

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - PARLIAMENTARY ORDER

SECTION 1. PROCEDURE

In order to expedite the work of the District Council and to avoid confusion in its deliberations, this District Council shall be governed by the parliamentary procedure of Roberts Rules of Order newly revised, all in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE II - VOTING CONSTITUENCY AND QUORUM

SECTION 1. THE VOTING CONSTITUENCY

The eligible voting constituency shall consist of all accredited members, present and registered. This shall include Ordained ministers, Licensed ministers, Certified ministers and church delegates.

SECTION 2. QUORUM

All ministers and delegates who shall respond to the announcement of the time and place of a District Council meeting as decided by the District Presbytery, shall constitute of quorum. (Note: Minimum of 20% must respond.)

SECTION 3. THE COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

The courtesy of the floor may be extended to visitors by invitation of the chair.

ARTICLE III - ORDER OF BUSINESS

SECTION 1.

The regular order of business for the District Council shall be as follows:

- A.** Announcement and confirmation of appointment of committees.
- B.** Reports of District Officials and Departmental Heads shall be printed and passed out at the beginning of the District Council. These shall not be read, but action shall be taken during the Council in session as to their acceptance.
 - District Superintendent
 - District Secretary -Treasurer
 - Departmental Reports
- C.** Report of Roster Committee
- D.** Unfinished business
- E.** All available pending resolutions shall be distributed in printed form to the Council at the opening of the first business session.
- F.** All booths shall be closed for business during the ministry of the Word in District Council sessions.

BYLAWS

- G.** Election of Officers
- H.** New Business and Committee Reports
- I.** Report of Ordination Committee and Ordination Service
- J.** Adjournment

SECTION 2.

- A.** All business sessions of the Council shall begin with prayer.
- B.** A time shall be set aside in each District Council for prayer for the sick
- C.** The Council business sessions schedule may be altered by a majority vote of the Council in session as need dictates.

ARTICLE IV- ELECTION OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. TIME OF ELECTIONS

A. District Officers

1. The District Superintendent and one Executive Presbyter shall be elected at the annual District Council on uneven years.
2. The Secretary-Treasurer, the Assistant Superintendent, and one Executive Presbyter shall be elected at the annual District Council on the even years.

SECTION 2. QUALIFICATIONS

A. District Officers

1. The Executive Officers and Executive Presbyters of the District Council shall be men who have been ordained, of mature experience and ability, whose lives and ministry are above reproach.
2. The Executive Officers and the Executive Presbyters of the District Council shall be required to have been members of this District for at least one full year prior to District Council. They shall be deemed fully cooperative in all matters.
3. The Executive Presbyters, other than the Superintendent and the Secretary-Treasurer, shall be ordained pastors in the District at the time of their election and hold no other district or sectional office while serving.

B. General Presbyters

1. The General Presbyters shall be representative men of mature experience and ability, whose lives and ministry are above reproach.
2. They shall be required to have been members of this District Council for at least one full year prior to the District Council.

BYLAWS

C. Section Presbyters, Assistant Presbyters, and Secretaries

1. The Sectional Officers shall be men who are ordained, and of mature experience and ability, whose lives and ministry are above reproach.
2. They shall be required to have been members of this District Council for at least one full year prior to election. They shall serve as pastors in the section.

D. All officers shall subscribe to the financial policy of the District

SECTION 3. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

The following procedure shall apply to all elections including Executive Officers, Executive Presbyters, Non-Resident Executive Presbyters, General Presbyters and all Sectional Officers. If no nominee receives a two-thirds majority of all votes cast on the first ballot, all names shall remain on the board with the number of votes received by each nominee. If an election is not reached after the second ballot is cast, all names except the three receiving the highest number of votes shall be dropped. If an election is not reached in the next ballot, the two receiving the highest number of votes will be balloted upon until one receives the necessary two-thirds majority of all ballots cast.

A. Election of District Officers

1. The Executive officers, namely, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and the Secretary-Treasurer, as well as the Executive Presbyters, shall be nominated by secret ballot, it being understood that the first ballot cast shall be considered an electoral ballot. The Executive Presbyters, other than the Executive Officers, shall serve no more than one term in sequence.
2. The Executive Presbyters. One shall be elected from each of the two areas of the state. These areas shall be defined as North being that area of the state which includes Sections 1 through Section 7, and the South being that area which includes Sections 8 through Section 12.
3. Names of all nominees and the number of votes received by each nominee shall be placed visibly before the Council. A two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall constitute an election.
4. Names of all nominees and the number of votes received by each nominee on each ballot shall be recorded in the

BYLAWS

minutes and reported to the District Council in session.

5. It is recommended that no office shall be filled by acclamation at the District Council.
6. All District officers shall be elected for a four-year term beginning 30 days after election.

B. Election of Non-Resident Presbyters

1. By virtue of his office the Superintendent of the Mississippi District shall be a nominee for Non-Resident Executive Presbyter to the General Council.
2. An additional nominee for the Office of Non-Resident Executive Presbyter shall be elected at the District Council preceding the Biennial General Council from the ordained Ministers of the District who are in good standing.
3. A two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall constitute an election.
4. The nominees' names shall be forwarded to the General Secretary's office as required by the General Council.

C. Election of General Presbyters

1. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as General Presbyters. The Assistant Superintendent shall be an ordained pastor of a church in our District.
2. A two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall constitute an election.

D. Election of Sectional Officers.

1. The Sectional Officers are to be elected by the Sectional Councils. Each officer is to be voted on separately, beginning with the presbyter.
2. The voting constituency shall consist of the qualified ministers and one duly appointed delegate from each church of the section.
3. A Two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall be necessary to constitute an election.
4. In the event of a vacancy, the District Superintendent shall make the necessary appointments in harmony with the ministers of the section and the respective department.
5. The term of office for all Sectional Officers shall be four years beginning 30 days after election.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. DUTIES OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- A. He shall be the President of the Corporation in all its legal matters, and shall be a member of all committees.
- B. The District Superintendent shall be a full-time officer.
- C. He shall preside at the meetings of the District Presbytery and of the Executive Presbytery.
- D. He shall preside at the meetings of the District Council.
- E. He shall have personal supervision of all the work of the District with the cooperation of the District Presbytery.
- F. He shall supervise the work in the District Office.
- G. He shall administer discipline in all cases, when requested to do so by the District Presbytery.
- H. He shall sign all District credentials requiring his signature.
- I. He shall perform any other function customary for the presiding officer, or such as may be directed by the District Council or Presbytery.

SECTION 2. DUTIES OF ASSISTANT DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- A. He shall be the Vice-President of the Corporation.
- B. He shall be a member of the Executive Presbytery.
- C. He shall assist the Superintendent.
- D. If for any reason the office of Superintendent is vacated, the Assistant Superintendent shall immediately assume the office. However, if he declines, the Presbytery Board shall call for a special District Council to fill the vacancy as provided for in Article X, Meetings, Section 2 of the Constitution.
- E. The administration and business of District World Missions shall be under the directorship of the Assistant District Superintendent who shall serve as the District World Missions Director.
- F. The District World Missions Director shall be responsible for assisting missionaries and pastors in planning missions services and shall promote and encourage the support of World Missions.

SECTION 3. DUTIES OF SECRETARY-TREASURER

- A. He shall be the Secretary-Treasurer of the Corporation.
- B. He shall be a member of the Executive Presbytery.
- C. He shall be a full-time officer.
- D. He shall keep true records of the proceedings of the District

BYLAWS

Council and meetings of the District Presbytery and shall publish same as approved and directed by the District Presbytery.

- E. He shall be custodian of the corporation seal of the District Council.
- F. He shall be authorized to sign all official and legal documents and to perform such other functions as are customary or as may be directed by the District Presbytery.
- G. He shall keep an accurate, itemized record of all receipts and disbursements, issuing a quarterly statement to all District ministers and churches, conducting the work of his office according to accepted business methods.
- H. He shall publish a District paper, *The Assemblies of God Advocate*. The intervals of issues published annually shall be determined by the Presbytery Board.
- I. He shall be the editor of the District paper in consultation with the District Superintendent.
- J. He shall sign all District credentials issued or those requiring his signature.
- K. He shall have the financial records audited annually by a public accountant, and shall publish the audit in the "Annual Report" book.
- L. He shall be bonded for an amount to be determined by the District Presbytery.
- M. He shall maintain a record of all Ordained ministers, Licensed ministers, and Certified Ministers in the District.
- N. He shall edit the Year Book and place it on the secure website as a downloadable electronic file, no later than sixty days after the District Council. He shall obtain the Executive Presbytery's approval of the District Council minutes before being posted.

SECTION 4. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. The Executive Officers shall be trustees of the District Corporation. They shall be empowered to transact all legal business as authorized by the District Presbytery.
- B. The Executive Presbytery shall have the oversight of each department of the District during the interim of the District Council sessions, acting for the fellowship in all matters affecting the interest of the District Council as may be delegated to them by the District Presbytery.
- C. The Executive Presbytery shall provide for its own meetings,

BYLAWS

and it shall take charge of the Executive phase of the District work, under the supervision of the Superintendent in all matters of moment, or that might affect the welfare of the District as a whole.

- D. The Executive Presbytery shall act on behalf of the District Presbytery, when it is not in session, regarding ministerial discipline as outlined in the General Council Bylaws, Article X, Discipline.
- E. The Executive Presbytery shall supervise the finances of all departments of the District.

SECTION 5. DUTIES OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTERY

- A. They shall represent the Mississippi District Council to the General Council.
- B. They shall represent the General Council and its interests to the fellowship of the District Council.
- C. They shall be members of the District Presbytery.

SECTION 6. DUTIES OF THE HONORARY GENERAL PRESBYTER

He may, when possible, represent the Mississippi District Council at the General Presbytery meetings.

SECTION 7. DUTIES OF DISTRICT PRESBYTERY

- A. The District Presbytery shall act as representatives of this fellowship and shall have the general oversight of the activities of the same during the interim between council sessions. It shall be authorized to act for the fellowship in all matters that affect its interest while the Council is not in session, and shall make a report to the District Council as requested. It shall provide for its own meetings.
- B. If for any reason, the office of Assistant Superintendent or Secretary-Treasurer is vacated, the district Presbytery Board shall call for a special District Council to fill the vacancy as provided for in Article X, Meeting, Section 2, of the Constitution unless a vacancy occurs within sixty days of the District Council. Such vacancy shall be filled by election at the next scheduled District Council.
- C. Should a vacancy occur in the office of an Executive Presbyter, other than the three Executive Offices, more than six months before the District Council, the Presbytery Board shall make an appointment to fill the vacant office until the next scheduled District Council. Should the unexpired term be less than six

BYLAWS

months, the vacancy shall be filled at the next scheduled District Council.

SECTION 8. DUTIES OF SECTIONAL PRESBYTERS

Each Sectional Presbyter shall be responsible for the development of his section of the District along the following lines:

- A. He shall care for the churches in the Section. In the event that some difficulty arises in a church, the Sectional Presbyter should be called by the pastor or the official board of the church. The church calling for such assistance should be expected to receive an offering for the official's traveling expenses. In the event the offering does not cover the official's expenses, the District Treasurer shall pay the deficit from the District Treasury.
- B. He shall promote peace and harmony among the ministers and churches of the section.
- C. He shall encourage the ministers to cooperate with the District program.
- D. He shall promote World and Home Missionary giving.
- E. He shall cooperate with the Home Missions Director in establishing new churches.
- F. He shall keep a record of the activities of the Section and, if called for, read same at the Sectional Council.
- G. He shall attend the District Presbytery Meetings.

SECTION 9. DUTIES OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE

- A. The Sectional Committee, consisting of the Presbyter, Assistant Presbyter, and Secretary shall care for the business of the Section in cooperation with the District Superintendent.
- B. The Sectional Secretary shall attend to correspondence as directed by the Presbyter. He shall take minutes of meetings when necessary.

ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees shall be appointed by the District Superintendent in cooperation with the District Presbytery, and the term of office shall continue from the date of appointment to the adjournment of the next regular meeting of the annual District Council.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees may be created by the District Council in session or by the District Presbytery between sessions as may be required.

SECTION 3. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEES

- A. There shall be a District Credentials Committee of a minimum of five ordained ministers including the Executive Presbytery, who shall administer the written and oral examinations for ministerial candidates at a location to be determined by the Executive Presbytery. This committee shall recommend to the District Presbytery Board the names of credential applicants which have been approved. These applications shall, upon recommendation by the District Presbytery Board, be submitted to the General Council Credential Committee for its approval and issuance of certificates.
- B. The dates, location, and time for the examination and interviews shall be set by the Executive Presbytery and shall be coordinated by the District Secretary-Treasurer.
- C. A prescribed guideline, approved by the District Presbyter Board, shall be followed by the Credentials Committee.
- D. The Credentials Committee shall not preside over ministers trials, nor be empowered to dismiss a credentialed minister, nor determine disciplinary action to be taken with a credentialed minister.
- E. The Credentials Committee shall be subject to the District Presbytery Board in all matters of its operation.

SECTION 4. EDUCATION COMMITTEE

There shall be an Education Committee consisting of the Executive Officers for the purpose of prescribing courses for those seeking ministerial credentials and their advancement thereof. These courses shall be the Institute Level Courses offered by the Global University of the Assemblies of God, or the equivalent thereof.

The Education Committee shall make the determination of course equivalency.

SECTION 5. WORLD MISSIONS COMMITTEE

There shall be a World Missions Committee, consisting of the World Missions Director, and at least three other members, who shall be nominated by the World Missions Director and approved by the District Presbytery. The World Missions Committee shall work under the supervision of the Director, and meet at his discretion to strengthen and promote the work of World Missions.

