



CHAPLAIN MINISTRIES HANDBOOK

INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINS

*for those serving in the
health care industry, correctional facilities, universities,
public and community services, marketplace ministries, and
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
chaplains in the
Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and Veterans Affairs (VA)*

Revised June 2026



INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINS

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EFCA INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINS
Including FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CHAPLAINS
Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and Veterans Affairs (VA)

Revised June 2026

This document provides parameters and guidelines for chaplains and candidates endorsed by the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) with a specific vocational calling to serve in an institution (local, regional, or state health care or correctional facilities, university, public service, community service, marketplace, etc.) or federal government (Federal Bureau of Prisons or Department of Veterans Affairs) setting. It provides an overview of the process to become endorsed and expectations while serving as an EFCA chaplain.

Institutions require endorsement to ensure the chaplain is an ordained spiritual leader, qualified spiritually, morally, intellectually, and emotionally to serve in a correctional facility, and is sensitive to religious diversity.

Requirements for chaplains vary with each entity or institution one ministers within. They may include board certification (most common are APC or SCA certification), ecclesiastical endorsement, United States citizenship, age limits, education and professional ministerial experience requirements, criminal and credit background checks, fitness and medical assessments and board certifications. Learning what is required of the specific chaplain role is the responsibility of the individual seeking the position and not that of the EFCA endorser.

An ecclesiastical endorsement for an institutional chaplain is not always required. The institution employing the chaplain determines their specific requirements. Those required to have board certification for their institution will likely be required to have an ecclesiastical endorsement.

For federal government chaplains serving in the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and Veteran's Affairs (VA), an ecclesiastical endorsement is required. To remain employed, endorsement is usually required to be renewed biannually. Additional education and training requirements need to be met for those interested in chaplaincy under the federal government.

State and local prisons will have different requirements than the federal government prisons.

While the chaplain's first responsibility is to uphold the EFCA's Statement of Faith and distinctives without compromise, they will also be responsible to the institution they serve.

Note: If you are a chaplain trainee or candidate whose institution requires endorsement while receiving chaplain training, please contact the EFCA Chaplain Endorser (Chaplains@efca.org) for further information.

What Does It Mean to Be an EFCA Chaplain?

The EFCA will only endorse fully formed, fully equipped ministers of the Gospel. Endorsed Chaplains are credentialed ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are an extension of the Church in pluralistic and inter-cultural settings. Chaplains must uphold confidentiality, respect diverse faiths, maintain professional boundaries, and ensure a safe, non-abusive environment. Key aspects focus on supporting mental health, addressing moral injury, and adhering to ethical standards.

In addition to administrative and organizational demands, responsibilities will include preaching, teaching, counseling, and rendering various forms of pastoral care according to EFCA doctrine and distinctives. Because of the impracticality of providing clergy of every faith or denomination at a secular institution, chaplains:

- a. Provide care when the person's religious faith is similar to that of the chaplain.
- b. Provide care regardless of the person's lifestyle.
- c. Make provisions for meeting the religious needs of those who are followers of other faiths.
- d. Cooperate with other faith leaders in meeting the religious needs of members of the chaplain's own faith group.

Ecclesiastical Endorsement

An Ecclesiastical Endorsement is an official written document completed by the Chaplain Endorser verifying the chaplain has completed the ministerial credentialing requirements and standards of his/her faith group and remains in good standing; and is competent and recommended for ministry to a particular organization, agency, or institution to which the individual has applied.

An Ecclesiastical Endorsement is required by the Bureau of Prisons and Veterans Affairs. Healthcare agencies and other institutions may also require an Ecclesiastical Endorsement. Endorsement alone is not sufficient for obtaining chaplain positions.

The Ecclesiastical Endorsement is given for a specific chaplain role and is to be updated when there is a change of employment or job responsibilities, or as required by the institution.

It is the responsibility of the chaplain to inform their institution and board certifying group of any changes in their endorsement status or if they lose their endorsement from the EFCA.

General requirements to become an institutional chaplain are dependent upon each institution's requirements. They MAY include:

- An M.Div.
 - A credential (license or ordination) from a recognized faith-based body
 - Completion of Clinical Pastoral Education or CPE (usually four units)
 - Board certification
 - Ongoing education such as Continuing Education Units (example: APC requires 50 hours/year)
 - Adherence to professional codes of ethics for spiritual care settings
 - Ability to minister effectively in a diverse and pluralistic setting
 - Supervised chaplain training hours in a facility to gain experience maybe required for certain roles.
- Note: The APC Board Certification requires 2000 hours post CPE units.

An Ecclesiastical Endorsement is not required by all institutions. In addition, standards for endorsement vary from institution to institution. Check with your institution to learn their requirements.

