

BYLAWS

CROSSWAY COMMUNITY CHURCH

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 PROCESS

To be admitted into church membership, eligible applicants must complete a preparatory course of instruction, fit the qualifications listed in the [Constitution](#) (see [4.1](#)), and be interviewed by a representative portion of the elders, who will then decide whether to recommend them to the elders to be approved for membership.

Persons yet unbaptized may be voted into membership by the elders upon the condition of their baptism, at which point (i.e., their baptism) their membership shall come into effect.

Persons who are members of a like-minded church may be admitted into membership if they are in good standing with that church. Apart from exceptional circumstances, they are to be received into membership upon the condition of an approval of transfer from their church, at which point their membership shall come into effect. All other membership rules and procedures apply (see [1](#) in the [Bylaws](#) and [4](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

Persons previously removed from membership (cf. [4.4](#) in the [Constitution](#)) may be re-admitted to membership following the normal procedures and qualifications in these [Bylaws](#) and the [Constitution](#).

1.2 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Temporary residents in the Milwaukee area, such as students, who are members in good standing with like-minded local churches from which they are temporarily distanced may be granted an associate membership in which they are formally included in the membership of CrossWay with all the normal privileges and responsibilities included therein apart from the following exceptions:

1. They shall not transfer their membership, but shall retain full membership with their home church.
2. When absent from the Milwaukee area due to returning home, they are released from the responsibility of attending our gatherings.

Associate membership will terminate immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the Milwaukee area. In the case of the termination of an associate membership as a disciplinary measure (see [4.5](#) in the [Constitution](#)), the elders shall notify the associate member's home church of that discipline and termination.

All other qualifications, responsibilities, and procedures for associate membership are identical to those for regular membership (see [1](#) in the [Bylaws](#) and [4](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

1.3 NON-RESIDENT MEMBERS

Members, such as students and military personnel, whose temporary residence will limit them from reasonably being able to assemble with CrossWay on a consistent basis shall notify the elders of CrossWay as soon as they become aware of this situation and will be granted leave of their duties to assemble with CrossWay for the duration of their temporary absence. To the degree that they are able, during the duration of their absence they shall associate themselves with a nearby, like-minded church by way of an associate membership or the best alternative.

2. OFFICERS

2.1 ELDERS

2.1.1 NOMINATION

At any time, the elders may nominate a member for the office of elder. When vacancies and needs arise, the elders may seek nominations from the congregation. Any member who meets the qualifications for elder (see [5.1.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)) may be nominated for this office.

2.1.2 PROCESS

A representative from the elders will approach the prospective elder candidate, asking them to pray and consider if they believe God would have them enter the elder process. The man will then go through an assessment and candidacy process (see the [Deacons & Elders](#) handbook for more detailed information.)¹ Sometime after this period, if the elders feel as though the candidate should become an elder, the congregation will be instructed to pray and consider the recommendation, and asked for feedback. As part of the candidacy process, elder candidates must complete a background screening in accordance with the church's leadership and safeguarding policies.

2.1.3 APPOINTMENT

Candidates shall be elected to the office of elder by a 3/4 majority vote of the elders and confirmed by a 3/4 majority vote of the congregation (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

¹ An exception and modified process may be granted in the case where the church is considering calling someone from outside its membership, such as in the case of a "Pastoral Search Committee."

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate does not meet the qualifications for elder (see [5.1.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)) should express such concern to the elders privately and well before the congregation would vote (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)). Any questions concerning a candidate should be submitted privately to the elders well before the meeting for the purpose of congregational voting.

No act of voting shall consist of choosing between candidates, but shall only consider one candidate per vote.

2.1.4 TENURE

Commitments to the office of elder shall be for an indefinite period of time. At the end of every three-year increment, at the discretion of the elders, a non-staff elder shall take a one-year sabbatical. During this year he is still considered an elder at CrossWay, but he is relieved of the majority of eldering duties.