ARTICLE VII - FINANCES

SECTION 1. MINISTERS TITHE AND OBLIGATION TO THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- A. The District Headquarters operation shall be supported by the tithes and offerings of the ministers of the District.
- B. Division of a tithe from ministers tithes received in the District Office for departmental support:
A tithe of all minister tithes shall be distributed to the ministries approved by the District Executive Committee.
- C. All ministers, Ordained, Licensed, and Certified Ministers, are expected to pay 85% of their ministerial tithe to the District.
- D. All ministers, Ordained, Licensed, and Certified Ministers, are expected to pay 50% of their secular tithe to the District.
- E. All credentialed ministers are expected to support the District with their tithes on a monthly basis unless without employ.

SECTION 2. MINISTERS OBLIGATION TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL

- A. All Ordained ministers are required to contribute \$25 per month to the General Council.
- B. All Licensed ministers are required to contribute \$20 per month to the General Council.
- C. All ministers holding a Certified Minister Credential are required to contribute \$10 per month to the General Council. (General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 10, f.)

SECTION 3. DISTRICT OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTORS SALARIES, BENEFITS AND EXPENSES

- A. The aggregate sum of salaries, business related travel expenses and employer provided benefits of all full-time District Officers and the Department Directors shall be determined by the District Presbytery.
- B. The Executive Presbytery shall be authorized to specify designations of employer provided benefits for the full-time District Officers and the Department Directors.
- C. It is requested that the churches receive an offering for the traveling expenses of the District Officer and Department Director at the time of his/her visit to the church.

SECTION 4. DISBURSEMENTS

The Secretary-Treasurer shall disburse all funds under the supervision of the Executive Presbytery.

BYLAWS

SECTION 5. CHURCH SUPPORT FOR DISTRICT COUNCIL IN SESSION

All churches located in and affiliated with the Mississippi District Council of the Assemblies of God are requested to support the convening of the District Council in session. The support shall be sent to the District Treasurer by cash, check, or electronic transfer no later than April 30 each year. All churches are requested to support the Council in session with no less than one dollar per church member/adherent.

ARTICLE VIII - INSURANCE AND MBA

SECTION 1. MINISTERS BENEFIT ASSOCIATION (MBA)

The Mississippi District Council endorses MBA and recommends it as a retirement plan for Certified, Licensed, and Ordained ministers. It is recommended that ministers invest 6% of their income each month in MBA and that churches invest an equal amount each month for their pastor's retirement, should the Lord tarry His coming. The District Superintendent or other officials shall introduce the plan to the churches when called upon.

SECTION 2. GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE

It is recommended that churches pay the insurance premium for their pastors.

SECTION 3. GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

The Mississippi District Council endorses the Group Life Insurance Plan for ministers as outlined by the General Council and urges every qualified Certified Minister, Licensed, and Ordained minister to participate. It is recommended that churches pay the insurance premium for their pastors.

ARTICLE IX – INSTITUTIONS

The Mississippi District Council recognizes that geographically and otherwise we are in the Gulf area (as assigned by the General Council). We, therefore, accept our share of the responsibility for developing and promoting Christian education in our area. The District Presbytery is instructed to contribute at their discretion, a portion of our minister's tithe income to the development of our Assemblies of God educational institutions.

ARTICLE X - RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. PROCEDURE FOR PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS

A Resolutions Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Presbytery 180 days prior to the District Council. The names of the

BYLAWS

Chairman and members to be published in the *Advocate*. All resolutions for presentation to the District Council, except emergency measures, shall be presented to the District Secretary's office no later than 90 days prior to the District Council session. The Resolutions Committee shall prepare the resolutions in printed form and mail them to District Council ministers and churches 30 days prior to the District Council, with the understanding that this does not apply to business growing out of the Executive Presbytery and District Presbytery meetings just prior to the District Council; and that resolutions of an emergency nature shall be decided by a two-thirds vote of the Council.

SECTION 2. SPONSORSHIP POLICY

All resolutions presented to the Resolutions Committee shall be signed by the author and sponsor. When a resolution is presented for the consideration of the District Council in Session, the author, or a spokesman, therefore, shall be expected to be the first speaker on behalf of the resolution.

SECTION 3. APPROPRIATENESS OF RESOLUTIONS

The Resolutions Committee shall, by a two-thirds vote, determine the appropriateness of a proposed resolution, including the following criteria in its decision:

- A. Possible conflict with the corporate charter, Constitution, or Bylaws.
- B. Those proposals absurd in substance.

SECTION 4. RIGHT OF SPONSOR

If the Resolutions Committee determines that a resolution is inappropriate, it shall so advise the author and shall apprise him of his right to present the proposed resolution to the house for determination as to appropriateness.

SECTION 5. FORMAT OF PRESENTATION

The Resolutions Committee shall:

- A. Put resolutions in proper form.
- B. Eliminate duplication where similar resolutions relating to a specific subject will be offered in a logical sequence.

ARTICLE XI - RADIO AND TELEVISION MINISTRY

The Mississippi District Council recognizes the radio and television ministries of the General Council of the Assemblies of God. We, therefore, urge all ministers, laymen, and churches to support these ministries with finances and otherwise. Our local churches are encouraged to sponsor release through local stations whenever

BYLAWS

possible.

ARTICLE XII - REVOLVING LOAN FUND

SECTION 1. ORGANIZATION

The Revolving Loan Fund shall be developed by the Executive Presbytery under the guidance of the District Presbytery.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of establishing the Revolving Loan Fund shall be to assist our churches with small loans. The fund shall also earn a fair rate of interest in order that the fund may be a continued blessing to the Lord's work. Interest rate shall be set by the District Presbytery.

SECTION 3. PROCEDURE OF GRANTING LOANS

- A. The Church shall obtain a loan application and procedural information from the District Office.
- B. The application shall be presented to the Superintendent, who shall explain the plan.
- C. The application shall be reviewed by the Executive Presbytery, and if the information at hand is inadequate, an investigation is to be made by one of the Executive Officers. The Sectional Presbyter shall be asked to give his recommendation concerning the loan. The Executive Presbytery shall then consider the recommendation along with all other available information and render a decision. If the loan is approved, the Secretary-Treasurer shall disburse the loan to the church.

ARTICLE XIII - CAMPGROUNDS

SECTION 1. CAMPGROUND COMMITTEE

- A. There shall be a Campground Committee comprised of no less than five persons who shall serve under the authority of the District Superintendent, the Executive Presbytery and the District Presbytery. The District Superintendent shall serve as chairman.
- B. The Youth Department Director, by virtue of his office, shall be a member of this committee.
- C. Membership of this Committee shall be chosen because of their demonstrated interest in and devotion to the ministry of camping.
- D. The Campground Committee shall have the oversight of the campgrounds and shall be responsible for the proper administration and maintenance of the campgrounds.

BYLAWS

- E. When a vacancy occurs, a nomination shall be brought from the campground Committee and thence to the District Presbytery for ratification.
- F. The District Presbytery shall have the right to remove anyone from this Committee who does not serve the best interests of the camping ministry.

SECTION 2. CAMPGROUND MANAGEMENT

- A. There shall be a resident Camp Administrator who shall work under the supervision of the Campground Committee.
- B. The Camp Administrator shall have the direct responsibility for the administration, maintenance, and promotion of the campgrounds, and shall be directly accountable to the District Superintendent.
- C. There shall be a written administrative and financial policy which shall be reviewed and revised by the District Presbytery when needed.

SECTION 3. PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTING CAMP ADMINISTRATOR

The Camp Administrator shall be appointed by the District Executive Presbytery Board from nominees submitted by the Camp Committee. The appointment shall be presented to the District Presbytery Board for ratification.

ARTICLE XIV - DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

SECTION 1. DISTRICT OFFICE

The District Superintendent shall be the District Office Manager and the Secretary-Treasurer shall be the Assistant Office Manager. The District Superintendent shall have the general oversight of all full and part-time positions, and shall be responsible for hiring and discharging of all non-elected employees, in cooperation with the other officers in the office.

SECTION 2. MAINTENANCE OF DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS PROPERTY

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of the District Office building and the grounds, and shall be authorized to secure services to maintain clean facilities and attractive grounds. The Secretary-Treasurer shall direct the service, under the guidance of the Superintendent. Routine minor repairs on the office building, and equipment shall be handled by the Secretary-Treasurer, and the need for any major repairs shall be presented to Superintendent and approved by the District

BYLAWS

Presbytery.

(Note: Each District Officer shall be responsible for the maintenance of the parsonage furnished him by the District. He shall also be responsible for maintaining attractive grounds around his parsonage. Bills for work done on the parsonages shall be presented to the Secretary-Treasurer for payment.)

ARTICLE - XV - PUBLICATIONS

SECTION 1. COMMUNICATION OF DISTRICT NEWS AND EVENTS

The District Office shall publish the news and advertise the events of the District in a manner and by any means that best serves the churches and ministers of the District.

SECTION 2. DISTRICT YEAR BOOK

The District Year Book shall include the District Constitution and Bylaws, policies of departments, essential resolution from the General Council Constitution and Bylaws, recommended Constitution and Bylaws for the Local Assembly and current minutes of the District Council edited in compliance with Bylaws Article V, Section 3, Paragraph N, and shall be available at the secure website and be accessible to the churches and constituents of the District.

SECTION 3. FINANCIAL REPORT

There shall be an annual report printed and placed in the hands of all ministers and delegates at the District Council.

SECTION 4. DISTRICT DIRECTORY

- A.** A current District Directory shall be maintained on the District Website and accessible to the churches and constituents of the District.
- B.** Should any church or minister request a printed Directory one shall be furnished for a nominal cost of printing and postage.

ARTICLE - XVI - MINISTRY

SECTION 1. MINISTRY DESCRIBED

Christ's gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11), exhorters, administrators, leaders, and helpers (Romans 12:7, 8). We understand God's call to these ministry gifts is totally within His sovereign discretion without regard to gender, race, disability, or national origin.

Three classifications of ministry are recognized and transferable

BYLAWS

among all Assemblies of God districts: the ordained minister, the licensed minister, and the certified minister.

All ordained, licensed, and certified ministers holding current ministerial credentials are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church, and those holding a local church credential as provided below.

A fourth classification of ministry, a local church credential, may be provided by a local General Council affiliated church under basic guidelines adopted by the General Presbytery and such additional guidelines adopted by the district council. The local church credential shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church) and shall be limited to 2 years, unless the credential is solely required for active and ongoing local ministry in a prison, hospital, or institution (renewable by the local church for an additional 2 years). A person holding a local church credential can perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church if authorized in writing by the senior pastor of the local church issuing the credential.

SECTION 2. BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

The following qualifications pertain to all applicants for ministerial recognition:

- A. Salvation.** Testimony to having experienced the new birth (John 3:5).
- B. Baptism in the Holy Spirit.** Testimony to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable him to fulfill the threefold mission of the church (Constitution Article V, paragraph 10).
- C. Evidence of call.** Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidenced by a personal conviction, confirmed by the work of the Spirit and the testimony of fellow ministers.
- D. Christian character.** A blameless Christian life and a good report of those who are without (Titus 1 :7;1 Timothy 3:7)
- E. Doctrine position.** A thorough understanding of and agreement with our doctrinal position as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.
- F. Assemblies of God Polity.** A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices, and purposes of the Fellowship through a study of the General Council and District Council Constitution and Bylaws.

G. Voluntary cooperation and commitment to the Fellowship.

An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older mature Christians and those in positions of authority.

By voluntary it is meant that, upon learning the principles, doctrines, and practices of the Assemblies of God, and by seeing the benefits to be derived from being associated with such an organization, persons of their own free choice decide to become members, thus subscribing to all that for which the organization stands.

For the minister, by cooperation, it is meant, to the best of one's ability, complying with all decisions setting forth and defining duties and responsibilities incumbent upon members of the organization. It includes active participation and respect for the will of the majority expressed through constitutional processes.

Hence, for the minister, voluntary cooperation means that when the minister decides to become a cooperating member of the Assemblies of God, this cooperation and participation thereby becomes obligatory and not optional.

H. Commitment to the Fellowship. An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older mature Christians and those in positions of authority.

I. Basic educational requirements. Any level of formal academic achievement (diploma or degree) shall not be a requirement for credentials; however, credential applicants shall meet the following criteria:

1. All applicants are required to be interviewed by the District Credentials Committee and, in preparation for the interview, pass a standard exam approved by the General Presbytery whereby they demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Assemblies of God doctrines, and ministerial practices.
2. Exceptions to the above, regarding all applicants meeting the Credential Committee, may be made for those applicants who are in school or college and because of distance, schooling obligation or other valid reasons are unable to attend the scheduled Credential Committee meeting. They may meet the Executive Presbytery for the exam and interview provided they have met all other

BYLAWS

credentialing requirements. This provision shall also apply to the spouses of Foreign Missionaries.

3. Successfully complete equivalent training to that indicated in paragraph (3) below, preferably, in an endorsed Assemblies of God post secondary school; or in a seminary, college, Bible college or school approved by the District Credentials Committee consistent with criteria established by the General Council Credentials Committee; or
4. Successfully complete courses prescribed by the general Presbytery offered in correspondence through the Global University of the Assemblies of God; or pass the final examination in the prescribed courses, or
5. Be recommended by a District Credentials Committee as qualifying for credentials through self-study and ministerial experience. Such candidates shall have a proven and fruitful ministry of substantial duration. Requests from a district for such a candidate shall be presented to the General Council Credentials Committee and may be granted on a case by case basis.

J. Mandatory screening. All applicants for ministerial credentials shall be screened through a designated screening agency established by the General Council Executive Presbytery. Said screening shall be done by the district council prior to the submission of the application to the office of the general secretary.

K. Marriage status. We disapprove of any married persons holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God or District Councils granting credentials to such, if either minister or spouse has a former spouse living unless the divorce occurred prior to conversion, except as hereinafter provided.