General Requirements for EFCA Chaplains Desiring Ecclesiastical Endorsement

The entity where a chaplain serves may have specific requirements for their chaplains. It is your responsibility to learn what requirements and credentials are necessary.

In addition, the EFCA requires the chaplain:

- ☐ Read the EFCA Chaplain Handbook for Institutional Chaplains. If you have questions about any of the information contained in the Handbook, contact the EFCA Chaplain Endorser.
- ☐ Show evidence of a willingness to minister in a pluralistic environment without compromising personal convictions or the [EFCA Statement of Faith](#).
- ☐ Read “[Where We Stand in the EFCA: Denials and Affirmations](#)”. This reflects the ethos and commitments of the EFCA. For a commentary and biblical explanation of these convictions click [here](#). If you are unable to affirm these statements, contact the EFCA Chaplain Endorser to discuss.
- ☐ Be a member in good standing and maintain membership in a local EFCA church throughout your endorsement as a chaplain. If you serve in a special circumstance and are unable to attend a local EFCA church, speak with the Chaplain Endorser.
- ☐ Submit the completed Application for Endorsement (including all forms, references, testimony, and other data) to the EFCA Chaplain Endorser for their review and action.
- ☐ Adhere to the ethical standards and policies of the EFCA Statement of Faith, and standards and policies established by your institution, if they do not violate or contradict those of the EFCA.
- ☐ Be credentialed by the EFCA before your chaplaincy begins.

There are two possible scenarios for credentialing based on the institution’s requirements:

1. Ordination is **NOT REQUIRED** for chaplaincy.

The minimum required EFCA credential for endorsement when the highest credential from the ordaining agency is not required is the Ministry License: Three-Year Renewable.

Note: The Ministry License: Five-Year Non-Renewable will not be available for this scenario.

2. The highest credential offered by the credentialing agency **IS REQUIRED** for chaplaincy.

In the EFCA, the highest credential is the Certificate of Ordination (for men) or the Certificate of Christian Ministry (for women).

The Ministry License: Three Year Renewable or Ministry License: Five-Year Non-Renewable is the first credential you will need to obtain. It must be obtained prior to the Certificate of Ordination or Certificate of Christian Ministry.

For federal government employed chaplain roles, the minimum credential is the Certificate of Ordination (for men) or the Certificate of Christian Ministry (for women).

Failure to maintain one’s credential will likely result in the suspension or loss of the credential and withdrawal of the EFCA endorsement.

EFCA Credentialing information can be found under “[Obtain a Credential](#)” at [EFCA.org](#).

Before beginning the credentialing process:

- Learn which credential is required for your institution.
- Contact the district where you reside to learn what is needed to begin the process.

Contact information for the [districts](#) can be found on [EFCA.org](#).

Interviews may be conducted by both the entity to which you are applying for chaplaincy and the EFCA.

Guidance Statement for Endorsed Chaplains Regarding Marriage and Related Functions

Chaplains must remain faithful to the biblical and historic pattern of marriage as well as biblical human sexuality as outlined in the Scriptures. Marriage remains clearly defined, in Scripture, as between one man and one woman.

EFCA Chaplains should neither violate nor compromise their own convictions, nor should they ignore the biblical principles and injunctions of marriage by participating, conducting, leading or directing same-sex marriage ceremonies. EFCA chaplains cannot minister in a context that would give any appearance of condoning the homosexual lifestyle or other ungodly sexual behavior whether in a pre-marriage counseling session or in a retreat setting when same-sex couples are attending.

However, this does not prohibit chaplains from engaging in teaching or training those of different sexual orientation or behavior if it does not compromise the chaplain's religious beliefs or the EFCA's stance on non-biblical lifestyles. **Notification of the Endorser is required if you are asked to be the trainer for this kind of training.**

We ask each chaplain to be mindful of how each ministry encounter might bring balance between our calling to proclaim God's Word to the lost, loving all peoples while maintaining fidelity to our understanding of the Holy Scriptures in regard to the homosexual lifestyle, same-sex couples and gender dysphoria.

In summary, while chaplains are given ample opportunities and leeway to be servants to 'perform' or 'provide' for their constituents, a clear line must be drawn by the chaplain when tasked or encouraged to perform in any compromising context that condones, encourages or blesses a behavior that contradicts the clear teachings of Scripture.

Please consult your Endorser and state statutes if you will be required to officiate weddings as part of your Institutional Chaplain duties.

See Appendix D: Biblical Sexuality and the Covenant of Marriage: Resolution (2017)

What the EFCA Endorser should expect from an EFCA Chaplain:

The chaplain's first responsibility is to uphold the EFCA's Statement of Faith and distinctives without compromise. They are also responsible to the institution they serve as long as they do not compromise the doctrines and standards of the EFCA.

