carried out, especially as it affects such matters as:
 - Determination of membership.
 - Selection or appointment of the principal governing board (elder, deacon, etc.).
 - Selection of the senior pastor.
 - Approval or alteration of constitution/by-laws.
 - Approval of an annual church budget.
 - Approval of any major purchase or dissolution.
- An EFC has as its local polity a form of congregationalism that fits the size and demographics of the congregation.
- An EFC teaches that congregationalism includes the involvement of the entire body in ministry.
- An EFC entrusts much of the decision-making to godly leaders who are trained, trusted and allowed to lead.

CREDENTIALS

An EFC calls a pastor who either holds a credential with the EFCC or agrees with the EFCC Statement of Faith and ethos and makes a commitment to obtain an EFCC credential in a timely manner. If a credential is not obtained, the district will inform the local church as to why it has not been granted. This commitment acknowledges the church's alignment with the doctrine and practices of the EFCC.

COMMITMENTS

An EFC is committed to praying for and working interdependently with other local EFC's, the district, national and international ministries. This commitment is evidenced by:

- **Local:**
 - Willingly cooperating with other EFCs for local ministry initiatives.
- **District:**
 - Intentionally sharing resources with other district churches.
 - Being actively involved in district ministries.
 - Annually sending representation to district conferences.
 - Communicating district initiatives to the leadership and membership of the congregation.
 - Regularly inviting district leadership to address the leadership and congregation.
- **National:**
 - Bi-annually sending representation to the EFCC National Conference.
 - Communicating national initiatives to the leadership and membership of the congregation.
 - Endorsing and promoting Trinity Western University and Trinity Western Seminary as recommended schools for both students and the calling of pastoral staff.
- **International:**
 - Endorsing and promoting EFCCM as our denominational international mission and encouraging members to serve internationally with EFCCM.
 - An EFC is committed to partnering financially in response to the needs/opportunities of the EFCC ministries. This is evidenced by:

- Adequately paying and caring for their own pastoral staff.
- An annual financial investment in support of district and national ministries with a yearly review of their participation of the recommended support levels for the district and national ministries.
- Preferential consideration is given to the support of EFCC missionaries, Trinity Western Seminary and Trinity Western University.

(Don Harder, APD Superintendent – as adapted from Rob Stewart, LPD Superintendent – as adapted from EFCA Southeast District document and policy)