L. Ecclesiastical annulments and marriage dissolutions- The General Council Executive Presbytery shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant qualifies for an ecclesiastical annulment. In such cases there must be clear and satisfactory evidence of deception, fraud, or other conditions which have a profound impact preventing the creation of a valid marriage union, unknown at the time of marriage by the applicant. The General Council Executive Presbytery shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant qualifies regarding a former marriage when the termination of that marriage is consistent

BYLAWS

with the scriptural position of the Fellowship relating to the granting or holding of ministerial credentials; or if a former marriage ended prior to conversion. In those cases involving pre-conversion divorce they shall be decided on an individual basis just as those that deal with ecclesiastical annulments. Appeals from the decisions of the General Council Executive Presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.

M. Eligibility of women. The Scriptures plainly teach that divinely called and qualified women may also serve the church in the ministry of the Word (Joel 2:29; Acts 21:9; I Corinthians 11:5). Women who meet the qualifications for ministerial credentials are eligible for whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and have the right to administer the ordinances of the church and are eligible to serve in all levels of church ministry, and/or district and General Council leadership.

N. Ministers from other organizations. If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the credentials committees of both the General Council and the district councils are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate on his or her own merits as to the level of credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

1. Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
2. Complete an application for ministerial recognition.
3. Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or the sectional presbyter for the applicant's area.
4. Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister was formerly affiliated. If such is not available, letter of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry, two of whom should be with the applicant's former credentialing body.
5. Take the credential examination.
6. Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credentialing bodies.
7. Meet with the district credentials committee for an oral interview.
8. Be recommended by the district credentials committee for

BYLAWS

- action by the General Council Credentials Committee.
9. All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers with the laying on of hands by the district presbytery. All other applicants so approved shall receive the appropriate level of credential recognition.
 10. Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition shall relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee upon recommendation of a district council credentials committee for a minister serving as a missionary in this country who holds a credential with a member body of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship.

SECTION 3. SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Residency requirements of applicants.** Applicants for all credentials must be residents of or hold credentials in the district where they make application and appear before its credentials committee.
- B. Local church credential.** A local church credential shall be administered by the local church pursuant to basic guidelines adopted by the General Presbytery and such additional guidelines adopted by the district council. It shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church).
- C. Certified minister**
 1. *General requirements.* They shall show promise of usefulness in the gospel work. They shall devote full or part time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the district credentials committees, may remain under the supervision of a pastor or a ministry coach or mentor. They shall show evidence of a divine call and be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry and proclamation of the gospel, except in case of ill health or advanced age.
 2. *Pastoral requirements.* In the event a certified minister is serving in a position as the pastor, he or she shall be expected to advance to the ministry license level within 2 years of acceptance of the pastorate. This shall not apply to any minister who has reached the age of 65 or older, or whose certificate has been issued on a provisional basis. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the District Credentials Committee.

BYLAWS

3. *Exception for provisional issuance.* A Certificate of Ministry may be issued on a provisional basis to a person who has not met all the credentialing requirements but who is deemed by the District Credential Committee to be essential to the continuity of a church or a ministry. The reason for such a provisional issuance must be ministry driven, and the justification for its use is terminated when the minister ceases to be involved in the ministry for which it was initially granted unless the minister accepts another qualifying assignment. Other limitations are:
 - a. The ministry certificate on a provisional basis will be issued for one (1) year and shall not be renewed more than two times.
 - b. A person who has been granted the Certificate of Ministry on a provisional basis must meet the qualifications for a ministry certificate within a 3-year period.

D. Licensed minister. Qualifications for license shall include clear evidence of a divine call, character and preparation suitable for that calling, practical ministry experience, and an evident purpose to devote one's life in service to the proclamation of the gospel.

- E. Ordained minister.** Qualifications for ordination are outlined in the New Testament (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9). In addition:
1. Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
 2. They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
 3. No person may be ordained to the ministry until he or she has shown evidence of a divine call and has held a ministry license and has been actively engaged in ministry and proclamation of the gospel for at least 2 full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.
 4. *Residency requirements of applicants.* Applicants must be residents of or hold credentials in the district where they make application and appear before its credentials committee. District councils are required to refrain from approving any applicant for ordination who may have been licensed in another district, until such licensed minister shall have been a member of the district in which he or she is

BYLAWS

seeking ordination at least 1 year. Applicants who have not been a member of the district where they apply for ordination for 2 full consecutive years must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officers of the district in which they were previously licensed, as well as the district of their residence.

5. *Exceptions to requirements.* The General Council Credentials Committee, upon request by a district credentials committee and where exceptional circumstances exist, may waive the requirements for an applicant holding a ministry license for 2 full consecutive years or being a member of the district in which he or she is seeking ordination for at least 1 year.
6. In order to maintain active status, ordained ministers shall be engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel except for cases of disability, retirement, or other valid circumstances as determined by the general secretary.

SECTION 4. ACTION OF CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

The General Council Credentials Committee delegates to the district councils the authority to examine, approve, and recommend candidates who qualify as Certified ministers, Licensed ministers, and Ordained ministers. Final approval and issuance of the ministerial credential shall be made by the General Council Credentials Committee. All ordination services, with the laying on of hands, shall take place under the auspices of the district councils.

SECTION 5. CERTIFICATES

The General Council Credentials Committee is authorized to issue Ordination Certificates, Licenses to Preach and Certificates of Ministry, together with the accompanying annual fellowship card, to all properly qualified and approved applicants.

SECTION 6. OFFICIAL LIST

- A. **Active ministers.** The official list of all Mississippi District credential holders shall be compiled by the Mississippi District and published for the convenience of the Fellowship, with the understanding it is not to be used for purposes of solicitation. This official list shall be revised annually and shall contain the names of those who are engaged in active ministry and whose credentials have been renewed by the issuance of the fellowship card for the current year.

BYLAWS

B. Inactive or disabled ministers. All credentialed ministers who shall withdraw from active ministry or shall cease to engage in pastoral, evangelistic, or other full-time ministry shall be expected to notify the District office, which shall inform the general secretary who shall then be authorized to transfer the names of such persons to the inactive list, unless the district of which said person is a member specifically requests otherwise by letter.

1. Definition. All ministers who have not been actively engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel over a period of 1 year shall have their names placed upon the inactive list for the following year.
2. Removal of inactive ministers from ministerial list. When a minister is inactive for 2 or more consecutive years, his or her name shall be eliminated from the ministerial list unless the Credentials Committee of the district of which said person is a member specifically requests otherwise by letter.
3. Exceptions. This shall not apply to those whose inactivity has been caused by the infirmity, or those engaged in other aspect of full-time ministry such as Headquarters or district workers, educators, ministers of music, ministers of youth, and ministers of Christian education; or those who have reached the age of 60 years; or those ministers who have had 25 years of approved service as credentialed ministers, or those whose spouse is disabled or has retired, giving them little opportunity for public ministry.
4. Ministers with disabilities. Ministers with permanent disability or illness which prevents them from engaging in active ministry, shall be indicated as disabled.

C. Restoration to active status. Should the minister at any time return to active ministry, his or her name may be restored to the active list upon application bearing endorsement by the district officary.

SECTION 7. SENIOR MINISTERS

In respect and honor to those ministers who have given years of service to the Fellowship, senior status shall automatically be given to all credential holders who have reached the age of 65, whether or not they continue in full-time ministry.

A. Terminology

1. The term senior-active shall be used for credential holders

BYLAWS

who continue to serve more than half-time in the ministry.

2. The term senior-semiretired shall be used for credential holders who continue to be active, but for half-time or less.
3. The term senior-retired shall be used for those who have ceased to engage in any regular appointed ministry.

B. Application for retired category. Senior-semiretired or senior-retired status shall be granted only to those ministers who filed a request for such status with their district office. The district secretary shall forward annually to the general secretary a list of those ministers who have made these requests.

C. Guidelines

1. Reports. Senior-active and senior-semiretired ministers shall continue to file their annual reports and pay the General Council portion of their tithes in the regular manner. Senior retired ministers shall file an abbreviated report to maintain a correct address file for mail and insurance purposes.
2. Sources of income. These designations and guidelines shall apply regardless of whether the senior minister's income is from his ministry, from retirement plans or Social Security payments, or from investments or other employment.
3. Designation in publications. No distinguishing mark shall accompany the listing of senior active in the official publications of the Assemblies of God, but may be so indicated in the working lists used for insurance and retirement purposes. Senior-semiretired and senior-retired ministers shall have this status indicated in the Official List of Assemblies of God Ministers.
4. Support of General Council Headquarters. Senior-active and senior-semi retired ministers shall continue to designate the required amount of support to the General Council Headquarters as set forth in General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 10, paragraph f.
5. Senior-retired ministers shall be free to distribute as they desire the portion of their tithes previously paid to the General Council.

D. Limitations of this Section 7

1. For General Council usage only. The definitions and decisions included in Section 7 apply only to General Council usage and are not binding upon the various districts,

BYLAWS

nor to the official legislation under which their members serve.

2. Other financial responsibility not circumvented. No part of Section 7 is intended to modify the responsibility of ministers to their districts, nor to terminate the Biblical responsibility for tithing.

SECTION 8. MINISTERIAL RELATIONS

A. Amenability. All certified, licensed, and ordained ministers shall be amendable to both the district council and The General Council of the Assemblies of God in matters of doctrine and discipline. (See GC Bylaws Article X.) All local church credential holders shall be amenable to their local church under guidelines established by the General Presbytery and district council in matters of doctrine and discipline. (See GC Bylaws Article VII Sect. 1).

B. Affiliation with district of residence. All credential holders shall be expected to affiliate with the District Council within the boundaries of which they reside and work in cooperation with the same.

1. Exception. Minister who resides in one district but pastors a church located in another district, he shall be required to be a member of the district in which the church is located.
2. Nationally appointed U.S. Missionaries. Nationally appointed U.S. missionaries shall become members of the district in which they serve and shall be listed on the ministerial roster of that district by the office of the general secretary. They may also retain honorary membership in their home district, be listed as a missionary under national appointment in the home district's yearbook, and be extended voice and vote in their home district while on official furlough.
3. Church-planting ministries. Ministers who serve in a trans-district ministry related to church-planting efforts may do so provided:
 - a. They have a scope of ministry which reaches beyond district boundaries; and
 - b. Both districts agree to the assignment; and
 - c. If the assignment involves a language group, they follow the guidelines provided by the Executive Presbytery of the General Council and adhere to these bylaw

BYLAWS

governing inter-district relations. (See General Council Bylaws Article V, Section 6.)

- d. Church planters holding credentials may obtain affiliation with the district they intend to serve and retain honorary membership in their home district, be listed in the district's yearbook, and be extended voice and vote in their home district for such time as they serve in another district. The financial responsibilities shall be the same as those of a nationally appointed home missionary. (See General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 8, paragraph c, subparagraph (3).
- C. Offices in the local church.** We recommend that all ministers (Ordained, Licensed, Certified Ministers) of the Mississippi District Council refrain from holding offices in the local church as deacons, trustees, or other lay official positions.
- D. Engagement of ministers.** We recommend that all our pastors and affiliated assemblies refrain from engaging any minister who is not endorsed by the Council, until they have communicated with the District Superintendent or District Secretary.
- E. Performing Ceremonies and Church Ordinances.** All ordained, licensed, and certified ministers holding current ministerial credentials are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (Sacerdotal functions) of the church.
- F. Secret orders.** All ministers must refrain from identifying themselves with any secret orders.
- G. Declaration against worldliness.** In order to strengthen the hands of our pastors and evangelists in holding up Bible standards against popular sins, we as a body unitedly declare ourselves against all forms of worldliness, particularly against modern immodesty and extremity in dress and we all agree as pastors, evangelists, Ordained, Licensed, Certified Ministers, Christian education superintendents, and teachers, to speak the same things and voice ourselves against all forms of popular sins.
- H. Ministerial courtesy.** All local ministers of the Assemblies of God church shall be expected to abide by rules of ministerial courtesy as stated in these Bylaws.
- I. Cooperation with other districts.** Ministers shall be expected to cooperate with other district councils in which they may labor

BYLAWS

temporarily. It is recommended as a standard of proper practice that all ministers conform to the financial policy of the district with which they are affiliated with the following exceptions.

1. *Financial Responsibilities for Foreign Missionaries.* Foreign missionaries will be obligated to pay \$25 per month to their home district when resident in the US. and \$10 per month when resident on their fields.
2. *Financial Responsibility of Chaplains.* All chaplains, military and institutional, will be obligated to their home district in the amount of 10 percent of their tithes from income earned from the chaplaincy. All chaplains are also encouraged to make voluntary contributions to the district in which they fulfill their assignments.
3. *Financial Responsibility of nationally appointed or approved home missionaries.* Nationally appointed or approved home missionaries shall contribute 25 percent of their tithe to their member district where they serve and 25 percent of their tithes to their home district if they are listed as honorary members. Missionaries who minister in their home district shall contribute a minimum of 50 percent of their tithe to that district.

SECTION 9. TRANSFER OF CREDENTIALS

A. Certificate of transfer. When a member minister takes up residence in another district, a certificate of transfer shall be issued within 60 days by the district of which he/she is a member, unless there are definite charges pending against the minister. The certificate of transfer shall be accepted by the district into which the minister moves. Exceptions may be made for the following:

1. Ministers moving to serve at the Assemblies of God headquarters.
2. Those who have attained the age of 60 and are no longer engaged in active ministry and those who have attained the age of 65 and are not pastoring a church.
3. Those who are in Armed Forces currently on active duty.
4. Those who are serving on the staffs of schools affiliated with the General Council and district council or nonaffiliated schools acceptable to the General Council and the district council in which the school is located.
5. Those who are appointed home missionaries or foreign

BYLAWS

missionaries who are on furlough or on temporary assignment in the United States and reside in a district other than their home district.