Chaplains who carry a dual role as a local pastor and also volunteer or serve as a part-time chaplain for public or community services or other institutions will be expected to maintain their primary accountability to their local EFCA district and a secondary accountability to the EFCA Endorser.

1. They will maintain denominational accountability which includes:
 - a. Doctrinal alignment to the EFCA Statement of Faith.
 - b. Personal conduct and spiritual lifestyle in accordance with a minister of the gospel.

2. Complete the additional EFCA requirements to maintain your credential while serving in a non-EFCA ministry:
 - a. Membership in a local EFCA church.
 - b. Accountability to their District (District Superintendent or district representative).
 - c. Annual ministry report completed at the end of each physical year. Completed reports should be sent to: Chaplains@efca.org or EFCA Chaplains, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55420-1300. The report summarizes your ministry and provides the EFCA with updated information. A form is provided in this document.
 - d. Attendance at one of the following EFCA events: EFCA One, the EFCA Theology Conference, your EFCA district conference, or an EFCA Chaplain conference function (minimally) every other year.
3. Remain vigilant to reaffirm the EFCA Statement of Faith every 3 years to maintain your EFCA credential.
4. The endorsee shall keep the Endorser informed of new assignments, promotions, schools attending, changes in email or mailing addresses and phone numbers, and other pertinent information as they occur. Particularly important is any change of work site or the status as a vocational minister/chaplain.
5. The endorsee shall contribute annual dues (*See Appendix A, "EFCA Chaplains Schedule of Annual Dues"*) by October 1 of each year.
6. EFCA chaplains are expected to meet the requirements of the institution they are serving as long as they do not conflict with the EFCA.
7. All Chaplains will report any pending adverse actions toward them to the Chaplain Endorser as soon as they are aware of such actions. This is an obligation, not a request.

What the endorsed chaplain should expect from the EFCA Endorser:

- An endorsed chaplain may request an updated endorsement if they:
 - a) Meet the institutional requirements.
 - b) Remain in good standing with his/her local EFCA church.
 - c) Maintain his/her national EFCA ministerial credential in good standing.
 - d) Complete annual reports to the endorser.
 - e) Pay annual dues as specified in Appendix A.
- The endorsee may expect official representation to:
 - a) The organization to which a chaplain may be a staff member.
 - b) Organizations such as Evangelicals Chaplains Commission (ECC), The Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy, and the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC).
- The endorsee may expect appropriate and timely chaplain-related information, and counsel regarding important trends, required data, and news vital to individual members and all endorsed chaplains.
- The chaplain can expect to be provided with counsel and support from the EFCA Chaplain Endorser when questions of concern may arise from one's workplace that impacts ministry or other professional duties.
- The endorsed chaplain may expect the prayers and support of the EFCA Chaplain Endorser.
- If the chaplain has been accused of impropriety or ethic violation or adversely treated by the employing organization the EFCA Endorser will act as an advocate for the chaplain.

Withdrawal of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

An Ecclesiastical Endorsement may be withdrawn by the EFCA Chaplain Endorser upon:

- A valid request from the individual
- Failure to maintain their EFCA credential or abide by the EFCA policies, the EFCA Statement of Faith, or the Chaplain Handbook
- Causes such as moral failure, illegal conduct, or incompetency in performing assigned tasks
- Failure to meet such standards as non-payment of annual dues or submission of regular reports

In case of moral failure or illegal conduct, the EFCA Chaplain Endorser will inform the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS) of the incident. BOMS is responsible to adjudicate all charges and prescribe appropriate disciplinary action for any minister holding an EFCA credential.

Summary

In view of the responsibility to God, the EFCA, and their local EFCA church as well as the institutions to which chaplains serve, the ministerial credential and Ecclesiastical Endorsement are important steps in the chaplain's call to ministry. The Endorsee and Endorser are obliged to maintain a constant vigil to see that mutual responsibilities indicated in the EFCA Statement of Faith and the EFCA Chaplain Handbook are being fulfilled in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord and in keeping with the tenets of our Faith.

Code of Conduct and Ethics for EFCA Institutional Chaplains

Purpose

Define essential standards for EFCA chaplains and pastors to ensure Christ-centered, ethical, competent, and respectful ministry.

Core Standards

- Seek best interests of those served; protect and advocate for dignity, rights, and confidentiality. Review your state statutes for confidentiality and reporting standards.
- Act with integrity, humility, compassion, and self-control.
- Represent Christ and EFCA faithfully; comply with this Code at all times.
- Act in obedience to Scripture and EFCA Statement of Faith.

