

Biographical Info & Voter's Guide

*For the 2026-2027 Elder Board &
Nominating Committee Candidates*



EMMANUEL FAITH ANNUAL MEETING

April 26, 2026 | 1:00pm

Annual Meeting Election Information

This year's Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 26, at 1pm in the Family Center (Gym). Church members will be emailed a digital link to vote online for the new Elder Board and Nominating Committee. Please note that your contact information will be required to verify you are a member when you fill out the ballot form. There will also be an opportunity to vote in person before the meeting on April 26 (see a worship guide for more details). Voting information is available at the church or online at efcc.org/events.

Church Members are reminded that under the *EFCC Constitution & Bylaws*, two categories of membership have been established: "Active" and "Associate." Only those in the Active category are eligible to vote. The Board of Elders encourages all Active Members to vote. Some in our church family, though attending for many years, have never become members. If you're in this category, your name will not appear on the membership list, and you will not be eligible to vote. Please see the following pages for more information on our Elder Board and Nominating Committee candidates to help you make informed voting decisions for this year's Annual Meeting election.

For more information about this year's Annual Meeting, please see the Annual Meeting agenda posted at the EFCC main office front desk, or on our website page at efcc.org/events.

2026-2027 Elder Board Candidates

Five candidates will be elected to the EFCC Elder Board. You may vote for up to five people on your ballot.

- Gary Bell
- Michael de Neve
- Greg Hill
- Joe Hilliard
- Rodger Keester
- Greg Mizel
- Austin Nielsen

2026-2027 Nominating Committee Candidates

Three candidates will be elected to the Nominating Committee. Please vote for up to three people on your ballot.

- Tom Anderson
- Jeff Felix
- Emmet Lee
- Ron Peet
- Irene Phillips
- Todd Willer

Elder Candidates

Gary Bell (Laura)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

My parents took me to church as a child, and during the summer before 7th grade, a faithful Sunday school teacher explained that I was separated from God because of my sin. Even at that young age, I was convicted of my disobedience, and asked Jesus to fix my broken relationship with Him (Romans 3:23, 6:23). I believed that Jesus took on humanity's sin (including mine) and I was reconciled to God

through the death and raising of his Son (Romans 5:8-10, 10:9). It wasn't until my involvement in a High School youth group that I started to understand that it was not through my efforts, but I was saved by the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8-10). God has been at work in my life ever since, and many times I have seen His faithfulness more clearly in retrospect.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: My wife and I enjoy serving as greeters for the Children's Ministry under the leadership of Diego Morales and Izamar Marquez. Also, within the past five years, we have served as table discussion leaders for Discipleship Academy led by Pastor Josh Rose and volunteered at Love Esco activities and at the Harvest Party.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

My gifts lean towards patience and compassion for people and lending practical help to those in need. I am known as an encourager, and I see how God has equipped me to help different teams work collaboratively both at work and church. I try to surrender my life to the leading of Jesus Christ, and if this is what God has prepared me to do, then I am willing to serve as an elder.

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

I have no prior experience as an elder in a church.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

For me, it is important to first listen and understand the other person's opinion. When asked, I try to be ready to clearly explain my convictions with gentleness and respect. I'm comfortable having a minority opinion, but it does drive me to critically examine why I hold those convictions.