6. Ministers having membership in one district and a mailing address only in another district.
7. Students in schools outside their home districts.
8. Those who are serving in a non-Assemblies of God institution providing:
 - a. They have a regular scope of ministry which reaches beyond district boundaries.
 - b. Both districts agree to the exception.
 - c. The institution is acceptable to both districts.
9. Church planters involved in trans-district ministry.

B. Transfers from Assemblies of God World Fellowships. A minister holding ordination (or equivalent) with a member group of the Assemblies of God World Fellowship may transfer his or her ordination to The General Council of the Assemblies of God if the following criteria are met:

1. A letter of recommendation from the executive committee of the national church or equivalent letter of recommendation.
2. A course on history and polity of U.S. church.
3. A completed ministerial application.

C. Transcript. In order to assist a member who is transferring into another district, a transcript giving helpful information concerning his/her spouse should accompany the certificate of transfer.

SECTION 10. CREDENTIAL RENEWALS AND REINSTATEMENT

A. Terminology

1. Renewed. The term renewed shall apply to all ministers who have met the annual deadline for renewal including those who are delinquent but who renew by January 15.
2. Reinstated. The term reinstated shall apply to the persons whose names have been deleted from the official ministerial list, who upon application, are approved for restoration of credentials.

B. Expiration date. All fellowship certificates are valid only until December 31 of each year and must be renewed annually. The renewing of credentials is the responsibility of the individual minister. Ministers who do not receive an annual renewal form

BYLAWS

by December 1, should notify their district office.

- C. Grace period until January 15.** All who have not renewed their fellowship certificates by mail postmarked on or before December 31 shall be considered delinquent. They shall be required to pay a late fee of \$50 up until January 15, to be divided equally between the District and General Council offices.
- D. Reinstatement of lapsed Minister.** Ministers whose renewal applications are not postmarked by January 15 shall be recorded as lapsed as of December 31. They must make application for reinstatement and pay a nonrefundable fee of \$100, to be divided equally between the District and the General Council. These ministers shall not be subject to the minimal time-lapse required of those whose credentials have been terminated for other causes.
- E. Reinstatement of other than dismissed minister.** When a minister who is a member of our Fellowship is removed from our rolls for any cause, except failure to renew and dismissal, and shall apply for reinstatement, he or she shall not be eligible for reinstatement until at least 6 months have elapsed after his or her name has been stricken from our list of ministers. The application must be made in the District where the minister resides and be accompanied with a nonrefundable fee of \$100 to be divided between the District and the General Council. (See General Council Bylaws Article X, Section 12. paragraph b, for reinstatement of dismissed minister.)The District of residence shall seek a letter of clearance from the District that processed the termination and upon receipt of the clearance, may add its endorsement and forward the application, together with the letter of clearance, to the General Council Credentials Committee for its action.
- F. Support of Headquarters.** The work of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, in its program of developing the spirit of cooperation and fellowship in U.S. and world missions fields, incurs considerable expense, including the financial support of the executive officers and offices.

Credentialed ministers should recognize their obligation to contribute from their tithes or as an offering the amount designated by the General Council for their particular level of credential for the support of General Council operations. All

BYLAWS

who can are strongly urged to give more than the suggested amount, either personally or through the assemblies they pastor.

Compliance with the above requirements shall be a prerequisite for renewal of credentials of all active ministers. If their contributions are in arrears, they shall be given opportunity to meet this deficit with their renewal.

The general treasurer's office shall submit to the respective district offices a semiannual report of ministers' contributions for the support of Headquarters. Each district shall make this information available to its ministers by any of the following methods:

1. Collectively, through district publications.
2. Individually, through personal letters.
3. Through any other media selected by the district.

The district shall carefully analyze the annual report of each minister and, in their knowledge of local situations, determine if he or she has been voluntarily cooperating with the General Council financial program.

SECTION 11. NONDISCIPLINARY CREDENTIAL TERMINATIONS

A. On the initiative of the minister.

1. Lapsed. Ministers who do not renew their credentials shall be listed as lapsed, provided there is no cause for disciplinary action. Their names shall be published as lapsed in the *Assemblies of God Minister*, hereinafter referred to as the minister's letter.
2. Resigned. Ministers who elect to remove themselves from the Fellowship shall submit a letter of resignation to the district with which they are affiliated. If there is no cause for disciplinary action, their resignation shall become effective after having been approved by both the District Council and General Council credentials committees. Their termination shall be listed in the minister's letter as resigned.

B. On the initiative of the district. (See General Council Bylaws Article X, Section 4.)

1. Inactive. When a minister becomes inactive for 2 consecutive years, according to the stipulations set forth in Bylaws Article VII, Section 6, paragraph b, his or her name shall be published as inactive in the minister's letter.

BYLAWS

2. Not renewed. If in the opinion of the credentials committees a minister's credentials should not be renewed, short of disciplinary action, the minister's name shall be published as not renewed in the minister's letter.

C. As a result of affiliation with another church organization.

In the event a minister shall identify with another organization granting ministerial credentials, and shall have received such credentials, his or her credentials with The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall be terminated. An investigation shall be made to determine the proper category of termination.

D. Surrender of Credentials.

In all cases the minister shall be requested to surrender his or her credential (Certificate of Ordination, License to Preach, Certificate of Ministry) and current fellowship card to the District Office. The District shall forward these to the office of the General Secretary of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Refusal to surrender his or her credential and current fellowship card shall be considered insubordination and may result in placing a charge against the minister.

SECTION 12. MINISTERIAL STATUS CHANGES

All changes in a minister's status are to be reported immediately to his or her District Office, which in turn is to report this information to the office of the General Secretary of the General Council, on the Ministerial Status Report form provided by that office.

SECTION 13. PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS

Assemblies of God ministers are encouraged to respect as sacred and confidential information confided to them while they are functioning in their ministerial capacities as spiritual counselors and are encouraged not to disclose such confidential information except with the permission of the confidant, to prevent the commission of a crime, or if required by law.

GENERAL COUNCIL BYLAWS

(pages 50-72 in District Bylaws)

ARTICLE VIII. CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

SECTION 1. CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Marriage was established by God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:18, 21-25) and confirmed by Jesus Christ to be a permanent relationship between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4-6). Because marriage is not only a commitment to a spouse, but also

BYLAWS

to God (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:9; Ephesians 5:31), a believer should marry only another believer (2 Corinthians 6:14). Christian marriage is a reflection of the love, purity, and permanence between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:23-33).

Even though some marriages may fall short of the biblical ideal (see Article IX, B, Section 5), husbands and wives who devote themselves to God (Ephesians 5:21) and find nurture and instruction in the body of Christ (Hebrews 10:25) can realize the strength and blessing of God in their relationship.

SECTION 2. CHILDREN

Children “are a heritage from the Lord”; therefore, rearing them is to be treated as a sacred trust. God’s strength and wisdom are available on a daily basis in order to bring up children to love and obey God (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4).

**ARTICLE IX. DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES
DISAPPROVED**

A. Commission on Doctrinal Purity

- a. Authorization and purpose.** A Commission on Doctrinal Purity shall be established for the purpose of giving careful attention to preventing deviations from the Statement of Fundamental Truths and proliferation of unscriptural teachings. The commission shall receive its assignments from and make its reports to the Executive Presbytery.
- b. Appointments and terms of office.** The commission shall be appointed by the Executive Presbytery and shall consist of 10 members representing, insofar as possible, the area divisions of the Assemblies of God. Members shall be recognized authorities in biblical knowledge. Their terms of office shall be for 4 years.
- c. Vacancies and terminations.** The Executive Presbytery shall be empowered to declare the office of any commission member vacant should it deem such action advisable. A decision to declare a vacancy and to fill such vacancy may be made at any meeting of the Executive Presbytery.

B. List of Doctrines and Practices Disapproved

In accord with its constitutional prerogatives, The General Council of the Assemblies of God has declared itself pertaining to disapproval of certain matters as follows:

SECTION 1. UNCONDITIONAL SECURITY

In view of the biblical teaching that the security of the believer depends on a living relationship with Christ (John 15:6); in view of the Bible's call to a life of holiness (1 Peter 1:16; Hebrews 12:14); in view of the clear teaching that a man may have his part taken out of the Book of Life (Revelation 22:19); and in view of the fact that one who believes for a while can fall away (Luke 8:13); The General Council of the Assemblies of God disapproves of the unconditional security position which holds that it is impossible for a person once saved to be lost.

SECTION 2. LEGALISM

- a. Matters of conscience.** *The Assemblies of God strongly affirms that the Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). However, since sincere commitment to holy living sometimes results in sharp differences of opinion among believers on debatable matters of personal conscience, the Assemblies of God disapproves the practice of pressing these debatable matters of personal conscience upon others (Romans 14:1-4).*
- b. Adding conditions to salvation.** *The Assemblies of God strongly affirms that salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8,9). Therefore, the Assemblies of God disapproves any teaching or practice that seems to add conditions to salvation (Galatians 3:1-5).*

SECTION 3. ESCHATOLOGICAL ERRORS

- a. The restitution of all things.** *The Assemblies of God understands the teaching of Acts 3:21 to limit the restoration to that of which the prophets have spoken, thus denying the universal redemption theory. We are opposed to all forms of universalism (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:10).*
- b. Setting a date for the Lord's return.** *It is unwise to teach that the Lord will come at some specified time, thereby setting a date for His appearing (Mark 13:32,33; Luke 12:37-40; 1 Thessalonians 5:2). It is also unwise to give out from the platform, or publish, visions of numbers and dates fixing the time of the second coming of the Lord*
- c. Post-Tribulation Rapture.** *The General Council of the Assemblies of God has declared itself in the Statement of Fundamental Truths that it holds to the belief in the imminent*

coming of the Lord as the blessed hope of the Church; and since the teaching that the Church must go through the Tribulation tends to bring confusion and division among the saints, it is recommended that all our ministers teach the imminent coming of Christ, warning all to be prepared for that coming, which may occur at any time, and not lull their minds into complacency by any teaching that would cause them to feel that specific Tribulation events must occur before the rapture of the saints.

d. Amillennialism. *The General Council of the Assemblies of God disapproves of the amillennial teaching and its attendant erroneous philosophy which denies the fact of a literal 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth, and substitutes for it the theory that this Christian or Church dispensation is the spiritual Millennium of which, its proponents say, the Bible writers prophesied.*

e. Credentials jeopardized if made an issue. *We recommend that those ministers who embrace any of the foregoing eschatological errors refrain from preaching or teaching them. Should they persist in emphasizing these doctrines to the point of making them an issue, their standing in the Fellowship will be seriously affected (Luke 21:34-36; 1 Thessalonians 5:9,10; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10; Revelation 3:10,19,20).*

SECTION 4. MEMBERSHIP IN SECRET ORDERS

Ours is a last-day message in preparation for the coming of the Lord (Matthew 24:14), leaving us no alternative but wholehearted devotion to the cause of spreading the gospel (Luke 9:62); and it is well known that the various secret orders require much valuable time and interest, thus diverting the servant of the Lord out of the way (Ephesians 5:16).

The nature of such organizations demands secrecy (John 18:20; Acts 26:26) reinforced by religious oaths (Matthew 5:34) and strong attachment by binding obligations to persons who are for the most part unregenerated (2 Corinthians 6:14). The spirit, philosophy, and general influence of such secret orders aim at the improvement of the natural man only (1 Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 2:8), thus wrongly channeling by incorrect interpretation important spiritual truths (2 Peter 3:16).

BYLAWS

Confidence in these secret orders and their teachings has always tended toward the embracing of a false hope of salvation through good works and improved moral service (Ephesians 2:8,9).

In consideration of the foregoing, all ministers affiliated with the Assemblies of God should refrain from identifying themselves with any of the secret orders that the General Council recognizes as essentially of the world, worldly; and the General Council advises any who may have identified themselves with such orders to sever their connections with them (2 Corinthians 6:17). Furthermore, Assemblies of God ministers are requested to use their good influence among our lay members to dissuade them from such fraternal affiliations (1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:24-26).

SECTION 5. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

a. Membership

- (1) Marriage entanglements before conversion. There are now among Christian people those who became entangled in their marriage relations in their former lives of sin and who do not see how these matters can be adjusted. We recommend that these people be received into the membership of local assemblies and that their marriage complications be left in the hands of the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:17, 20,24).*
- (2) Common-law marriages. We recommend that in no case shall persons be accepted into membership who are known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony.*

b. Remarriage. *Low standards on marriage and divorce are very hurtful to individuals, to the family, and to the cause of Christ. Therefore, we discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. We positively disapprove of Christians getting divorces for any cause except fornication and adultery (Matthew 19:9). Where these exceptional circumstances exist or when a Christian has been divorced by an unbeliever, we recommend that the question of remarriage be resolved by the believer in the light of God's Word (1 Corinthians 7:15,27,28).*

c. Local church leadership

- (1) Standard for offices of bishop, or elder, and deacon. Since the New Testament restricts divorced and remarried believers from the church offices of bishop, or elder, and deacon, we recommend that this standard be upheld by*

all our assemblies (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:12), except when the divorce occurred prior to conversion (2 Corinthians 5:17) or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9), or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15).