Gospel and Doctrine

- Minister in alignment with the EFCA Statement of Faith.
- Affirm salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone.
- Keep the Gospel central, shared with gentleness, cultural sensitivity, and without coercion.
- Serve, build trust, and rely on the Holy Spirit for outcomes.
- Judiciously contextualize the gospel, biblical principles, and EFCA convictions within the setting where you serve without compromise.

Professional Practice and Accountability

- Pursue the fruit of the Spirit in the professional care and relationships within the pluralistic environment that you serve.
- Practice within your scope of training; refer when beyond competence.
- Pursue continuing education and spiritual growth.
- Submit to appropriate spiritual authority and accountability within EFCA structures, and to your institutional structure as appropriate provided it does not conflict with the EFCA values, or convictions.
- Remain politically neutral in your institutional chaplain role; do not use your position or EFCA credentials for political advocacy.

Personal Boundaries and Conduct

- Take responsibility for holistic self-care: attend to your spiritual, emotional, relational and physical health for the sake of competent professional care.
- Be above reproach concerning sexual misconduct, pornography, substance abuse, illegal drugs, and abuse of power. We strongly recommend personal accountability relationships for your personal, professional, and spiritual health.
- Be above reproach in meeting with and caring for others. Avoid inappropriate private one-on-one care with opposite-sex individuals or minors; meet publicly or with another present. Exercise caution with touch; never exploit, manipulate, intimidate, bully, or abuse others.
- Address stress, burnout, and fatigue through rest, discipline, and support.

Services, Ceremonies, and Public Ministry

- Officiate marriages only between one man and one woman.
- Do not officiate or promote pagan, occult, or unbiblical practices.
- Seek EFCA guidance (EFCA pastor, District leader, or Endorser) when ethical or doctrinal questions arise.

Confidentiality and Legal Compliance

- Protect personal information; prohibit gossip.
- Explain limits of confidentiality clearly.
- Follow mandatory reporting laws, state regulations, and HIPAA where applicable.
- Disclose confidential information only with consent or when legally required.

Community and EFCA Engagement

- Minister in community; wisely collaborate with other chaplains, team members, pastors, and ministry leaders when available.
- Participate in EFCA conferences, communications, and required activities to maintain credentials.
- Commitment: Serve faithfully, teach truthfully, love generously, and uphold Christ and the EFCA with excellence.

INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAIN ANNUAL REPORT
Chaplain Ministries



Please send this report to:

Chaplains@efca.org or

EFCA Chaplain Ministries, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55420-1300

Report Ending 31 Dec 20_____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Home Address: _____

City, ST Zip: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Office Phone: _____

Email (1): _____ Email (2): _____

Church membership: _____ City, ST: _____
(EFCA church membership is required for endorsement)

Institution Serving: _____ City, ST: _____

Check the ministries you were involved in during this past year:

☐ Chapel Leadership

☐ Counseling

☐ Administration

☐ Visitation

☐ Institutional Worship Leader

☐ Bible Studies

☐ Preaching

☐ Special Project(s) (describe) _____

Length of service in your present ministry: _____ ☐ Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Volunteer

Board Certified through APC? ☐ Yes ☐ No Date of certification: _____

Did you attend an EFCA training event this past year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, which event? _____

Complete the narrative report on the next page.

INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAIN ANNUAL REPORT

Narrative Report:

Please describe your ministry focus, special projects, educational opportunities, and significant events. Include personal comments regarding your family, prayer needs, or suggestions of how the EFCA or Endorser may assist you better. Use another page if more space is needed.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Reminder: Annual dues are due October 1 of the calendar year.

- Salaried-Institutional chaplains: \$100 (*Includes Hospice, Hospital, Senior Health Care, Corporate, etc.*)
- State and Federal employed chaplains: \$150 (*Includes Bureau of Prisons, Veterans Affairs and State Prisons*)
- Volunteer: No dues are requested

Page 2 of 2 – (Institutional Chaplain Annual Report)



EFCA CHAPLAIN MINISTRIES
APPLICATION FOR ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT
INSTITUTIONAL – Including BOP and VA CHAPLAINS

This application is for ecclesiastical endorsement for direct appointment as a chaplain,
and ecclesiastical approval for chaplain candidates.