Elder Candidates

Michael de Neve (Sara)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I grew up knowing who God was, however, I did not have a personal relationship with Him. When I was eleven years old, I attended a youth group meeting at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa. The pastor began to describe what eternal separation from the Lord meant, and naturally, I was scared. I learned that we all have sinned (Romans 3:23) and we cannot have eternal life with Jesus unless we acknowledge the sin in our life and that our Lord, being a loving God, died for us in our place (Romans 5:8). I repented and trusted Christ as my Lord for the assurance of salvation (John 3:16). From that moment I began to have a relationship with Jesus. Life continued with highs and lows of a typical young teenager; however, in the summer of 1986, I rededicated my life to the Lord, acknowledging Him as the center of my life.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: I am involved in several ministries at EFCC. I am involved with our worship ministry led by Nate Keating (Modern) and Melody Holz (Classic) in various roles. Recently, I have had the opportunity to play both guitar and bass for the Classic services. I have also had the privilege of occasionally leading worship with my wife, Sara, for EFCC's Set Free Ministry, which is led by Kathy Moratto. I was also an EFCC Elder (2023-2026). Finally, I'm involved with EFCC's Safety and Security Ministry Team, led by Pam Lawson. Admittedly, they let me hang out with them when I'm not playing music. I have been involved with my current ministries for more than 5 years. The only additional past ministry is Play As One (PAO), led by Jon Goodman). Although not an official EFCC ministry, I did work with PAO for 10 years in various roles, including coaching and administration, which took place at Emmanuel Faith.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

I believe I am gifted in encouragement. I find myself in many roles where I work alongside leaders, and I tend to help them through encouragement; especially through tough times. I feel led to tell people what I believe they need to hear, not what they want to hear. I believe, if elected as an elder, that I could be of encouragement to the board. My goal would be to listen to the issues and discussions first before making my own opinions. I believe I can give productive feedback and am willing to allow the Lord to help me make crucial decisions. I feel if I'm elected by our congregation, then the Lord wants to use me as an elder. Naturally, I only want to be an elder if the Lord allows it.

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Elder Candidates

Michael de Neve (continued) ...

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

Besides being a past EFCC elder board member, I am also a board member for Play As One. It has been a wonderful experience being in a "front row seat," observing how the Lord is allowing this ministry to grow. Several years ago I served on the Elder Nomination Committee under the leadership of Zack Swinscoe. There, I learned a lot about the process of becoming an EFCC elder. It was through Zack's leadership that we had some interesting discussions on how an elder is selected and the weight of selecting elders for our church.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I strive to have my opinions based on God's Word. I never want to be right just for the sake of being right. I want my opinions based on Truth. When I need to communicate an opinion that goes against a popular belief I strive to maintain open communication and allow others to express their views. That being said, speaking truth is showing love, and I feel it's important not to compromise truth. If I have 100% certainty that my opinion is based on God's Word, I am at peace with my decision.

Elder Candidates

Greg Hill (Lindsey)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I trusted Christ as Savior as a 1st grader in the old Building 7 at Emmanuel Faith. Since then, there have been faithful and less faithful seasons of life. As I grow older, I am growing in faith in and allegiance to King Jesus. (Romans 10:9, John 3:16)

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Worship leader and teacher for Faith Kids. I have worked in the past with Izamar Marquez,

Kelli Warren, Jeremy Johnson, Josh Rose, Ryan Paulson, and Scott Smith.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

I believe I am gifted as a teacher, leader, and helper. I feel called to serve my church family in any capacity it needs.

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

I previously served as an Elder at EFCC from April 2018 – April 2021, and April 2022 – April 2025.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I attempt to come to an honest understanding of differing opinions and do my part to ask questions and seek to create peace. I do not take issue with holding an unpopular opinion and would hope that others would extend the same peace-seeking attitude I strive for.

Elder Candidates

Joe Hilliard (Kristi)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I was raised Catholic, and my mom would always impress upon me how important it is to have a relationship with our Lord and Savior. Growing up my brother would often hand me a \$20 dollar bill and tell me to drop it into the plate at Mass. For me, my faith meant more than just an offering; I wanted a relationship. My wife and I started attending Emmanuel Faith, and it was during this time that everything started to fall into place. I began to realize God wants a personal relationship with us, not one that is based solely on traditions and rituals. I started to realize what I had thought all along, that I could speak directly to God, and it was much more meaningful.