2.1.5 STAFF PASTOR ANNUAL REVIEW

All Staff Pastors shall undergo an annual performance and ministry review under the oversight of the Elder Team.

The purpose of this review is to encourage faithful ministry, identify areas of strength, clarify areas for growth, and promote ongoing effectiveness in pastoral leadership.

The review process shall include the following:

- a. The Staff Pastor shall complete a written self-evaluation using an approved Staff Pastor Self-Evaluation and Annual Performance Review form.
- b. The Elder Team shall complete a written evaluation using an approved Staff Pastor Evaluation and Annual Performance Review form.
- c. Both the Staff Pastor and the Elder Team shall identify and document areas of strength and areas for growth.
- d. Two members of the Elder Team shall facilitate the review process:
 - One elder selected by the Staff Pastor
 - One elder appointed by the Elder Team
- e. These two elders shall:
 - Collect and summarize the Elder Team's evaluations
 - Meet with the Staff Pastor to review both the Elder summary and the self-evaluation
 - Prepare a written summary (approximately one page) including:
 - Areas of strength
 - Areas for growth
 - Recommendations for increased effectiveness

- Submit a signed and dated summary report to the full Elder Team
- f. All written evaluations, discussions, and interviews conducted as part of this process shall be treated with strict confidentiality.
- g. To the extent reasonably possible, the annual review process shall be conducted between April and June of each year.

2.2 DEACONS

2.2.1 NOMINATION

At any time, any member may nominate another member for the office of deacon by submitting a nomination to the elders. When vacancies and needs arise, the elders may seek nominations from the congregation. Any member who meets the qualifications for deacon (see [5.2.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)) may be nominated for this office.

2.2.2 PROCESS

A representative from the elders or deacons will approach the prospective deacon candidate, asking them to pray and consider if they believe God would have them enter the deacon process. The candidate will then go through an assessment (see the [Deacons & Elders](#) handbook for more detailed information.) If the elders and deacons feel as though the candidate should become a deacon, the congregation will be informed of the recommendation, instructed to pray and consider the recommendation, and asked for feedback. As part of this process, all deacon candidates must complete a background screening in accordance with a church's leadership and safeguarding policies prior to being installed into office

2.2.3 APPOINTMENT

Candidates shall be elected to the office of deacon by a 2/3 majority vote of elders and confirmed by a 2/3 majority vote of the congregation (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate does not meet the qualifications for deacon (see [5.2.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)) should express such concern to the elders privately and well before the congregation would vote (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)). Any questions concerning a candidate should be submitted privately to the elders well before the meeting for the purpose of congregational voting.

No act of voting shall consist of choosing between candidates, but shall only consider one candidate per vote.

2.2.4 TENURE

Commitments to the office of deacon shall be made in two-year increments. At the end of every two-year increment, the elders shall confer with a deacon as to their willingness to continue in the office. Deacons shall be granted the opportunity to continue in office (without any reelection) for at least another two-year tenure or vacate their office at their discretion and for any reason.

2.2.5 LEADERSHIP SAFEGUARDING COMPLIANCE

All elders and deacons must comply with the safeguarding policies adopted by CrossWay Community Church, including any screening, training, and procedures related to the protection of min in two-year increments. At the end of every two-year increment, the elders shall confer with a deacon as to their willingness to continue in the office. Deacons shall be granted the opportunity to continue in office (with

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2.3 EXTRA-BIBLICAL OFFICES

As needed, the elders may appoint qualified persons to extra-Biblical, administrative offices, such as treasurer. When appropriate, more than one administrative office may be held by the same person simultaneously. All such offices shall function under the appointment, direction, oversight, authority, and description of the elders. The termination or reassignment of any administrative office shall be the decision of the elders.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 THE CONGREGATION

3.1.1 BUSINESS MEETINGS

The occasions in which the church shall gather to conduct matters of congregational business, such as those things requiring a vote from the church membership (see [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)), shall be as follows:

- a. On an annual basis, no later than one month after the end of the fiscal year (June 30st), for the purpose of accepting an annual budget as well as dealing with any other matters of business that may arise at that time.