Rev. Scott Barber - EFCA Chaplain Endorser scott.barber@efca.org 507.350.0051
chaplains@efca.org www.efca.org/chaplains

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Primary (cell) phone: _____ Alternate phone: _____

Email (primary) _____ Email 2: _____

Social Security Number (last 4 digits): _____

Type of Institution Serving:

- | | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Health Care | ☐ Senior housing/healthcare | ☐ Hospice | ☐ Marketplace |
| ☐ Correctional Facility
(local or state) | ☐ Community Services / Police | ☐ Corporate | ☐ Educational |
| ☐ Federal Bureau of Prisons | ☐ Department of Veterans Affairs | | |

- Do you have any convictions by martial or civilian courts (except minor traffic violations)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you have any record of disciplinary action, financial irresponsibility, domestic violence, or child abuse against you?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Birth: _____ Place of Birth _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female
(Month/day/year)

Ethnic origin _____ U.S. citizen: Yes ☐ No ☐

Denominational Background _____
(Name of religious body)

Current church attending _____ Location: _____

Is this an EFCA church? ☐ Yes ☐ No Are you a member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Note: Current membership in an EFCA church is required for endorsement.
You must maintain membership in an EFCA church throughout your chaplain career.

Do you hold a ministerial credential? ☐ Not yet credentialed ☐ Licensed ☐ Ordained
By whom? _____ Date: _____
(Denomination or local church)

EFCA Endorsement requires you hold an EFCA credential or transfer your ordination to the EFCA. See EFCA requirements in the Handbook.

Marital Status: ☐ Married - Date: _____ Name of Spouse _____
☐ Single (never married) ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced

Children:

Name	Male/Female	Year of Birth	Living at home
	M / F		Y / N
	M / F		Y / N
	M / F		Y / N
	M / F		Y / N
	M / F		Y / N

Are you presently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No If so, name of employer _____

Location: _____ Position _____

References (three): Suggested individuals include an evangelical pastor, chaplain, instructor, or mentor.

Send the reference form to the individuals, requesting it to be returned to our office address or chaplains@efca.org.

Name	Email address

Commitments:

- I have read the [Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America](#) and affirm all statements without mental or theological reservation. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, please explain which statements you cannot affirm and why:

- I have read and agree with [Where We Stand in the EFCA: Denials and Affirmations](#). ☐ Yes ☐ No

For a commentary and biblical explanation of these convictions click [here](#).

If No, please explain why:

- As an EFCA Endorsed Chaplain, I will:
 - ☐ Maintain the necessary EFCA credential as per EFCA requirements.
 - ☐ Complete Annual Reports to the Chaplain Endorser.
 - ☐ Submit Annual Dues as per the EFCA Chaplain Handbook.

➤ ***See page 3 of this application form for a checklist of required documents to complete this application.***

Signature _____ Date _____

Required documents and forms to complete the application process:

_____ Attach a current resume which includes educational institutions attended and degrees earned

_____ Attach a current photo of yourself

_____ Attach your personal testimony and faith journey (1-2 pages, typed)

_____ College and seminary transcripts. Request transcripts for undergraduate and graduate work be sent to the Endorser's office, EFCA Chaplain Ministries, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55420

_____ Reference forms - 3 total to be returned by the individuals
(Form is following this application packet section in the Handbook)

_____ A check for \$120 payable to "EFCA Chaplains" (non-refundable)
Seminarians who pay this fee and meet all other requirements will receive an Ecclesiastical Approval or Endorsement upon Active/Reserve Duty assignment.

At the time an endorsement is needed please email the Chaplain Endorser (Chaplains@efca.org) with the name and address (email) where the endorsement is to be sent.

Annual dues will be expected after one has been employed at the institution.

Send the completed original application along with the required documents to:
EFCA Chaplain Ministries
901 East 78th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55420
or PDF to chaplains@efca.org

For questions regarding the application process, contact Rev. Scott Barber (Scott.Barber@efca.org)

Please retain a copy of your application for your files.



EFCA Chaplain Ministries, 901 E 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55420
www.efca.org/chaplains

(Page 3 of 3 – EFCA INSTITUTIONAL Chaplain Application for Endorsement)



**EFCA CHAPLAIN MINISTRIES
RECOMMENDATION AND REFERENCE FORM**

Name of Chaplain applicant: _____

1. How long have you known this applicant? _____ In what context/capacity have you been acquainted with them?
2. On a scale of 1-10 (poor to excellent), how would you rate the over-all competency of the applicant to serve as pastor/chaplain? _____ Please explain:
3. What, in your judgement, are the strengths of the applicant as a pastor/chaplain?
4. What, in your judgement, are the limitations of the applicant as a pastor/chaplain?
5. Based on biblical standards, what evidence is there that this applicant is a Christian?
6. In what ways has it been evident to you that this applicant has a call to the Gospel ministry?
7. Would you have any reservations about this applicant serving as a pastor/chaplain in an institutional setting?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Please explain.