Salvation isn't something we earn, but is instead received through faith. This has brought me clarity as my relationship with God has continued to grow and flourish. Therefore, the scripture that resonates with me is Ephesians 2:8-9, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Newcomer Lunch working with Pastor Josh Rose, as well as other EFCC leaders and elders who regularly attend and present to the Newcomers. Sunday Safety and Security Ministry Team (SSMT) volunteer working with Pam Lawson and other SSMT members. Additional ministries served within the past five years include: Elementary Winter Camps, worked with Diego Morales, Rob Lomicka, and others. VBS, working with Pastor Jeremy Johnson and Kelli Warren. ALPHA Class with Josh Rose (led a small group with my wife, Kristi). Snowball Bash volunteer working with Anna Nielson. Harvest Party Volunteer working with SSMT.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

I believe God has gifted me with the ability to work well alongside others. I enjoy problem-solving and providing prayerful solutions to challenges. I value listening carefully and considering different perspectives with the overall goal of unity, which I believe is essential when making decisions that impact the church body. I am friendly, outgoing, and approachable. These traits have allowed me to build meaningful relationships with others. I genuinely enjoy serving and being of service to people, whether through encouragement, support, or practical help.

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Elder Candidates

Joe Hilliard (*continued*) ...

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

I have served as the Vice President of our community's HOA. I also served as Vice President of the Associated Student Government at Palomar College.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

First, I listen carefully and then diligently ask questions to make sure I understand all perspectives before expressing a position. I think you should do your own research and make sure your decisions are informed. If my convictions lead me to take a position that is in the minority, I would be prepared to remain calm, gracious, and humble while always showing respect, even when there is a disagreement.

Elder Candidates

Rodger Keester (Tina)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I cannot point to an exact day or moment to my salvation because I have been a Christian for as long as I can remember. I came from a long line of Presbyterians and was baptized as an infant in my parents' church in Los Alamitos, CA. I attended years of Sunday school, participated in children's choir, became a leader in VBS, and became an official member, leading to marriage in the church. My Christian faith has always been a big part of my life, even through

my young adult years, and I have always been a member of several Bible studies and was baptized a second time as an adult. I guess you could say, I was justified at some point, and I am being sanctified (2 Thess. 2:13) day by day with Christ. My life verse has been Romans 5:8 showing "God demonstrated his love in this, it was while we were still sinners when Christ died for us."

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Safety and Security Ministry Team (SSMT) volunteer and occasional team lead on Sundays with Pam Lawson; Harvest Party Security with Rich Bell and Dr. Larry Michael; Group Bible Studies with Geoff Horn and Rich Bell; EFCC Mission trip to Egypt with Alli Sonnier. In the past 5 years, I have also served with the Snowball Bash Security for Anna Nielsen, in addition to my continued work with the SSMT volunteer team and Harvest Party security. Law Enforcement Bible Study leader and other group Bible studies with Rich Bell. Harvest Party support and candy packing as a member of Families in Faith.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

After years of study, I have come to the realization that my spiritual gift is prophecy. My gift does not pertain to the ability to foretell future events; instead, it involves the unique capacity to receive and interpret messages from the Bible, messages that serve to encourage, build up, and provide comfort to fellow believers in their spiritual journeys. So in this light, I feel a calling to the role of an elder at EFCC, specifically to strengthen and to build up the faith of the congregation. It is a responsibility I take seriously, as I believe that nurturing the spiritual growth of others is essential for a thriving church. Through prayer, mentorship, and teaching, I hope to contribute positively to the church community.

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Elder Candidates

Rodger Keester (*continued*) ...

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

I was an elder for my previous church for a couple of years. I also was an Area Coordinator for Billy Graham Evangelical Association (BGEA) Online ministry leading a team of 15 to 20 volunteers as a liaison to the ministry supervisors for eight years.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

During my entire working career as a criminal investigator for the IRS, I worked in a job that was divisive by nature. This position has given me a unique perspective on various issues in the workplace, which I think correspond to the church. Throughout my career, I encountered situations where my line of work was unpopular and sometimes met with resistance. I know firsthand what it is like to stand alone with a viewpoint that differs from the majority. In my experience, I have found that on most occasions, when I take the time to first think thoughtfully and clearly about a matter, and then explain to others the differences in culture, opinion, or context, it goes a long way toward resolving the conflict at hand.