- (2) *Prerogative of local assemblies. It is understood that recommendations are not binding, but local assemblies shall maintain the prerogative of setting their own standards (in accord with provisions of Article XI of the Constitution).*

d. Performing marriage ceremonies

- (1) *Ministerial guidelines. We discourage any Assemblies of God minister performing a marriage ceremony for anyone who has been divorced and whose former spouse is still living, unless the case is included in the exceptional circumstances described in Bylaws, Article IX, B, Section 5, paragraph b.*
- (2) *Violation of conscience not required. We realize that the remarrying of such persons included in the exceptive circumstances in Bylaws, Article IX, B, Section 5, paragraph b, could violate the conscience of a minister; and if this should be the case, the minister should not be expected to perform such ceremonies.*
- (3) *Same-sex ceremonies. No minister shall perform any type of marriage, cohabitation, or covenant ceremony for persons who are of the same sex. Such a ceremony would endorse homosexuality which is a sin and strictly forbidden in God's Word (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26,27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:9-11). Any minister of our Fellowship who performs a ceremony for these types of disapproved relations, unless innocently deceived into doing so, shall be dismissed from the Fellowship.*
- (4) *Counsel. An Assemblies of God minister is urged to counsel applicants for marriage ceremonies with scriptural guidelines for Christian marriage prior to performing the ceremony. A minister may not perform ceremonies for persons who, in the minister's opinion, approach marriage without proper forethought, wisdom, and sobriety.*

BYLAWS

- e. Ministerial credentials.** *We disapprove of any married minister of the Assemblies of God holding credentials if either minister or spouse has a former spouse living unless the divorce occurred prior to conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9), or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15). (See also Bylaws, Article VII, Section 2, paragraphs j and k.)*

SECTION 6. WORLDLINESS

In view of the alarming erosion of national moral standards, we reaffirm our intention of holding up Bible standards against all forms of worldliness. We urge all believers to —love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.... For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the worldll (1 John 2:15,16).

In its teaching regarding worldliness, the Scriptures warn against participation in activity that defiles the body, or corrupts the mind and spirit; the inordinate love of or preoccupation with pleasures, position, or possessions, which lead to their misuse; manifestation of extreme behavior, unbecoming speech, or inappropriate appearance; any fascination or association which lessens one's affection for spiritual things (Luke 21:34,35; Romans 8:5-8; 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 2:8-10; 4:12; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; Titus 2:12).

SECTION 7. ABUSES OF STEWARDSHIP

a. Tithing

- (1) According to the Scriptures, tithes should be used for the support of the active ministry and for the propagation of the gospel and work of the Lord and not be given to charity or used for other purposes. In tithing, the ministers ought to be examples.*
- (2) We recognize the duty of tithing and urge all our people to pay tithes to God. It is recommended that arrangements satisfactory to the pastor and the church be made by all pastors and churches, so that the pastor may receive regular and adequate support. We disapprove, however, of the teaching that all tithes necessarily should belong to the pastor for his or her support.*

b. Solicitation of funds

- (1) *It is considered improper and unethical for ministers or missionaries to solicit funds, by letter or otherwise, for anything or any reason whatsoever without proper authorization.*
- (2) *The purpose of this section is not to hinder or discourage legitimate projects but to protect the Fellowship from those who employ methods not in harmony with Assemblies of God principles or policies.*

Leaders in local projects shall have unquestioned freedom in local churches or communities.

Projects of general interest to the district must have authorization of the district officers.

Projects or institutions of national scope that plan to solicit funds from Assemblies of God churches must have the authorization of the Executive Presbytery of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Promotion of all projects of a missions character must have the authorization of the Executive Presbytery.

- (3) *The obtaining and use of mailing lists for promotional purposes not having proper authorization or which are not in keeping with policies of The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall be considered improper and unethical, whether it be under the name of a prayer chain beyond a local scope, chain letters, or appeals to the constituency for the support of ventures of strictly local or personal character. All offenders guilty of the practices expressed in the foregoing paragraphs shall be subject to discipline.*

c. Private ownership of religious institutions. *The General Council of the Assemblies of God approves the holding of title to all church buildings, schools, or other institutions that are supported by funds solicited for the work of God by properly constituted corporations. It disapproves the holding of title to such properties by the ministers of the Assemblies of God, through private ownership, corporations sole, or closed corporations. In the event a local congregation is not incorporated or set in order by the district council, title should be vested in properly qualified trustees. Where private ownership exists, a properly incorporated body shall*

BYLAWS

be formed and title to the property shall be transferred to the corporation.

A disregard of this principle and recommendation shall seriously affect the relation of the Assemblies of God members involved in such ownership.

SECTION 8. VIOLATIONS OF MINISTERIAL COURTESY

All discourteous conduct is disapproved, and all ministers are advised against interfering with pastors in charge of assemblies, whether it be by going in upon their work without consent or by such correspondence with members of the assembly as will hurt the influence of the leader. All correspondence which concerns the whole assembly shall be addressed to the one in charge and not to individual members. Where there is no pastor, letters concerning the work shall be addressed to the officers of the assembly.

Any minister who so offends shall be subject to discipline.

SECTION 9. MINISTRY IN A NON-ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCH

Ministers shall not be limited or restrained from entering open doors to preach this Pentecostal message, so long as they retain Assemblies of God doctrine, standards of holiness, proper attitudes, and proper ministerial conduct without compromise.

Inasmuch as unity is a vital principle for growth and spiritual development of the Assemblies of God Fellowship, it is essential that we recognize our relationship to each other and that we practice Christian cooperation in all our pastoral, evangelistic, missionary, and local church work.

We recommend therefore that our ministers confer with district council officials before engaging in ministry in any church group or organization not affiliated with the Assemblies of God so as to ascertain whether such ministry might result in confusion or misunderstandings. If the minister does not have district approval, he or she shall be expected to refrain from conducting services for the church. Ministers who violate this principle shall be subject to discipline.

SECTION 10. AN IMPROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD THOSE REMOVED FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

In order to render effective decisions made in the interest of proper discipline and for the protection of our assemblies, all who hold credentials, and local churches holding certificates of affiliation, shall refrain from taking an attitude toward offenders that

BYLAWS

would tend to nullify or set at naught the solemn verdict of those entrusted with this responsibility. Those who fail to support said verdict shall be subject to reprimand or, if persisted in, appropriate discipline.

SECTION 11. INTERDENOMINATIONAL OR ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

The General Council of the Assemblies of God encourages ministers or churches to fellowship with other Christians of like precious faith who hold to the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the universality of sin, the substitutionary Atonement, the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and His second coming.

The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall not belong to any interdenominational or ecumenical organization that denies the evangelical beliefs stated in the above paragraph, and urges its ministers and churches to avoid entanglement with such interdenominational or ecumenical organizations except as opportunity may arise to support biblical values in the culture or provide opportunity to bear witness to our evangelical and Pentecostal faith and experience.

SECTION 12. DIVINE HEALING AND PROFESSIONAL MEDICINE

The General Council of the Assemblies of God disapproves of any credentialed minister counseling a believer to exclude medical advice and/or treatment when seeking prayer for physical healing. Assemblies of God ministers shall not represent medical advice and/or treatment as a lack of faith in God's healing power.

SECTION 13. ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATIONAL ATTRIBUTION

a. Attribution. *In order to maintain our testimony of quality and integrity in educational credentials before the Church and the world, and to minimize the possibility of our ministers and churches being victimized by, or supporting, or perpetrating frauds in education or credentialing, we maintain certain standards for the attribution of degrees, certifications, and titles.*

(1) Attribution by ministers. Our ministers shall refrain from listing, promoting, or attributing to themselves or others any degrees or titles conferred by institutions or organizations having, at the time of conferral, a formal

accreditation status less than that of our appropriately corresponding Assemblies of God institutions (whether our institute, regional university, or seminary levels).

- (2) *Attribution by the General Council. No media, ministry, department, arm, or employee of the General Council shall list, attribute, or promote for any person, any degree or title conferred by an institution or organization having, at the time of conferral, a formal accreditations status less than that of our appropriately corresponding Assemblies of God institutions (whether our institute, regional university, or seminary levels).*
- (3) *Attribution by local churches. We strongly encourage our ministers, boards, and churches to take great care to ensure that all ministers and church employees have actually earned the legitimately accredited education, training, and certification, as defined above, which they claim by their titles or degrees (such as counselor, therapist, doctor, and so on).*
- (4) *Attribution accepted. All previously earned or conferred degrees prior to August 2007, from any institution whatsoever shall be fully accepted and grandfathered in.*

b. Intentional failure to comply. *Intentional refusal to comply with this ethical standard for educational credentials constitutes perpetrating a fraud upon the church and the world, personally and in the good name of the Assemblies of God, and the General Council disapproves of such practices.*

ARTICLE X - DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1. THE NATURE AND PURPOSES OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible. The aims of discipline are that God may be honored, that the purity and welfare of the ministry may be maintained, and that those under discipline may be brought to repentance and restoration.

Discipline is to be administered for the restoration of the minister, while fully providing for the protection of the spiritual welfare of our local assemblies. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective, and is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy.

SECTION 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DISTRICT AND GENERAL COUNCIL CREDENTIALS COMMITTEES

The Executive Presbytery of the General Council is the Credentials Committee of the General Council of the Assemblies of God. (GC Constitution Article X, Sections 4 and 6). It shall have the final authority in matters of doctrine and the personal conduct of all certified, licensed and ordained ministers. District actions related to the termination of credentials or the remedial discipline of rehabilitation are to be in the form of recommendations to the General Council Credentials Committee. All references to the discipline of ministers within this article of the bylaws relate solely to certified, licensed, and ordained ministers.

SECTION 3. CAUSES OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Violations of Assemblies of God principles as stated in these Constitution and Bylaws may give cause for disciplinary action by the credentials committees. Among such causes for action shall be:

- a. Moral failure involving sexual misconduct.*
- b. Moral failure involving pornography.*
- c. Any moral or ethical failure other than sexual misconduct.*
- d. General inefficiency in the ministry.*
- e. A failure to respect our Pentecostal testimony correctly.*
- f. A contentious or non-cooperative spirit.*
- g. An assumption of dictatorial authority over an assembly.*
- h. An arbitrary rejection of district counsel.*
- i. A declared open change in doctrinal views.*
- j. Immoral, unethical, or illegal practices related to personal, church, or ministry finances.*
- k. A marriage in violation of our stand on marriage and divorce. (See Bylaws Article IX, B, Section 5, paragraphs d and e.)*
- l. Violations of ministerial courtesy. (See Bylaws Article IX, B, Section 8.)*
- m. Ministry without prior approval in a non-Assemblies of God church. (See Bylaws Article IX, B, Section 9.)*
- n. An improper attitude toward those dismissed from the Fellowship. (See Bylaws Article IX, B, Section 10.)*

Notwithstanding the above, when more than 7 years have elapsed from an occurrence that is cause for disciplinary action, a district credentials committee may recommend to the General Council Credentials Committee that no discipline be administered

BYLAWS

when, in view of all the circumstances, it would appear that such discipline would only serve as punitive in nature rather than rehabilitative. In all such cases, final determination shall be made by the General Council Credentials Committee.

SECTION 4. RIGHT OF INITIATIVE

- a. Authority.** *Occasions sometimes arise which make it necessary to deal with ministers who for some reason seem to have reached the place where, in the opinion of the leaders, endorsement can no longer be given. Credentials committees which have the authority to ordain ministers and to recommend them for credentials also have the right to withdraw their approval and to recommend the recall of credentials.*
- b. Prior right of district.** *The officers of the district in which an alleged offense is reported to have occurred shall be recognized as having the prior right of initiative in matters of discipline.*
- c. Responsibility of district of affiliation.** *If the district in which an alleged offense is reported to have occurred for some reason cannot take action, the General Council Credentials Committee shall refer the matter, together with the facts and supporting instruments, to the district with which the minister is affiliated.*
- d. Responsibility of General Council Credentials Committee.** *In the event a district fails to take action within 90 days after a matter has been referred to it, it shall be the responsibility of the General Council Credentials Committee to see that action is initiated.*

SECTION 5. INVESTIGATION OF REPORTS OR COMPLAINTS OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OR CONFESSIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF ASSEMBLIES OF GOD PRINCIPLES

- a. Within the Districts of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.** *Reports or complaints of alleged violations of Assemblies of God principles (Bylaws, Article X, Section 3) or confessions of such by a minister shall be investigated. The superintendent of the district in which the alleged offense is reported to have occurred, or an appointed representative, shall conduct the investigation to determine their source and validity. It is the responsibility of the district superintendent to*

safeguard the church, the minister, the district, and the Fellowship. In the event such reports or complaints against a minister are filed with the General Council Credentials Committee, they shall be referred to the district in which the offense occurred for investigation. A copy shall be sent to the district with which the minister is affiliated.

- (1) Interview with complainants. The persons involved shall be interviewed to ascertain the facts in the case and the reasons underlying the persistence of the reports or complaints.*
- (2) Interview with accused minister. The accused minister shall be given an opportunity to be interviewed to discuss the complaints received in the hope that the matter can be resolved.*
- (3) Signed complaints. In the event the investigation so warrants, a signed complaint shall be filed with the district office by each complainant describing the alleged offense.*
- (4) Conditions for ministry during investigation. Conditions of continuing ministry may be subject to restriction during the time of investigation at the discretion of the appropriate district officers on the basis of evidence at hand and the nature of the alleged offense. Such conditions are subject to review in 3-month intervals until such investigation has been completed resulting in either clearing the person of the allegations or filing formal charges.*

b. Outside United States. *In case the alleged misconduct occurs outside the United States in an area under the general oversight of Assemblies of God World Missions, that division shall take the initiative to file complete data with the district of the minister's affiliation. Any hearing or trial affecting that individual's ministerial credentials shall be held in the district of the minister's affiliation. Assemblies of God World Missions shall convey all information available to the said district as follows:*

- (1) Report to district of affiliation. At the earliest date after Assemblies of God World Missions receives a report of misconduct, such report shall be conveyed by telephone*

and by letter to the superintendent of the district with which the minister is affiliated.