- b. Upon the decision of the elders.
- c. Upon the petition of at least 1/4 of the membership.

At least two weeks in advance of any meeting in which such business is to be raised, sufficient information regarding the location, date, time, and agenda of the meeting must be provided to the entire congregation. In the event that a condition or situation arises which is deemed an emergency by the elders, this advance notice regulation may be waived.

The elders shall be responsible for providing a moderator for each meeting in which business is to be conducted.

Provided the above provisions for notification have been met, a quorum of the congregation shall be understood to be met by those members present.

3.1.2 DECISION-MAKING

Only members of this church who are at least eighteen years of age shall have the right to vote. They shall vote in person or be allowed to vote by way of absentee ballot, so long as they request to do so before hand.

Majorities will be determined by the percentage of affirmative votes amongst all members voting, not the percentage of affirmative votes amongst all members total. Absences or abstentions will not be regarded as votes cast and will not be considered in determining majorities. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

The results of all congregational votes shall be made public to the membership in a timely fashion.

3.2 THE ELDERS

3.2.1 BUSINESS MEETINGS

The elders shall hold elder meetings on a regular basis for the purpose of conducting their business (see [6.2](#) in the [Constitution](#)), the frequency and details of which shall be according to their preference and as are necessary to fulfill their duties effectively. The time, location, and medium of such meetings must be made known to every elder within a reasonable time frame. A quorum for an official elder meeting is defined as at least 3/5 of the elders. In cases requiring a vote of the elders, every elder who is entitled to a vote must be given the opportunity to do so.

3.2.2 DECISION-MAKING

If ever consensus cannot be achieved among the elders regarding a specific decision, recommendation, or approval, they shall decide the matter by a simple majority vote (except where other types of majority are specified in the [Constitution](#) or these [Bylaws](#)). Majorities will be determined by the percentage of affirmative votes amongst all voting elders, not the percentage of affirmative votes amongst all elders total. Absences or abstentions will not be regarded as votes cast and will not be considered in determining majorities. Voting by proxy is prohibited. In the case of ties or deadlocks, if needed, the elders may appoint a mutually agreed upon third party (such as the congregation) to decide the matter.

3.2.3 POSITIONS & COMMITTEES

The elders may create positions and committees to which it may delegate any specified aspect of its responsibility and any manner of operation. The work and products of all such positions and committees shall be subject to audit and edit of the elders. At any time, the elders have the authority to dissolve any committee or position it has created. The elders have authority to appoint any member of the church (including any officer) to such positions or committee. The elders may grant to the deacons the authority to appoint members of the church to any position or committee that would be under the deaconate's domain.

3.2.4 ELDER CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

In cases of interpersonal conflict within the elder team persisting and unresolvable within the leadership team, the following mediation plan will be initiated within six months:

- a. Notify the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) for support.
- b. Invite discerning members of CrossWay Community Church Members to seek prayerful support.
- c. In cases involving a married elder, notify the spouse, ensuring a thorough understanding of the situation.

3.2.5 STAFF ELDERS CREDENTIALING IN THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF AMERICA

Staff Elders will be Required to complete Ministerial Credentialing in the Evangelical Free Church of America within three years of assuming the role.

The rationale and benefits for credentialing include:

- a. Interdependency among the local church, district, and national office to ensure alignment with the Statement of Faith (SOF) and ethos of the EFCA.

b. Staff Elders, through the credentialing process, become accountable not only to the local church but also to the broader denominational structure. The Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS) serves as the implementational authority on the denominational level, ensuring that Staff Elders adhere to the standards set forth by the EFCA. This dual accountability strengthens the overall integrity and quality of leadership within the local church

3.2.6 COUNSELING TRAINING

All elders shall undergo mandatory training every three years on various counseling situations, including but not limited to abuse, addiction, marital conflict, mental health issues, and trauma. This training will be provided by trusted counseling resources and will focus on equipping elders to offer compassionate and effective care. The recurring training ensures that elders remain well-prepared to address complex pastoral care needs, promote emotional and spiritual well-being, and respond appropriately to those seeking counsel within the church.