For instance, during my tenure, there were moments when government policies were met with skepticism. However, by patiently articulating the reasoning behind these policies, I was often able to foster a better understanding in others. I have discovered that adopting a compassionate approach can significantly help to diffuse any underlying tension related to disagreements. This combination of clear communication and a considerate demeanor can transform potentially contentious situations into opportunities for growth and unity in a church body as well.

Elder Candidates

Greg Mizel (Shannon)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I trusted Jesus as my personal Savior during the fall of my freshman year while attending Christian Heritage College (CHC). I was 17. My conversion was miraculous, as every believer's is. God allowed me to survive my childhood and teen years. He allowed me to experience the emptiness and despair of attempting to live life without Him. And He was tenacious in His pursuit of me. He wouldn't leave me alone. Early influences included

my mother, who first claimed to be "born again" during my junior year in high school, my college roommate, who modeled a sincere and disciplined faith, and countless others who were a part of that unique community of faith.

1 John 4:10 is one of the first Bible verses I memorized while attending CHC: "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Presently, I am serving at EFCC as a Small Group Leader in the High School ministry (with Pastors Ryan Lunde and Josh Rose). I also regularly volunteer, supporting ministries that target families with children who are disabled (Hope on the Hard Road; Buddy Break) and/or in foster care (Family Strong). I have also served as a winter camp counselor for the last two years, supporting children in grades 3-5, and when needed, I volunteer on Wednesday nights to help support Kids Clubs (previously under Kelli Warren, now Rachel Johnson).

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

I am a prayerful, relational leader, a teacher, a counselor, and a coach. Professionally, I have served in all these roles. I have also served as an administrator (15 years as a school principal and seven years as an executive cabinet-level leader). I am a brand and team builder and a systems thinker. I have frequently challenged the status quo. I am generally pretty good at resolving conflict. In this moment, I am not clear where I am most needed — but I am eager to serve — and I am adaptable. My goal if selected to serve in this role is to be a great teammate and to work to ensure our church meets the unique needs of its members and our community.

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Elder Candidates

Greg Mizel (continued) ...

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

While I have been nominated to be an elder previously, I have not served in this role or as a deacon of a church — at least not formally. I have always been an active church member, however. Raising a large family (seven children — and now nine children) required me to be selective where I served. I tended to serve in leadership roles that allowed me to exercise my spiritual gifts while enjoying my children in the community of faith. In 37 years of marriage, Shannon and I have only attended three churches: Lake Murray Evangelical Free Church (10 years), Green Valley Church (12 years), and EFCC.

Shannon and I have served on the board of directors for Partners in Evangelism (PIE) Mali for over 15 years. This is a para-church ministry that EFCC has traditionally supported.

Professionally, in my most recent executive leadership role, I interacted with a board of education daily — setting monthly meeting agendas, organizing presentations to the board, responding to questions/concerns from board members, implementing school board policies, managing daily operations, overseeing finances, etc.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary “unpopularity” if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I am a long-time, veteran leader. I have worked in small and large systems. I learned a long time ago that leadership is not a popularity contest. I also learned, though, that our work moves at the speed of trust. So navigating conflict skillfully is non-negotiable.

I strive to resolve conflict (points of disagreement) at the lowest level, and without an audience whenever possible. I lean towards working to make it right vs. insisting on being right.