- (2) Confidential file. A confidential file shall be submitted to the superintendent, conveying all information as it becomes available to the division. A final complete file shall be prepared under the direction of the field director of the field involved and shall be presented to the district superintendent for use in any action the district may take.*
- (3) Additional information. When in the judgment of Assemblies of God World Missions or the district involved, basic information is lacking (which information may be available at the site of the alleged misconduct), arrangements may be made for the gathering of such.*

SECTION 6. PREPARATION AND FILING OF CHARGES

If after due investigation it is determined that charges should be made, proper charges shall be prepared and filed in the district office. If no one appears to sign the charges, the district officers making the investigation may file charges based on the evidence in their possession. The person against whom charges have been filed shall be informed in writing by certified mail, at the last address furnished to the district, of the charges made in keeping with Bylaws, Article X, Section 3.

SECTION 7. DISTRICT HEARING AND DISCIPLINE

- a. District hearing.** *In the event the reports or complaints cannot be dealt with privately to the satisfaction of all concerned, the superintendent of the district in which the alleged offense is said to have occurred, or the superintendent of the district with which the minister is affiliated, shall arrange for a hearing by the district credentials committee for the accused minister. The minister shall be required to appear at the hearing in the hope the matter can be resolved.*
- b. Forfeiture of rights of accused.** *A hearing shall not be considered as final disposition of the case until the accused be present and be allowed all rights and privileges granted herein. However, an accused member may be found guilty of charges and disciplined for failure to appear at the hearing, or if proof is found of willful neglect to take advantage of rights and privileges provided in these Bylaws.*

c. Discipline

- (1) *Cause for discipline. A minister who has been found guilty of violating any of the Assemblies of God principles set forth in Bylaws, Article X, Section 3, either by a confession of the minister involved or by deliberation of the district presbytery, shall be subject to disciplinary action.*
- (2) *Determination of discipline. It shall be the responsibility of the credentials committees to determine whether the circumstances of the case merit rehabilitation or dismissal. The credentials committees shall weigh decisions on: (a) the basis of the offense itself, (b) the manner and thoroughness of repentance, (c) the attitude of the offending minister toward the discipline, and (d) the willingness manifested to cooperate.*
- (3) *Administering discipline redemptively. If the district determines that guilt has been established, discipline shall be administered prayerfully and in the fear of God, in accordance with the Scriptures, and as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of this ecclesiastical body (Bylaws, Article X, Sections 8 and 9).*

d. Surrender of credentials. *Disciplined ministers shall be required to surrender their ministerial credentials and their current fellowship card to the district office. In the event of rehabilitation the credentials shall be held in the district office. In the event of dismissal the district shall forward the credentials to the general secretary of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Refusal to surrender ministerial credentials and current fellowship card may result in placing an additional charge against the minister.*

SECTION 8. REHABILITATION

Recognizing that the underlying principle involved in discipline is redemptive, and that man's conscience frequently brings him to judgment and confession, and that justice can sometimes be best served with mercy, an effort should be made to lead the offending minister through a program of rehabilitation, administered in love and kindness. The following provisions for rehabilitation shall apply

a. Basis. *Those found to have violated any of the Assemblies of God principles (Bylaws, Article X, Section 3) may request a program of rehabilitation as an alternative to dismissal. Rehabilitation is a privilege granted out of mercy and not a*

BYLAWS

right to be expected or demanded. The primary purpose is to restore a person to God, spouse, and family, with the results leading to possible restoration to ministry. Granting such request shall be at the discretion of the district and General Council credentials committees.

b. Procedure and requirements. *The following procedure shall be used by the district presbytery in determining the specific requirements for rehabilitation for the individual minister.*

(1) *Rehabilitation requirements. The specific terms and conditions of the rehabilitation program as recommended by the district credentials committee are to be forwarded to the General Council Credentials Committee for approval. After such approval they shall be given to the minister.*

(a) *Suspension. The minister shall be considered to be under suspension during the entire period of rehabilitation.*

(b) *Terms and Conditions*

(1) *Period of time. The program for rehabilitation shall continue for not less than 1 year except when the violation involves misconduct defined in Bylaws, Article X, Section 3, paragraph a, in which case it shall continue for not less than 2 years.*

(2) *Authority. The General Presbytery shall be authorized to establish guidelines and policy in regard to terms and conditions of rehabilitation. Such guidelines and policy shall be consistent with provisions of the Bylaws.*

(c) *Extent of ministry. The extent to which ministry may be permitted, if any, shall be determined by the district presbytery, subject to the approval of the General Council Credentials Committee and compatible with the guidelines and policy established by the General Presbytery.*

(d) *District membership. The minister shall not be permitted to transfer his or her membership to another district during the period of rehabilitation.*

BYLAWS

- (e) Publication. While the minister's credentials are in a state of suspension, the minister's name shall not be removed from the ministerial roster, nor shall the minister's disciplinary status be published in either the General Council or district council official publications.*
 - (f) Credentials renewal. The minister shall renew his or her credentials annually in the regular manner.*
 - (g) Supervision. In the event his or her ministerial activity has been terminated, the minister must become established in a local church working under the supervision of a pastor or presbyter.*
 - (h) Reports. The minister must submit reports quarterly to the district superintendent.*
 - (i) Ministerial benefits. During the program of rehabilitation the minister shall continue to be eligible for benefits such as the ministers group insurance and Ministers Benefit Association.*
 - (j) Program administration. The approved rehabilitation program shall be administered by the district presbytery.*
- (2) District progress reports. The credentials committee of the district shall submit to the General Council Credentials Committee on February 1 and August 1 of each calendar year a progress report relative to the rehabilitation of ministers under discipline.*
 - (3) Completion of rehabilitation. When the rehabilitation program has been satisfactorily completed, the suspension shall be lifted and the minister shall be restored to good standing.*
 - (4) Transfer of information. A rehabilitation information form for district use, prepared and distributed by the general secretary, shall be completed by the district in which the rehabilitation occurred when the rehabilitated minister requests a transfer to a new district. The completed rehabilitation form shall accompany the Certificate of Transfer to another district. A disciplined minister shall, as a condition of entering a rehabilitation program, sign a Limited Disclosure Agreement approved by the General Presbytery allowing the basis of his or her rehabilitation*

program to be disclosed by the district superintendent or district secretary of a transferring district. The information shall be preserved for future reference in the files of the district in which the rehabilitation occurred and the General Council.

- c. Eligibility of previously dismissed.** *In the event a minister who has been dismissed requests reinstatement, the district shall first obtain permission from the General Council Credentials Committee before submitting an appropriate rehabilitation program as prescribed in Section 8 of this article. The dismissed minister shall not be eligible for reinstatement until the requirements for rehabilitation have been completed. Consideration may also be given to a minister if in the opinion of the credentials committees he or she has satisfactorily fulfilled the remedial requirements of such rehabilitation.*

SECTION 9. REFERRAL FOR ACTION TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

a. District recommendation

- (1) Rehabilitation. When a minister is to be placed in a rehabilitation program in accordance with Section 8 of this article, the district shall forward to the General Council Credentials Committee the specific charges and recommended terms of rehabilitation. The district shall inform the minister involved of its action and, where applicable, the superintendent of the minister's district of affiliation.*
- (2) Dismissal. When a minister has been found guilty of violating any of the Assemblies of God principles as set forth in Bylaws, Article X, Section 3, and it is determined that rehabilitation is not feasible or fails, a minister's credentials are to be terminated by dismissal. The district shall forward to the General Council Credentials Committee the specific charges and its recommendation for dismissal. The district shall inform the minister involved of its action and, where applicable, the superintendent of the minister's district of affiliation.*
- (3) Subsequent dismissal. Should evidence come to light following a minister's resignation, or the lapse of his or her credentials, of conduct occurring prior to his or her*

BYLAWS

resignation or lapse of credentials that would constitute grounds for disciplinary action under Article X, Section 3, of these Bylaws, the district at its discretion may request the General Council Credentials Committee to change that minister's status from lapsed or resigned to dismissed. The district shall inform the minister involved of its action and, where applicable, the superintendent of the minister's district of affiliation. All rights of appeal will apply.

- (4) *Credential absolution. Should a district where a dismissal occurred determine, after careful investigation, that a dismissed minister has completed remedial rehabilitation followed by faithful service for many years, it may request the General Council Credentials Committee to lift a dismissal and clear the minister's name by changing his or her credential status from dismissed to resigned.*
- b. General Council Credentials Committee action.** *The General Council Credentials Committee shall consider the recommendation of the district and shall concur if in its judgment the district was justified in the action taken. If the General Council Credentials Committee does not concur, it may remand the case, together with its recommendations, back to the district for review and reconsideration. The district shall report the results of its recommendation to the General Council Credentials Committee for final disposition.*
- c. General Council to hold information.** *All pertinent information relating to the disciplinary action taken against a minister shall be preserved for future reference in the office of the General Council Credentials Committee.*
- d. Final disposition.** *The general secretary shall notify the minister and the district(s) involved of the final disposition of the case.*

SECTION 10. RIGHT OF APPEAL

- a. Filing of appeal to the General Council Credentials Committee.** *The right of appeal applies to all actions of discipline and termination of credentials other than lapsing or resigning on the initiative of the minister. An accused minister shall have 30 days from the date notification of the General Council Credentials Committee's decision was mailed to appeal to the General Council Credentials*

Committee. The minister shall be apprised officially of this right at the time notification is given to the minister of the decision of the General Council Credentials Committee. The appeal is to be sent to the office of the general superintendent, and should include any new or exculpatory information not previously considered, with copies sent to the superintendent of the minister's district of affiliation and any other districts involved.

b. Consideration of appeal by the General Council Credentials Committee. *The General Council Credentials Committee may respond to the appeal in one of the following ways:*

(1) Remanding of case to the district. If in the judgment of the General Council Credentials Committee, justice has not been served, the case shall be remanded to the district presbytery for review and reconsideration. The district shall report the results of its review to the General Council Credentials Committee for final disposition.

(2) Denial of appeal.

(a) Forfeiture of right of appeal. No appeal shall be granted by remanding the case to the district presbytery if proof is found of willful neglect on the part of the accused to take advantage of available rights and privileges during the district hearing (see Section 5, 6, & 7 of this Article).

(b) Insufficient grounds. The General Council Credentials Committee shall have the prerogative to determine whether there is sufficient cause to grant an appeal, and remand the case to the district.

c. Right of appeal to the General Presbytery.

(1) A disciplined minister whose appeal has been denied by the General Council Credentials Committee may appeal to the General Presbytery. An accused minister shall have 30 days from the date notification of the General Council Credentials Committee's decision was mailed to appeal to the General Presbytery. The appeal is to be sent to the office of the general superintendent, and must include new exculpatory information, with copies sent to the superintendent of the minister's district of affiliation

and any other districts involved. The decision of the General Presbytery shall be final.

- (2) A district may appeal a decision of the Executive Presbytery to the General Presbytery. The decision of the General Presbytery shall be final.*

SECTION 11. PUBLICATION OF DISMISSAL

No publication of a dismissed minister's name shall be made until the district has been advised by the office of the general secretary that such has been authorized by the General Council Credentials Committee. An additional 30 days from the date of the notification shall be given the dismissed minister to exercise the right of appeal.

SECTION 12. REINSTATEMENT OF CREDENTIALS

- a. Authorization.** *Application for reinstatement may be made through the district council within which territory the applicant resides. The application shall be considered subject to the approval of the district in which the termination was made.*
- b. Minimal time-lapse for dismissed ministers.** *The minimal time-lapse required before a minister who has been dismissed is eligible for reinstatement shall be 1 year, except it shall be 2 years for a minister who has been dismissed because of charges as stated in Bylaws, Article X, Section 3, paragraph a. The time-lapse shall be computed from the date of the district presbytery action as it appears on the ministerial status report filed with the General Council Credentials Committee. (See Bylaws, Article VII, Section 10, for other renewals and reinstatements.)*
- c. Rehabilitation obligatory.** *When a minister has been dismissed from our Fellowship and applies for reinstatement, he or she shall comply with the procedures for rehabilitation outlined in Section 8, paragraph c, of this Article.*
- d. Option to refer to General Presbytery.** *The General Council Credentials Committee may also hold the reinstatement of a minister's credentials in abeyance until the next session of the General Presbytery in order that the General Presbytery may have the opportunity to review the case, in which event the matter of reinstatement of such minister may be left entirely with that body.*
- e. Reinstatement fee.** *When applying for reinstatement the minister must include a \$100 reinstatement fee with the*

BYLAWS

application to be divided equally between the district council and the General Council.

SECTION 13. NOTICE

Notice shall be deemed to have been given to a minister by certified mail from the district or General Council Credentials Committee on the basis of the last address furnished to the district or General Council by the minister. In the event the certified letter is returned as undeliverable for any reason, notice will have been deemed to have been given in view of the fact it is the minister's responsibility to furnish the district or General Council his or her address, and to accept lawful mail.

(End of General Council Bylaws)

ARTICLE XVII - MISSIONS

SECTION 1. WORLD MISSIONS

- A.** The administration and business of District World Missions shall be under the directorship of the Assistant District Superintendent who shall serve as the District World Missions Director.
- B.** The District World Missions Director shall be responsible for assisting missionaries and pastors in planning missions services and shall promote and encourage the support of World Missions.
- C.** Since the work of World Missions is so efficiently handled by the World Missions Department of the General Council, we hereby adopt all General Council Bylaws and recommendations made in regard to World Missions and endeavor to cooperate with the national Foreign Missions Department in these matters.
- D.** All assemblies are advised to send their Foreign missions offerings to the National World Missions Department.
- E.** We recommend that the first Sunday in each month shall be set aside as Missionary Day when a special offering is taken for World Missions.
- F.** We recommend that each church designate 20% of its monthly World Ministries offering for District Home Missions. The same to be sent to the District Home Missions Department.