Name: _____ Position _____

Church/Institution: _____

Location (city, state): _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

Mail to: Chaplain Ministries, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55420
or email to: Chaplains@efca.org

Appendix A



EFCA Chaplains Schedule of Annual Dues

Category	Amount (Annual)	Rank/Status	Comments
Federally Employed	\$150	GS-11 and above	Bureau of Prisons Veterans Affairs National Guard Technician
State Employed	\$150		State Prisons
Institutional – Salaried	\$100		Hospice, Hospital, Senior Health Care, Corporate, etc.
Institutional – Volunteer	\$0 (or donation)		Hospice, Hospital, Senior Health Care, Corporate, etc.
Chaplain Candidates	\$50		Exception - those who pay initial fees which account for the first year of being commissioned in the Candidate Program

Annual dues schedule January 2012, EFCA Chaplains Commission

Note: If a chaplain is a member within two categories (above), the higher amount of the two will be the assessed annual dues.

Annual dues can be paid during the calendar year by 1 October in any of the following manners:

- 1) Automatic Monthly Donation
 - <https://helps.efca.org/resources/automatic-monthly-donation-form>
- 2) Credit Card
Online: <https://chaplains.ministries.efca.org/>
Select “Pay dues”
Follow the screens to make your payment.
- 3) Paid in full via check to:
EFCA Chaplains
901 East 78th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55420-1300

Appendix B



EFCA Statement of Faith

Adopted by the Conference on June 19, 2019

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

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. Amen.

Appendix C



Where We Stand in the EFCA: Denials and Affirmations

June 21, 2023

Introduction

We believe that as an association of churches, we in the EFCA are bound together by the biblical gospel, and we seek to live in the unity which that gospel creates. We believe and practice, “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things, charity.” In that light, we seek to address social movements and cultural trends that can create division among us.

Just as Paul needed to explain and defend himself and his ministry (2 Cor 10-13), we, too, sense a need to explain the ministry the Lord has entrusted to us. Because of questions asked, concerns raised, and criticisms made about or against the EFCA, which both prompted *and* limited the issues addressed, the Board of Directors and the Board of Ministerial Standing have adopted this declaration. The following statements are not meant to demonize or denigrate but are attempts to clarify where we in the EFCA stand as we seek to make the biblical gospel, and not any social movement, central among us.

Denials and Affirmations

- We are *not* adherents of the secular “Social Justice” movement as held in progressive circles, *but* we do believe that biblical justice has social implications, particularly in protecting those who are most vulnerable and marginalized.
- We are *not* “woke” in the sense of having embraced a progressive ideology that is grounded in critical theory rather than the Bible, *but* we do see the need to be awakened to the global and indeed cosmic impacts of sin, including racial injustice, and to be attuned to the biblical call for gospel-driven efforts toward reconciliation and restoration.
- We are *not* adherents of “Critical Race Theory” that reduces all racial inequities to a struggle between oppressor and oppressed and presents a worldview that is contrary to the Scriptures, *but* we do believe that the questions and challenges it raises stir us to recall critical biblical truths that we may have neglected and require our attention.
- We are *not* “Christian Nationalists” who believe the federal government should declare the United States a Christian nation or who believe that Americans are “God’s chosen people,” *but* we do believe that a patriotic love of one’s nation is appropriate and that Christians should be good citizens who may freely advocate for God-honoring public policies.
- We do *not* believe that political means can establish the kingdom of God, *but* we do believe that God has appointed governing authorities to do good and that, for citizens in Christ’s kingdom, King Jesus’ rule and reign transcends all other citizenships and partisan ideologies and transforms how we live in the world.

- We do *not* believe that a person’s biological sex should be separated from their self-perception as a man or a woman nor that the body should be altered when it does not conform to that self-perception, *but* we do believe that some people experience a distressing struggle between these two and that we must treat those who struggle in this way with love and compassion as we seek to help them, with the truth and power of the gospel, toward the wholeness of a biologically-sexed identity grounded in God’s “very good” design in creation as male and female.
- We are *not* egalitarian in our understanding of the roles and functions of men and women in the church, *but* we do believe that the gifts and ministries of women are essential to the health and fruitfulness of churches and ought to be sought out and multiplied in ways that arise from and are consistent with our complementarian convictions, as reflected in our EFCA ordination policy.
- We do *not* believe in the annihilation of those who die apart from Christ, *but* in their eternal conscious punishment. Among the kinds of suffering we ought to seek to alleviate, this is the most grievous, and it is our urgent duty and God-given privilege to seek to alleviate it by proclaiming the gospel and calling all people to believe the gospel by repenting and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Few Summary Statements Reflecting Our EFCA Convictions

We believe that the good news of the Kingdom of God, announced and embodied by Jesus Christ, is the ultimate and final solution to the problems of this world. Love for God and love for our neighbor, to which the gospel calls us, requires that we seek the welfare and common good of our communities and nation.