Elder Candidates

Austin Nielsen (Anna)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

The Lord began working in my heart as a young child through the example of my family and local church community. As a teen, I became a member of the Baptist church that my grandfather helped found. Over time, I began to develop a deeper understanding of the Scriptures, but my faith was shallow and self-serving with little fruit. While I was in college, I began attending Emmanuel Faith (2001). It was here that the Spirit began to work deeper on my heart, revealing the truth of His goodness and love. Some of the greatest

joys in my life have come when I stepped out in faith to follow God's calling, even when I was scared to death of what would happen. These experiences brought an awareness to my life that allegiance to Jesus is an opportunity to experience joy by partnering with Him in the restoration of this world. I am excited to see the ways in which He will use me in the future and am prayerful that I will be bold enough to follow His leading. (Colossians 1:13-14, John 1, Ephesians 2:8-10)

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: I am currently serving on the EFCC Board of Elders (Rich Bell, Pastor Ryan Paulson). I am on the Community Outreach Advisory Team - Chairperson (Pastor Luke Bajenski). I serve on the Homework Club Homework Tutor and team leader (Anna Nielsen, Luke Bajenski). And I am a Young Adult Mentor (Pastor Josh Rose). Also, I've been involved in numerous activities over the last 5 years centered around outreach and church events, including Love Esco projects, homework and education, Young Adult ministries, Harvest Party, foster care support, and many other activities (Luke Bajenski and Josh Rose).

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Elder:

I believe that I have been gifted primarily in three areas. First, leadership: I enjoy tackling tough challenges and finding creative solutions to complex problems. Second, discernment: When faced with difficult choices, I rely on the Spirit to influence my decision-making. Third, wisdom: I enjoy studying and rely heavily on what God teaches me through the Scriptures and through others.

I care deeply for our church and the community of Escondido. I feel that God is leading me to use the gifts He has given me to take on new and challenging service opportunities.

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Elder Candidates

Austin Nielsen (*continued*) ...

Describe any experience you have had as an elder or (ruling) deacon in a church, as well as experience or current role as a member of a board of directors or trustee of a para-church organization:

I have been serving on the Emmanuel Faith Community Church Board of Elders from 2023 to present. In addition, I have been on the board of directors from 2013 to present, for a non-profit organization that provides orphan care to children in Romania (Heart To Heart International Ministries).

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

Unity is important to me, so when differences of opinion arise, I seek first to develop a deep understanding of the other perspective, identify areas of common ground, and discern the roots of our differences. Often, I find that disagreement stems more from misunderstanding than from firmly opposed convictions. When I am ultimately compelled to take a minority position, I will make my conviction known while continuing to pursue unity with those with whom I disagree.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Tom Anderson (Penny)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I trusted Christ at an early age and rededicated my life to Christ around 1972. (John 3:16)

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: In the fall of 2000, former EFCC Senior Pastor Dennis Keating asked Penny and me to head up the usher/greeters for the three morning services, now two. We continue to be head ushers, leading a faithful team on

average of 17 volunteers per service. Prior to COVID, we led on average, per service, 30 volunteers. Our current ministry boss is Pastor Jeremy Johnson.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Nominating Committee Member: I first started attending EFCC back in the fall of 1972, my first year of college. I have a BA in Business Administration and a Master's in Christian Education from Talbot Seminary. I have a strong ability to organize and keep tasks on track, as needed. Attending here for so long and being very active in co-leading the ushers/greeters and welcome team — I know a lot of people who have come to EFCC over the years, and I have had the privilege of asking all ages to fill a position for not just the regular services, but also Christmas concerts, extra services on Christmas Eve, Easter, etc.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I try to listen to the opinion of others and respond with what I believe to be correct, as I see it, along with written guidelines.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Jeff Felix (Debbie)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

Coach Robert Embrey invited his football players to attend Hume Lake in 1969. Following a successful sophomore season as a varsity starter, I was excited to return to Escondido High School for my junior year. After struggling with the words of John MacArthur and Ken Poure all week, I met with Coach Embrey Thursday night, and he held my hand as I accepted Jesus Christ

as my Lord and Savior. My cabin leader was a young intern named Jim Adkins. We stayed up most of the night talking about what comes next. Years later, our families became the best of friends.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Jon Goodman came to me several years ago and asked me to help him start an organization called Play As One (PAO). Larry Michel and I assisted Jon with completing the necessary legal forms, policy, and financial matters to get the fledgling program started. I continue to serve as Board President of PAO and counsel with Jon as needed (at least once a week) to keep this highly successful opportunity for children and families alive and growing.