BYLAWS

SECTION 2. U.S. (HOME) MISSIONS

A. District Home Missions

1. The administration of the business of District Home Missions shall be under the Home Missions Board and under directorship of the District Superintendent who shall serve as Home Missions Director.
2. The District Superintendent shall supervise the business of District Home Missions and shall serve as Chairman of the Home Missions Board.
3. The District Home Missions Department is amenable to the Executive Presbytery and the District Presbytery.

B. District Home Missions Board

1. The Executive Presbytery shall serve as the District Home Missions Board.
2. The duties of the Home Missions Board. The duties of the Home Missions Board shall be to assist the Home Missions Director in the implementation of his vision in the planting, supervision, and sustaining of the District sponsored works.
 - a. The District Home Missions Board is charged with two major functions.
 - (1) To initiate action to establish new churches.
 - (2) To develop and lead to maturity existing churches that give evidence of need for help and willingness to receive help.
 - b. The District Home Missions Board shall recommend policies and programs to the District Presbytery and the District Council for action and shall be authorized to implement all policies and programs set by the District Presbytery and/or District Council.
 - c. The District Home Missions Board is subject to the District Presbytery and is to report to the District Presbytery at its regular meetings and to the District Council in annual sessions.
 - d. The District Home Missions Board shall be charged with the approval of all church planting and development projects.
 - e. The District Home Missions Board shall be charged with the responsibility of approving all church planting workers.

BYLAWS

- f. The District Home Missions Board shall have the prerogative of authorizing the purchase of church planting property and/or constructing buildings and shall be authorized to provide moneys for such projects not to exceed \$30,000.00. Any projects exceeding this amount must be approved by the District Presbytery.
- g. The District Home Missions Board shall be responsible for reviewing churches that need to be developed and shall determine where their need lies. The board shall offer suggestions and give help in meeting those needs.

C. Sectional Home Missions Committee

- 1. There shall be a Sectional Home Missions Committee composed of the sectional presbyter, assistant presbyter, and the secretary. They shall supervise all district approved pioneer works in their section in harmony with the District Home Missions Director. This committee shall also serve to assist the District Superintendent in matters pertaining to the closing and reopening of churches within their respective sections.
- 2. All new Home Missions works must be approved by the Home Missions Board in cooperation with the Sectional Committee. However, if cooperation is not forthcoming, the District Home Missions Board must present the project to the Presbytery Board to be approved before proceeding as it deems appropriate. Any decision concerning church planting approval reached by the District Home Missions Board may be appealed by the Sectional Committee to the Presbytery Board.

D. Church Planting

The planting of new churches shall be a priority for the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God. Initiative for planting churches, in addition to the District Home Missions Board can come from a church planter, section, or a church(s).

A new church plant shall not be prohibited, unless a compelling reason(s) exists. If determined that a perceived compelling reason(s) exists to prohibit the plant, the church planter, section or church(s) shall have a right to appeal the decision of the District Home Missions Board to the District Presbytery and the decision of the District Presbytery shall be

BYLAWS

final, except in the case of a General Council Church which has the right to appeal to the General Council Executive Presbytery.

E. Administration and Policy

1. **Approval of Personnel.** The District Home Missions Board, and the Sectional Presbyter in the section considered for a new Home Missions work, shall interview and screen all personnel being considered for Home Missions work.
2. **Church Planting.** Steps for planting a new church in the Mississippi District Council shall be:
 - a. **Approval**

All Home Missions works must be approved in cooperation with the District Home Missions Board and the Sectional Home Missions Committee. Any work not approved by the District Home Missions Board may be closed.
 - b. **Control**

All pioneer works will be under the Home Mission status or supervision until properly set in order.
 - c. **Site location**

Site location shall be determined by the District Home Missions Board in cooperation with the Sectional Committee, after a study of present population growth, future growth factors, church saturation, land acquisition feasibility in the projected areas and sites, before new church planting be determined.
 - d. **Amenability**

All pioneer works and pastors must be amenable to the district leadership and policy and cooperative with the section and other local churches.
 - e. **Reporting**

Each Home Missions Church shall report monthly on the District Home Mission Church Report Form. These reports are to be filled out in triplicate; one copy to the District Home Missions Director, one copy to the Sectional Presbyter and one for the church file.
 - f. **Evaluation**

Annual evaluation shall be made of all Home Missions workers by the District Home Missions Board and the Sectional Committee.

BYLAWS

F. Finances of District Home Missions

1. Two percent (2%) of all minister's tithes received by the District Secretary/Treasurer shall be designated for Home Missions.
2. From all offerings designated for Home Missions Department from rallies, camp meetings, projects, local assemblies, individuals, legacies, and any other funds which may be designated and ten percent (10%) is set aside for a Home Missions Emergency Fund.
3. Fifty percent (50%) of the BGMC funds returned to the district is for Home Missions.

G. National Home Missions

1. The District Home Missions Board shall interview all applicants for National Home Missions appointment and shall make the official recommendation to the General Council Division of Home Missions.
2. All National Home Missions appointees desiring to establish a home mission ministry in the district must be interviewed and approved by the District Home Missions Board.

H. Evangelism

1. Established churches are urged to assist Home Missions works by sending their pastors or providing funds for competent evangelists to conduct revival campaigns in pioneer churches and helping with outreach efforts.
2. Pastors are encouraged to dedicate a portion of their time each year to evangelize in pioneer efforts.
3. Evangelists are encouraged to set aside time for crusades in pioneer efforts where local financial support is not available.
4. Every pastor is encouraged to launch out into new branch Sunday Schools, special prayer services, street meetings, crusades and sidewalk Sunday Schools.

I. Chi Alpha

Definition: Chi Alpha (XA) is the Assemblies of God mission arm to colleges and universities.

1. Chi Alpha shall be a ministry of District Home Missions.
2. There shall be a District Chi Alpha Representative/Director appointed by the Home Missions Board and ratified by the District Presbytery. Appointment shall be made on even years for a four year period.

BYLAWS

- a. Purpose. To coordinate college ministries in the District and to give oversight to campus leadership in general compliance with the Mississippi District Chi Alpha College Ministries Policy Manual.
- b. There shall be a Chi Alpha Committee consisting of the Home Missions Director, the District Chi Alpha Representative/Director, and the District Youth Director. The committee may also consist of others as required, who will be recommended by the Home Missions Director, District Chi Alpha Representative/Director, and the District Youth Director.
- c. The District Chi Alpha Committee shall meet at least once a year for review, planning, and development of strategies to resource and advance the ministry of Chi Alpha in Mississippi.

J. Other Ministries

Inter-cultural, M.A.P.S., and other district home missions ministries shall be under the supervision and oversight of the district home missions board, and government, guidelines, and policies, as needed for direction in these ministries, be formulated and approved by the district presbytery board.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE XVIII-- SECTIONS AND SECTIONAL COUNCILS

SECTION 1. DIVISIONS

The Mississippi District shall consist of twelve sections as follows (reference Map of Sections).

Section (1) **Southaven**- DeSoto, Tunica, Tate, Marshall, and Lafayette (Plus First A/G, Clarksdale.)

Section (2) **Tupelo**- Benton, Tippah, Alcorn, Prentiss, Tishomingo, Union, Lee, Itawamba, and Pontotoc.

Section (3) **Water Valley**- Coahoma, Quitman, Panola, Yalobusha, Tallahatchie, Grenada, Carroll, and Montgomery.

Section (4) **Columbus**- Calhoun, Chickasaw, Monroe, Webster, Clay, Choctaw, Oktibbeha and Lowndes.

Section (5) **Greenville**- Washington, Sunflower, Leflore, Holmes, Humphreys, and Bolivar.

Section (6) **Jackson**- Issaquena, Sharkey, Warren, Yazoo, Madison, Hinds, Rankin, Attala, Leake, and Scott (plus Trinity A/G, White Oak, and First A/G, Crystal Springs)

Section (7) **Meridian**- Winston, Noxubee, Neshoba, Kemper, Newton, Lauderdale, and Clark (plus Trinity A/G, Kosciusko).

Section (8) **McComb**- Claiborne, Copiah, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Lincoln, Lawrence, Wilkinson, Amite, Pike and Walthall.

Section (9) **Hattiesburg**- Smith, Jasper, Jones, Lamar, Forest, Perry, Marion, Jefferson Davis, and Covington.

Section (10) **Waynesboro**- Wayne and Green, (plus First A/G, Shubuta; Corinth A/G, Quitman; First A/G, Richton).

Section (11) **Biloxi**- Pearl River, Hancock, Stone, Harrison, and the portions of George and Jackson counties that lie West of Highway 57.

Section (12) **Pascagoula**- the portions of George and Jackson counties which lie East of Highway 57.



Mississippi District
Assemblies of God



Sectional Boundaries & Names

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 Southaven | 7 Meridian |
| 2 Tupelo | 8 McComb |
| 3 Water Valley | 9 Hattiesburg |
| 4 Columbus | 10 Waynesboro |
| 5 Greenville | 11 Biloxi |
| 6 Jackson | 12 Pascagoula |

BYLAWS

SECTION 2. CHANGES IN BOUNDARY LINES

Proposed changes in sectional boundary lines shall be endorsed by the District Presbytery and submitted to the constituency thirty days prior to the date at which the proposed change is to be voted upon.

SECTION 3. SECTIONAL COUNCILS

- A. The Sectional Councils shall be held within the boundary lines of each section on uneven years.
- B. Each officer is to be voted on separately, beginning with the Presbyter.

ARTICLE XIX--LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

SECTION 1. GENERAL COUNCIL AFFILIATED

It will be the responsibility of the district presbytery to determine when an assembly has reached a state of growth, stability, and maturity qualifying it for affiliation with the General Council of the Assemblies of God. Qualifications shall include a minimum acting voting membership of 20 persons. In cases where there are fewer than 20 voting members, an exception may be granted by the District, in compliance with General Presbytery policy, and provided that the church has demonstrated the capacity for self-governance. The assembly shall have matured to a point where a sufficient number of qualified persons are available for the offices called for in its constitution and bylaws.

The procedure for affiliation shall be:

- A. A church desiring affiliation shall forward its request to the office of the district in which it is located. The district council shall provide an approved application form and procedural instructions.
- B. The meeting in which an assembly shall be set in order shall be presided over by an officer of the district who shall assist the assembly in the adoption of a constitution and bylaws acceptable to the district.
- C. An existing, mature church that desires to affiliate with The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall apply to the office of the district council for guidance and assistance.
- D. Upon approval by the district presbytery, the application for affiliation shall be forwarded to the general secretary of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Recognition of affiliation shall occur upon receipt by the assembly of an official Certificate of Affiliation issued by the general secretary.

SECTION 2. ANNUAL REPORT FROM ASSEMBLIES

Each church of the Assemblies of God is requested to keep a current record of its membership and to report this information annually, on forms provided, to the office of the district secretary and the General Council secretary.

SECTION 3. SAFEGUARDING THE ASSEMBLIES

- A. Pastors and leaders of assemblies should make proper investigation of persons who seek to gain entrance to teach, minister, or pastor. Use of the platform should be denied until spiritual integrity and reliability have been determined. It is recommended that Assemblies of God churches use Assemblies of God ministers since the use of non-Assemblies of God ministers may bring confusion and problems detrimental to the Fellowship.
- B. No minister dismissed by the Assemblies of God may be allowed to pastor or have ministry in an Assemblies of God church. Pastors and district officials should maintain an exchange of information regarding dismissed ministers known to be seeking ministry in our assemblies.

SECTION 4. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHURCHES, DISTRICT COUNCILS, AND THE GENERAL COUNCIL

- A. Nature. General Council affiliated churches are deemed to be sovereign, autonomous, self-governing, and self-determining bodies which have, by their sovereign, self-determining action in making application for and receiving recognition as a General Council affiliated church, entered into an agreement with the Fellowship to be amenable to the General Council and district council in matters of doctrine and conduct. (See GC Constitution Article XI, Sect. 1, d.)
- B. Relationships. *Cooperative Fellowship* describes both the relationship that exists between local churches and their relationships with the district councils and the General Council.
- C. Organizational assistance. The services of both the General Council and district council are available to assist the General Council affiliated church in dealing with any of its problems, either internal or external, when requested by the pastor or a majority of the official board of the church or a petition signed by 30 percent of the voting members.
- D. Preservation of affiliation. In the event the termination of affiliation with the General Council of the Assemblies of God is

BYLAWS

under consideration by an affiliated assembly, the pastor or board shall invite the district officers to participate in a specially called business meeting for the express purpose of giving the district officers the opportunity to present the case for continued General Council affiliation. Final disposition of the matter may then proceed in accordance with the constitution and bylaws of the local church.

E. District Supervision

1. An assembly may be declared under District Supervision due to existing confusion therein, inability to govern itself, unable to secure or retain a pastor, danger of property loss, division of membership, imposed leadership, unscriptural teachings or practice, or divisive conditions.
2. The District Supervision is understood to be an emergency action to safeguard and preserve the church and its rightful and scriptural activities until the adverse condition is corrected.

SECTION 5. GUIDELINES FOR MINIMAL MEMBERSHIP FOR GENERAL COUNCIL AFFILIATED ASSEMBLIES

If a General Council affiliated church is unable to meet any of the criteria for affiliation as set forth in the Constitution, Article XI, Section 3, a, it shall seek the assistance of the district officers for help in maintaining the minimal requirement for General Council affiliation. The district may use any means prescribed by its bylaws to assist the church in returning to a position of strength. If the minimal requirements have not been attained, the church shall revert to district affiliated status until the minimal requirements for General Council affiliation have been attained or an exception has been granted in accordance with Article XI, Section 3., Paragraph B., 3.