We believe the church is the new community created by God, the “pillar and buttress of truth.” Our primary ministry and mission is to proclaim the gospel and to make disciples among all people, as salt and light in the world as we await the glorious return of Jesus who will complete the transformation he has begun.

We believe, as an association of churches united in our Statement of Faith, that biblical truth and the gospel are to be valued above any contemporary social ideology, while acknowledging that social movements may contain biblical truth to which we must attend.¹

In sum, the EFCA is neither “Progressive Evangelical” nor “Neo-Fundamentalist.” We remain tethered to the text of Scripture and grounded in the gospel (*evangel*) of Jesus Christ as we love God and love others (Matt 22:37-39). As we interact with one another and the world around us, we are committed to convictional kindness--conviction that is grounded in the “faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), and kindness that manifests “the fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22-23). We both proclaim the gospel (Rom 1:16) and seek to live in a manner worthy of the gospel (Phil 1:27).

¹ These social/secular ideologies often contain elements of biblical truth but cut them off from other complementary truths, distorting and falsifying them in the process. The issues raised by these movements are “antithetically against yet parasitically dependent upon the truth of the Christian worldview,” and they will be subversively fulfilled and transformed only by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Addendum: *Sic et Non* (Yes and No)

As Christians, we affirm the truth of the Scriptures and the truthfulness of biblical doctrine with an unqualified "Yes" (1 Cor 15:1-8; 2 Cor 1:20). When the truth of the Scriptures and biblical doctrine are being denied, we respond with an unqualified "No" (Gal 1:6-9; 2 Pet 2:1).

When we encounter those with views different from our own, how do we respond? Too often there is either an attempt at *via media*, a "middle of the road" belief as if differing beliefs can be melded together or that they do not matter, or an "all or nothing" approach, either naively and uncritically accepting everything, or critically and condemningly rejecting everything. There is a better way.

Sic et Non, Yes and No.

Sic, yes. This means, first of all, that in our approach to contemporary claims we need to learn to say "yes." We need to avoid an attitude of hyper-criticism, which assumes that if any idea is new (or, if we have never heard it said that way before) it must be false. Although we have the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Scriptures, no church body or theological tradition has all the truth.

Non, no. Just as clearly as we must affirm the truths others hold, we must also reject their errors. Too many of us are extremely naive in our acceptance of the truth claims of others. Too often we allow ourselves to be misled by others' false notions because we are convinced that their motives are pure, unaware of the damaging (and damning!) spiritual effects of every false doctrine or teaching.

How do we do a better job of engaging the increasingly diverse religious opinions we are hearing today? By teaching our minds and our lips to say "yes and no." "Yes" to what is good and right. "No" to what is bad and wrong. This will require that we use our critical faculties and listen to people as they speak and write. It will also require us to search the Scriptures more carefully and fully to be in a better position to make valid assessments of others' truth claims.

Appendix D

Biblical Sexuality and the Covenant of Marriage: Resolution (2017)

The EFCA Conference approved the Resolution on Biblical Sexuality and the Covenant of Marriage which was unanimously recommended by the EFCA Board of Directors.

Background

Due to cultural and legal changes and challenges, especially after the decision of *Obergefell v. Hodges* (June 26, 2015), in which the Supreme Court of the United States determined it is a fundamental right for same-sex couples to marry, the Spiritual Heritage Committee (SHC) was asked by many pastors and leaders of local EFC churches for help and guidance in making a statement affirming the biblical teaching on marriage. Added to this is the cultural normalizing of sexual fluidity. These two issues are connected in that the biblical teaching on marriage between a man and a woman, is grounded in God's prior creation of humans as male and female. This led to the SHC's presentation of the Resolution to the board with the recommendation it be brought to the Conference.

Rationale

The board brought this Resolution to the Conference for approval for the following reasons:

- The needs and requests of pastors and local churches, along with legal and cultural changes prompt a need for a denominational Resolution.
- The EFCA has a history of making statements as a Conference through Resolutions on important issues that affect the church.
- This Resolution is grounded in the Bible, given expression in our [Statement of Faith](#), and expounded in [Evangelical Convictions](#).
- Although these issues are not the gospel, they are connected to the gospel, and they are critical issues to address as the EFCA stands on the inerrant, sufficient and authoritative Scriptures.

Two Key Biblical Truths

This Resolution consists of two key biblical truths. First, God created human beings uniquely in his image as male and female, which addresses God's biologically sexed creation which is "very good," and which grounds the truth we affirm about marriage. Second, God has designed marriage to be a covenantal relationship between one man and one woman.