Another time, former Emmanuel Faith Pastor Greg Lane asked me to formulate a plan to relocate the existing Sunday school rooms to other rooms at the church while the new Children's Center building was being constructed. The plan was formulated, and with staff's help, the temporary move was successful.

Greg also had a dream of starting a preschool at EFCC. Since I had started several preschool programs in my career, I accepted the task. I am very proud of the Emmanuel Faith Preschool and what it has added to the church programming. Shortly after that task began, former EFCC Senior Pastor Dennis Keating announced his retirement. Gabriel Quiroz asked me to serve on the committee to determine the retirement package for Dennis and the onboarding package for Ryan. The church elders confirmed my participation in the small committee. We met for several months and finally reached a consensus with both individuals.

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Nominating Committee Candidates

Jeff Felix (*continued*) ...

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Nominating Committee Member: Early in my career, I discovered I am a Strengths-Based Leader. Leadership demands that you find ways to give teammates hope and stability by establishing trust and providing compassion. I focus on the team's strengths rather than trying to fix their weaknesses. I attempt to build effective teams and earn followers by meeting their basic needs. In short, I have spent a great deal of time knowing my strengths, investing in others' strengths, and then assembling teams with complementary strengths, all while fulfilling each follower's fundamental needs. This skill has usually made me the "mediator" for the group. I will make sure everyone gets along well with others while still maintaining the pace of fulfillment and the goal for success.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?* This has occurred many times in my life as I have dealt with labor organizations, trained and worked with many school boards and board members, and hired and fired thousands of employees over my 40+ years as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. My answer has always been to love others, even if they vehemently disagree with my opinion, and to use the Matthew 18 principle to keep the lines of communication strong and free of rumors and gossip. Be true to your faith and convictions, and never allow the circumstances to dictate your actions.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Emmet Lee (Sandra)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I was agnostic for most of my young life. I started attending church with my wife and sons regularly in my thirties/forties and continued to hear God pulling at my heart. I had many encounters with my patients that led to discussions about faith and the healing process for my patients. One day in 2007, the Holy Spirit had me

take communion and accept Jesus as my Savior. In 2012, Pastor Assad Saif led me to proceed with my baptism. Romans 1:16-17.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Welcome Team (Penny and Tom Anderson). Play As One, head basketball clinician (Jon Goodman). Bible study leader (Lynette Fuson). Panel speaker. In the past, I have been on three short-term mission trips to Broken Arrow Bible Ranch.

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Nominating Committee Member: Two gifts I have are leadership and organization. I have taken small leadership roles when participating in Love Esco events. I have organized some of the outdoor baptisms. I played a co-leadership role in our previous Bible study group and now lead a Life Group. I was given the lead clinician role for basketball in the Play As One organization; this role included leading children in Christ-like participation in sports/social activities.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I have had some discussions with former EFCC Senior Pastor Dennis Keating, and I have now been more convinced of drawing that line more than I had previously. I will defend the Christian stance, but I also would like to remind some Christians that some of their actions in the name of Jesus may not show the love that Jesus has preached to us through the Scriptures.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Ron Peet (Judy)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I grew up in a strong Christian home and accepted Christ as a young child. (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9). While I was in college, I really decided to follow Christ more closely and make Him #1 in my life. Now married with grown children and grandchildren, I try to put Christ first in all of my decisions.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC:

I am currently involved in and help lead two different small groups (Todd Hoyt). I am a member of the Global Outreach Committee (Luke B). I am on the board for Men on a Mission (Mark Pearsey). I am on the current Nominating Committee. I am a greeter for the 9 am service in the Chapel (Esteban Tapia).

