



# Evangelical Congregational Church CHARTER FOR INCORPORATED CHURCHES

When a congregation desires to incorporate, the decision to do so shall be by action of the congregation in a meeting duly announced for that purpose. All the members of the congregation, of legal age and in good standing (311.4 and 302), are entitled to vote. The following shall be the Articles of Incorporation:

## Charter

1. The name of this corporation is \_\_\_\_\_  
(name to include the words Evangelical Congregational.)

2. Said corporation is formed for the purpose of the public worship of God according to the faith and polity of the Evangelical Congregational Church, the promotion of the interests of the Christian faith, and the spread of Christ's kingdom throughout the world, without contemplation of pecuniary gain or profit, in connection and association with the said Evangelical Congregational Church. The corporation does accede to, recognize, and adopt *The Creed, Ritual, and Discipline of the Evangelical Congregational Church*.

The said corporation reserves to itself the power to dissolve this ecclesiastical affiliation and relation and form any other denominational affiliation or continue as an independent congregation in the following manner:

Congregational action dissolving or changing, or intended to dissolve or change, the ecclesiastical affiliation or relation of the said congregation can be taken only during the thirty days immediately preceding the opening date of the regular session of the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church, within whose geographical area the congregation and its property are located. During the aforesaid thirty days, a congregational meeting may be called by the Official Board/Ministry Council only if one-fifth of the members in good standing subscribe to a written call for such meeting, said call to contain an announcement of the purpose of such meeting. At least ten days' written notice of such meeting shall be given to all members of the congregation entitled to vote by mailing a copy of the call, postage paid, to such member at his or her address shown on the church membership records, and the said meeting shall be announced on two Sundays in the regular services of the congregation held within thirty days prior to said meeting. All persons of legal age, whose names are enrolled at the time the meeting is convened and whose names have been enrolled at least one year prior thereto, and who have contributed regularly to the maintenance of the congregation and communed during such year are entitled to vote.

At a meeting thus convened, the congregation, by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the congregation appearing on the church membership records and entitled to vote as hereinbefore set forth, may dissolve the ecclesiastical affiliation with the Evangelical Congregational Church. No such dissolution of a congregation's affiliation with the Evangelical Congregational Church shall become effective unless and until formal written notice of such action shall be delivered to the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church, within whose geographical area the congregation and its property are located, on the first day of the next regular session.

Members entitled to vote at the aforesaid congregational meeting who, in the event of a decision to dissolve the affiliation with the Evangelical Congregational Church, shall decide to remain with the Evangelical Congregational Church, shall be entitled to a pro rata share of the appraised value of the property of the congregation on the effective date of such dissolution;

provided, however, that such dissenting members shall agree, by majority vote, to use and shall use such money in providing and maintaining a place of worship in connection with the Evangelical Congregational Church, with which they shall become affiliated.

If any appropriations or other grants shall have been made by the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church, or any of the agencies of such Conferences, toward the creation or maintenance of this congregation or its property, such appropriations or grants shall constitute a non-interest bearing obligation chargeable against the property of the congregation, such debt to become payable and collectible according to law from this congregation if it shall separate from or dissolve its affiliation with the Evangelical Congregational Church.

Should this congregation become extinct or cease to exist, as set forth in 321.4 of the *Discipline*, or should this congregation make request to the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church for the discontinuance of worship services and the closing of the work in the area served by this congregation, then, and in any of such events, the property of this congregation shall revert, and if the property be sold, then the proceeds thereof paid, to the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church in which this congregation and its property are located, and that National Conference shall thereupon acquire and become entitled to a rights of ownership in such property.

3. The business of this corporation is to be transacted at \_\_\_\_\_  
in \_\_\_\_\_ (address of church).

4. The said corporation is to exist perpetually.

5. There is to be no capital stock, and there are to be no shares of stock issued.

6. The names and residences of the incorporators are \_\_\_\_\_

7. The names and addresses of the persons who shall be the Board of Directors of the corporation are as follows:

These persons shall serve until such time as an Official Board/Ministry Council shall be organized, at which time the Official Board/Ministry Council, at least three in number, shall replace the above-named persons and become for all purposes the Board of Directors of this corporation. Members of the Official Board/Ministry Council shall be elected at such time and in such manner and shall perform such duties as may be specified in the *Discipline*.

8. Any property, real or personal, which shall hereafter be bequeathed, devised, or conveyed to said corporation shall be taken and held to inure to it, subject to the control and disposition of the members thereof, according to the *Discipline*.

9. This corporation can, by majority vote of its qualified members present at any duly called congregational meeting, adopt any bylaws not inconsistent with the provisions of this charter, the laws of the state of incorporation, and the *Discipline*.

Witness our hands and seals this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A.D. \_\_\_\_\_