Resolution

EFCA Conference Resolution Biblical Sexuality and the Covenant of Marriage June 2017

Whereas, the EFCA Statement of Faith affirms that “God created Adam and Eve in His image” (Article III.3); and

Whereas, when God created Adam and Eve, He said, “‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them” (Genesis 1:26-28a); and

Whereas, this means that God has created human beings uniquely as male and female as part of the divinely created order, and that this biologically sexed difference is foundational for human identity and ought to be recognized and valued; and

Whereas, Jesus refers to this difference in describing God’s design for marriage by declaring, “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh” (Mark 10:6-8; cf. Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:31); and

Whereas, God’s creation of human beings as male and female provides a biologically sexed identity grounded in God’s good design;

Now, therefore, it is hereby resolved as follows:

The Evangelical Free Church of America affirms that God created human beings uniquely in His image as male and female, and He has designed marriage to be a covenantal relationship between one man and one woman.

This Resolution on Biblical Sexuality and the Covenant of Marriage is an important affirmation of the truth of the Bible, as articulated in the EFCA Statement of Faith.

Adopted this 21st day of June, 2017 by the EFCA Conference in Austin, Texas.

Appendix E
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
to be Endorsed by the EFCA as Chaplain

What is the first step I should take if I want to be endorsed as an EFCA chaplain?

Contact the chaplain endorser (chaplains@efca.org) with a brief note of introduction which includes:

1. Contact information (email and phone)
2. EFCA church membership (including location of the church)
3. Where is God calling you to serve?
4. Current education status (including school, anticipated year of graduation and degree obtained)
5. Read the list of requirements in the EFCA Chaplain Handbook to become endorsed with the EFCA. Include any questions you have regarding these requirements.
6. Anticipated time frame(s) to meet chaplain requirements.
7. What questions or concerns do you have for the Endorser?

Do I need to serve as a chaplain candidate before I serve an institution as a Chaplain?

Requirements of the employing agency vary and may include additional training under the supervision of a staff chaplain at the institution.

When can I be regarded as a Chaplain?

In the EFCA Chaplain candidates are not fully regarded as an EFCA Chaplain until all institutional and EFCA requirements have been completed.

For institutional roles requiring the highest credential offered by the ordaining agency, the candidate must have had their **public credentialing ceremony** to complete the process of obtaining the EFCA Certificate of Ordination (for men) or the Certificate of Christian Ministry (for women).

Prior to obtaining these credentials, a candidate must have held an EFCA Ministry License: Three-Year Renewable or Ministry License: Five-Year Non-Renewable.

Note: The Ministry License: Three Year Renewable is the minimum credential accepted to be endorsed by the EFCA when the institution does not require our highest credential. The Ministry License: Five Year Non-Renewable will not be accepted as a valid credential to be endorsed by the EFCA.

Will an Ecclesiastical Endorsement guarantee acceptance to a chaplain role?

Endorsement alone is not sufficient for obtaining chaplain positions. It is simply one requirement among many. Each employing institution has its own specific requirements.

Can I “fast track” completing my Certificate of Ordination (for men) or Certificate of Christian Ministry (for women)?

Neither the Certificate of Ordination or the Certificate of Christian Ministry can be completed without first completing the EFCA Ministry License: Three-Year Renewable or Ministry License: Five-Year Non-Renewable. The Five-Year Non-Renewable Ministry License is a faster track than the Three-Year Renewable License. See the Ministry License details outlined in the credentialing pages of EFCA.org.

Will you write an endorsement for me because I graduated from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School?

Endorsement is not tied to a specific educational institution but rather the individual must meet the institution's specific requirements and that of the EFCA as listed in the Chaplain Handbook.

I attend a local Evangelical Free Church. Will you write an endorsement for me?

Current MEMBERSHIP, in good standing, in an EFCA church is required for endorsement. You must maintain membership in an EFCA church throughout your chaplain career.

Can I serve in a like-minded local church and obtain EFCA credentials?

No, you will need to be a member, in good standing, of a local EFC church.

Will I be endorsed once I complete my EFCA Certificate of Ordination (for men) and a Certificate of Christian Ministry (for women) at the District Credentialing Council?

No. After completing the district council, your council minutes are sent to the EFCA (National) Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS) for processing. BOMS will need six weeks to review your work. When BOMS has approved your credential, you will need to work with your local church, district office, and the National Office Credentialing Department to schedule a public credentialing ceremony to be held at your local church. The certificate will be presented to you at that time.

You will receive the Ecclesiastical Endorsement after your public credentialing ceremony has taken place.

What type of support does EFCA chaplains have if an issue arises that is not a clearly defined stance by the EFCA?

The chaplain can expect to be provided with counsel and support from the Chaplain Endorser when questions of concern arise that impact ministry or other professional duties.