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Nominating Committee Member: I have been involved at EFCC for a long time and feel that I have the gift of discernment. Having attended for a long time, I have a wide group of people that I know at EFCC.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I try to listen to others first to see what their ideas are. If my convictions are different, I pray for wisdom and then graciously give my position. I try to use Scripture to back up my position.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Irene Phillips (Shay)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I came to know my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, during my freshman year of high school. My dad was invited to attend a Reformed Baptist church in Escondido and asked if I would like to go with him. I agreed. As a practicing Catholic, I was accustomed to attending church regularly, yet for some reason, that Sunday we did not attend Mass.

The sermon that morning was about Nicodemus. I had never opened the Bible on my own before that day, nor do I recall ever hearing that story. Perhaps it had been shared before, but my heart was not

ready to truly understand it until that Sunday of my freshman year.

The pastor explained that our sins separate us from the Lord. For the first time, I began to understand what sin really meant. Sin was not limited to extreme wrongdoing; it included everyday thoughts and actions—harboring bitterness, speaking unkindly, or being dishonest with my parents. In God’s eyes, all sin separates us from Him, and I realized that I needed a Savior.

He then shared what Christ accomplished through His death on the cross and His resurrection. I understood that I did not deserve the free gift of salvation, yet by His grace, God offered it freely. That day, I received Jesus as my Savior alongside my dad. It is a deeply special moment that we will always share together. The verse I base my salvation is Ephesians 2:8-9.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: Emmanuel Faith Choir: Melody Holz. Basketball Ref for Play as One: Emmet Lee. Former EFCC employee in Children’s Ministry as an Elementary Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator: Pastor Jeremy Johnson and Izamar Marquez.

(Bio continued on next page ...)

Nominating Committee Candidates

Irene Phillips (*continued*) ...

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Nominating Committee Member: I believe God has given me a deep desire to see Him honored through the men who are placed in the role of elders. It is important to me that those who serve in this capacity truly know God's Word, live according to it, and lead with integrity and conviction.

My hope is that these men would be bold in standing firmly on Scripture and guiding the church in a way that is faithful, biblical, and pleasing to the Lord.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

At the end of the day, my desire is to do what honors the Lord. At times, I have found myself in the minority regarding my convictions. However, I do not view that as a weakness. Rather, I see it as a reminder that my ultimate audience is God Himself.

My purpose is not to gain the approval of others, but to live in a way that is faithful and pleasing to Him alone.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Todd Willer (Pam)



Share when you trusted Christ as your Savior and include the Scripture on which you base your salvation:

I grew up going to a church, but never understood the Gospel. Once I graduated from high school, the Holy Spirit moved in my soul and drew me to him. I finally understood what Jesus did for me/us — taking away our sin and giving us his righteousness if we repent and put our trust in Him (John 3:16). My life has been completely different from that point forward, always with Jesus at the center.

Current ministry activities and/or past responsibilities at EFCC: I'm currently on the Elder board (ministry leader: Rich Bell), teach in various ABFs, lead a Connect group with my wife (ministry leader: Lynette Fuson), and I'm also doing some Premarital Counseling with my wife (ministry leader: Lynette Fuson).

Describe how you're gifted and feel called to fulfill the responsibility of Nominating Committee Member: I have been at EFCC for decades, knowing quite a few people. I believe I have the gifts of encouragement and teaching. I see the importance of a strong elder board with diverse views but committed to a unified direction for EFCC — and I want to support that.

Managing Conflict: *How do you manage conflict and react to temporary "unpopularity" if your convictions drive you to take a stand that is in the minority?*

I generally don't take differences of opinion in a personal way. I am a curious person and will ask questions as to why they have a different take. I am ok if I stand in the minority as long as I know my point of view well enough to explain why I have it.



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