3.2.7 ELDER DECISION-MAKING AND VOTING PROCEDURES

The Elder Team shall seek to make decisions with prayerful unity whenever possible. When a formal vote is required, the following procedures shall apply:

- a. Reasonable Notice and Deadline
A reasonable timeframe for discussion and voting shall be established and communicated to all elders prior to the vote.
- b. Majority Decision After Deadline
If the established deadline has passed and one or more elders have not submitted their vote, the decision shall proceed based on the votes received, provided quorum requirements are met.
Elders who do not submit a vote within the designated timeframe shall be understood to defer to the decision of the majority.
- c. Request for Extension
An elder who is unable to meet the voting deadline may request an extension prior to the deadline.
Such a request must include a stated reason and a desire for further discussion.
- d. Granting of Extension
The Elder Team may grant a reasonable extension if:
 - Additional discussion is warranted, and
 - The delay does not pose undue risk or harm to the church

e. Urgent Matters

In situations requiring timely action, the elders may proceed with a vote after reasonable effort has been made to include all elders.

4. PARTNERSHIP

4.1 COOPERATION & AFFILIATION

CrossWay Community Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches and ministries in the fulfillment of its mission, CrossWay may voluntarily affiliate, associate, or partner with other churches, ministries, associations, and conventions to various extents at the discretion of its elders.

4.2 LICENSING & ORDINATION

For the purpose of providing certain individuals official, ecclesial affirmation in the eyes of outside parties, the church may choose to license any member to ordained, Gospel ministry with all the rights and privileges possessed therein to perform Christian ceremonies and clerical duties. This licensure shall be granted upon the decision of the elders. The church reserves the right to revoke this licensure upon the decision of the elders.

4.3 MISSIONARIES

To be appointed as an officially supported missionary of CrossWay Community Church, candidates must be nominated for the position, accept the nomination, be elected by the elders for the role by a 2/3 majority vote, and be confirmed by a 2/3 majority vote of the congregation. Missionaries need not be members of CrossWay. A missionary's tenure as an officially supported missionary of the church will be terminated upon death, resignation, public discipline, or removal for failure to fulfill their qualifications or missionary duties. In the latter case, a missionary shall be removed from office upon the decision of the elders. Removal from office by this means shall not be considered a disciplinary action (cf. [4.5](#) in the [Constitution](#)). A missionary's tenure as an officially supported missionary of the church may also be terminated in other cases at the discretion of the elders. With due consideration of the circumstances, missionary units, such as families or couples, shall be treated as one party with regards to these procedures.

4.4 INDEMNIFICATION

CrossWay will purchase and maintain liability insurance on behalf of any and all persons who are or were a staff member, elder, deacon, employee, committee member, other office member, or volunteer of the church (while serving in their capacity as such). Such insurance will be purchased for the purpose of protecting such persons from covered loss resulting in liability asserted against the above individuals in connection with their activities on behalf of the church.

Should any staff member, elder, deacon, employee, committee member, other office member, or volunteer of the church incur any liability as a result of their affiliation with or service to the church and which is not covered by the church's insurance policy, and should such liability result in any out-of-pocket cost to such a person, then that person may request indemnification from the church. The granting of full or partial indemnification shall be at the discretion of the elders of the church.

In relation to any indemnification request that is made pursuant to the above policies, if such request is made by an individual who is not currently serving as an elder of the church, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting person, and the dollar amount of such indemnification), will be made by the elders. Such decision of the elders will be final. If the indemnification request is being made by an elder, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting person, and the dollar amount of such indemnification), will be made by the remaining elders. All decisions on indemnification request shall be made by the elders and are final.

Indemnification will not be granted in cases in which the requesting person has operated in any way contrary to the [Constitution](#), [Bylaws](#), and/or [Church Covenant](#). Similarly, indemnification will not be granted in cases in which the requesting individual has clearly operated outside of the laws of the United State of America and the State of Wisconsin, insomuch as said laws are not in contradiction of CrossWay's [Statement of Faith](#) (see [2](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

5. ADMINISTRATION

5.1 RECORDS

The church shall keep proper records of all business decisions made in any elder or congregational meeting and shall preserve an accurate roll of the membership.

5.2 FINANCES

The ministry of the church shall be supported by the financial gifts of the membership. It is understood that membership in this church involves duties to support the church and its causes with regular and proportionate giving.

The financial planning of the church shall be carried out through the medium of annual budgets. A new annual budget is to be accepted within the first month of each new fiscal year (July 1st – June 30st). Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's levels. Annual budgets shall be formulated under the oversight of the elders and adopted upon a 2/3 majority vote of the elders and a simple majority vote of the congregation (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)). Formulation of those parts of the budget that involve staff compensation shall be the responsibility of individuals other than those receiving said compensation. Any revisions or amendments to the budget shall again be accepted upon a 2/3 majority vote of the elders and a simple majority vote of the congregation (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

All funds of the church shall be deposited to the credit of the church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories that the elders determine. The church shall keep correct and complete books and records of account. The treasurer of the church shall disburse these funds promptly according to the financial program of the church as detailed in the budgets. Apart from the elders' discretion, the church shall not incur long-term debt outside of the annual budget without congregation approval by way of a simple majority vote (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

The elders are the only officers who have authority to execute legal documents relating to real estate, church property, and church finances. They may, however, authorize any agent of the church to enter into a contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the church. This authority may be limited to a specific contract or instrument, or it may extend to any number and type of possible contracts and instruments.

5.3 STAFF

By a 2/3 majority vote of the elders (apart from any elder in question), CrossWay Community Church may elect to provide financial support to certain individuals in return for and to better assist them in their labors on behalf of the church. Such individuals shall be referred to as staff. In addition to the duties of any office they may hold, staff shall perform the duties in keeping with their job description. All staff job descriptions shall be approved by the elders and determined under their oversight. Any substantial changes to these terms of employment or offers of employment shall again be made subject to a 2/3 majority vote of the elders. All staff compensation shall be provided in the annual budget and according to that budget. No staff shall play a role in determining their own compensation.

The dissolution of any individual as staff will occur in the following circumstances: upon (a) death, (b) resignation, and in cases in which a staff position is contingent on membership (c) public discipline or (d) cessation of membership for any reason. In addition, staff positions may be terminated (e) due to failure to fulfill its qualifications or duties or due to a cessation of the church's need or financial capacity for the staff position.

In the case of the latter circumstance (e), individuals shall be removed from their position as staff upon the decision of the elders. Removal from a staff position by this means shall not be considered a disciplinary action (cf. [4.5](#) in the [Constitution](#)).

The dissolution of an individual as staff for any of the reasons above shall be made public to the membership for the sake of its proper functioning (subject to the elders' discretion).

5.4 PROPERTY & ASSETS

CrossWay Community Church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and so hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is deemed beneficial for the functioning of the church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, bill of sale, deed, or otherwise. All property shall be held in the name of the church.

Decisions regarding acquisition, disposal, or major modification of any substantial assets occurring outside the annual budget, shall be made upon a 2/3 majority vote of the elders and confirmed by a simple majority vote of the congregation (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)). All other minor transactions and decisions regarding assets will be subject to the determination of the elders in conjunction with the church's budget.

5.5 DISSOLUTION & MERGERS

Any decision either to dissolve or merge shall be made upon the decision of the elders by a 3/4 majority vote and confirmed by a 3/4 majority vote of the congregation (per [6.1](#) in the [Constitution](#)).