SECTION 6. DISTRICT AFFILIATED CHURCHES

A. Procedure to Become District Affiliated.

1. Local groups desiring recognition and affiliation as members of the Mississippi District Council may apply to the District through the Presbyter of the section in which they are located.
2. The Superintendent or Sectional Presbyter, or someone they may appoint, shall conduct a business meeting with the group to determine its qualifications for District affiliation.

BYLAWS

3. The group may be received into the Mississippi District Council of the Assemblies of God fellowship (by the Superintendent and Sectional Committee) if it meets the requirements in doctrine, practice, cooperation and Bylaws, and agrees to be governed thereby. Refusal to accept the group may be determined by the Superintendent and Sectional Committee.
4. A New Church Opened Form, furnished by the District Office, shall be completed at the time the group is accepted into the District Council fellowship.
5. Assistance shall be given to the church by the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyter for the selection of church officers, a pastor, and other business matters, as needed.

B. Rights and Privileges

1. A District affiliated church shall have the right to own its own property, elect its official board and officers, call its pastor, and such like important matters. However, this liberty shall in no wise be used to flaunt or contradict the General Council or District Council Constitution and Bylaws, or standard of doctrine and practice, or lower the same, or violate the spirit of fellowship in the Council.
2. The District affiliated assembly may have representation at the District Council, and Sectional Council meetings, by one lay delegate. Such delegate shall be able to interpret and represent the desires of his/her assembly, and shall be entitled to full speaking and voting privileges at the Council. Such delegate shall be furnished a letter of authorization by his/her assembly, as its representative in the Council.
3. District Council affiliated assemblies shall be encouraged to proceed to the status of sovereign General Council affiliated assemblies.
4. A District affiliated church shall not have the right to sell its own property without written consent of the District Executive Presbytery.

C. District Supervised

1. An assembly may be declared under District Supervision due to existing confusion therein, inability to govern itself, unable to secure or retain a pastor, danger of property loss,

BYLAWS

division of membership, imposed leadership, unscriptural teachings or practice, or divisive conditions.

2. The District Supervision is understood to be an emergency action to safeguard and preserve the church and its rightful and scriptural activities until the adverse condition is corrected.

SECTION 7. PARENT AFFILIATED CHURCHES (PAC)

- A. All sovereign churches desiring multiple meeting sites which result in distinct congregations from the Parent congregation shall complete all necessary paperwork (applications) required by the General and/or District Councils.
- B. If the PAC is approved it becomes the sole responsibility (legal, financial and organizational) of the Parent Church and reported by the Parent Church in its Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR).
- C. The PAC shall have no delegate recognized at the District Council nor will credentialed staff unless their credential is registered with the Mississippi District.

SECTION 8. DISTRICT SUPERVISED CHURCHES/POLICY FOR DISTRICT SUPERVISED CHURCHES

A. Defined

1. An assembly that is subject to the District Officiary for guidance and supervision in all matters, including its transactions, legal or otherwise, elections or appointments and operational affairs. It shall not have the authority to sell, lease, rent, alter or dispose of any church property, real or chattel, without the written consent of the District Superintendent.
2. When a church is declared under District Supervision the Official Board of the Assembly and all offices and positions are thereby vacated, with the exception of the pastorate, and the District recommended "Constitution and bylaws for local churches" shall become the governing document.
3. The assembly shall not conduct any business such as the election of officers, Members may be received as approved by the District Superintendent and sectional committee.

B. Reasons for District Supervision

1. An assembly may be declared under District Supervision due to existing confusion therein, inability to govern itself, unable to secure or retain a pastor, danger of property loss,

BYLAWS

division of membership, imposed leadership, unscriptural teachings or practice, or divisive conditions.

2. The District Supervision is understood to be an emergency action to safeguard and preserve the church and its rightful and scriptural activities until the adverse condition is corrected.

C. Declarations of District Supervision

1. The declaration of District Supervision may be made in person by the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyterian of the section in which the church is located, or by a letter to the pastor, church secretary, or official board from the District Superintendent.
2. The pastor, majority of church board, or 30% of membership of the assembly may make request to the District Superintendent or Sectional Presbyterian for District Supervision for its protection or any good and valid reason, such as prevailing conditions as stated in section 7, B, I.
3. There shall be a proper investigation by the sectional committee who shall make a recommendation to the District Superintendent as to what action if any should be taken. It is recommended that any investigation utilizing polls, surveys, etc., not include an expression of the congregation's desire regarding District Supervision.
4. In case of an emergency, a church may be declared under District Supervision by the District Superintendent, if in the course of a business meeting, or at any time a state of confusion or conditions exist, so as to interrupt, interfere with, or to make difficult, the progress of the meeting. The Sectional Presbyterian shall be informed when a church is placed under District Supervision by emergency action.

D. Procedures for District Supervision

1. The proper channel of communication is through the Presbyterian, who shall keep the Superintendent informed and seek the Superintendent's recommendations.
2. Any specific course of action shall have the unanimous agreement of the participating sectional officers and the District Superintendent. Should a unanimous agreement not be possible the other members of the Executive Presbytery shall be consulted, and a majority vote of the participating sectional officers and Executive Presbytery shall prevail. In

BYLAWS

the event of a tie vote, a majority decision of the Executive Presbytery shall prevail.

E. Appointments

1. The District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyter shall interview and appoint the pastor.
 - a. The office of pastor during District Supervision shall not be vacated except by resignation or majority vote of the sectional committee and District Superintendent. In the event of moral failure or violation of ministerial ethics, the applicable District and General Council Bylaws shall apply.
 - b. Votes of confidence or other expressions regarding the pastor shall not be permitted during District Supervision.
2. There shall be no official board. A steering committee may be appointed by the District Superintendent from names selected by the sectional committee at the discretion of the Superintendent, the congregation may express itself in the selection of committee members from nominees presented by the sectional committee.
3. All other officers shall meet the qualifications for office as set forth in the recommended Constitution and Bylaws for local churches and shall be selected in the manner described in item 2 above.

F. Reporting and Pastor Amenability

1. The pastor shall submit a written report monthly, on the church status financially, attendance, etc., to the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyter on the form furnished by the District Office.
2. The pastor is amenable to the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyter in all matters of the church's operation.
3. The pastor shall clear any proposed new courses of action, programs, or changes with the sectional committee. If the plans are of major consequence, the sectional committee shall consult with the Superintendent through the Presbyter.

G. Rights and Privileges

1. The pastor or official board shall have the right to appeal the action of District Supervision to the District Executive Presbytery and District Presbytery Board.
2. The District Supervised church may have representation at the District Council and Sectional Council meetings by one

BYLAWS

lay delegate. Such delegate shall be able to interpret and represent the desires of his/her assembly and shall be entitled to full speaking and voting privileges at the Council. Such delegate shall be furnished a letter of authorization by his/her assembly as its representative in the Council.

H. Transition from District Supervision

1. When conditions for which cause the assembly was placed under District Supervision have been corrected as determined by the Sectional Committee and District Superintendent and the requirements and qualifications of the District Council Constitution and Bylaws are met, the assembly may be allowed to return to its former status of sovereignty or District Affiliation.
2. The return of the assembly to the desired status may be initiated by the District Superintendent, Sectional Committee, pastor, or church.

SECTION 9. GOVERNMENT

- A. (See Constitution Article XI, Section 3 E. See also Recommended Constitution and Bylaws in this book.)
- B. Optional Church Governance Models that have been approved by the District Presbytery Board are available.

SECTION 10. NEW ASSEMBLIES

- A. The planting of new churches shall be a priority goal of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Resources at all levels shall be aligned to accomplish this purpose. Initiative for establishing new churches and the oversight of those churches may emanate from local assemblies, sections, and district councils. District presbyteries, sectional committees, or the authorities within a district charged with the responsibility of approving new churches shall not prohibit the planting of new churches unless a compelling reason exists. If it is determined that a compelling reason exists, a minister or local church desiring to plant the church shall have the right to appeal to their district presbytery or authorities within a district charged with the responsibility of approving new churches, and the decision of the district may be appealed to the General Council Executive Presbytery whose decision shall be final.
- B. All ministers desiring to begin new churches shall be required to consult the Home Missions Director and Sectional Committee of that respective Section. He is to work in accord with all

BYLAWS

concerned. Failure to abide by this policy may affect the standing of the minister in the District. (See Article XVII, Section 2. Home Missions)

SECTION 11. ASSEMBLIES RESULTING FROM A DIVISION

- A. Status of assembly.** When efforts to maintain unity and harmony in an assembly have failed, and a division results in a new congregation being formed, the district should exercise strong and wise leadership in ascertaining the facts and seek to preserve Assemblies of God adherents for the Fellowship. Within the bounds of ethical principles, sound doctrine, and district policy, all districts should seek to retain any meritorious group within the Assemblies of God .
- B. Status of minister.** Circumstances in each case will determine whether the minister should be disciplined or denied ministry in either the original church or the dissident group, or even residency in the area where the division occurred. If a minister is guilty of inappropriate conduct resulting in a division, the district presbytery shall deal appropriately with the minister as provided in Article X, Section 3, of the General Council Bylaws.

SECTION 12. TRANSFER OF LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

- A. Letter of introduction.** It is recommended that members request a letter of introduction from the church of which they are a member to be sent by mail to the church with which they desire to affiliate.
- B. Acknowledgment of transfer.** It is recommended that the receiving church shall give an acknowledgment of transfer to the former church.

SECTION 13. CHURCH PROPERTY

A. Deeds

1. The following form may be used in deeding church property to the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God in conformity with District Constitution and Bylaws.

WARRANTY DEED

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00), cash in hand paid, and other good, legal and valuable considerations, the receipt and sufficiency of all of which is hereby acknowledged, I/we _____

BYLAWS

hereby sell, convey and warrant unto MISSISSIPPI DISTRICT COUNCIL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, a Mississippi non-profit corporation, the following land and property lying and being situated in _____ County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as follows:

(legal description)

There is excepted from the warranty hereof all protective covenants, easements and prior mineral reservations of record.

WITNESS the signature(s) of the Grantor(s), this the _____ day of _____, 20____.

(Signature)

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

COUNTY OF _____

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the aforesaid jurisdiction, the within named _____

_____, who acknowledge that _____ he/she/they signed and delivered the above and foregoing Warranty Deed on the day and year therein mentioned for the purposes therein expressed.

WITNESS MY HAND and official seal of office, this the _____ day of _____, 20____.

My Commission Expires:
Notary Public

2. The following form may be used in deeding church property to the local Assembly of God in conformity with District Constitution and Bylaws

WARRANTY DEED

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00), cash in hand paid, and other good, legal and valuable considerations, the receipt and sufficiency of all of which is hereby acknowledged,

I/we _____

(names)

hereby sell, convey and warrant unto _____

and _____ Trustees for

BYLAWS

_____ of
_____ (name of church)

_____ Mississippi, and their successors in office, (in trust nevertheless, for the use and benefit of such local church and of the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God), the following land and property lying and being situated in _____ County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as follows:
(Legal Description)

The property described shall be used for worship, according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God, within the State of Mississippi. In the event said property should cease to be used for such purposes due to lack of membership, or in the event the congregation should sever its affiliation with the Assemblies of God organization, the members of the District Presbytery of said Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God organization shall become successor trustees (with all powers under the right Uniform Trustees' Powers Act of Mississippi) and shall have the right to use and hold said property and dispose of same for the furtherance of the Gospel within the District.

Excepted from the warranty hereof are all restrictive covenants, right-of-ways, easements and mineral reservations of record pertaining to said property.

WITNESS the signature(s) of the Grantor(s), this the _____ day of _____, 20____, A.D.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF _____

THIS DAY PERSONALLY appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the State and County aforesaid _____ and _____ who acknowledged that he signed, executed and delivered the above and foregoing instrument of writing on the day and year therein mentioned.

BYLAWS

GIVEN under my hand and official seal of office, this the _____ day of _____, 20____ A.D.

Notary Public
My Commission Expires:
Grantor(s)' Address:
Grantees' Address:

ARTICLE XX-- YOUTH DEPARTMENT

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION AND NAME

There shall be a youth organization called "the Department of Youth Ministries of The Mississippi Assemblies of God".

SECTION 2. MISSION

The mission of the Mississippi District Youth Ministries is to equip the church to **WIN, BUILD, and SEND** students to fulfill the Great Commission.

- A. Win** - To provide an adequate presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to every student before high school graduation.
- B. Build** - To disciple students and leaders in their understanding of God's revelation and their walk with Him and to further discover and develop their ministry potential.
- C. Send** - To commission students, leaders, and resources to assist in world evangelization.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES

This mission will be achieved by fulfilling the following ministry objectives:

- A.** Establishing a vigorous youth ministry in every church.
- B.** Encouraging and promoting ministry to youth in every section and local church.
- C.** Training and equipping youth leaders.
- D.** Giving every student a clear, personal presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ before high school graduation.
- E.** Involving every student in the process of evangelism and discipleship.
- F.** Involving every student in the cause of world evangelization.

The primary focus of ministry shall be to:

- A.** Persons age 12 through 19 (in education, sixth grade through twelfth grade);
- B.** Students and sectional and local youth leaders.

SECTION 4. Methodology

This mission and these objectives will be achieved, in part, through the following strategic methods and means:

- A. *Winning Through Student Outreach*** - Establish campus ministry in Mississippi's secondary schools through the Youth Alive strategy which includes:
 - 1. The Seven Project outreach through Internet, Seven school assemblies, 7@Night community events, and resource tools.
 - 2. Recruiting and sending faithful students as campus missionaries to their respective campuses.
 - 3. Youth Alive Campus Clubs for students to gather and share the truths of God.
 - 4. Prayer Zone Partners to bathe the campus and its people in prayer.
- B. *Building Through Student Discipleship and Leadership Development*** - Establish healthy ministry development for youth, leaders, and churches by:
 - 1. Resourcing believers in their daily walk in consistent, spiritual growth.
 - 2. Helping students develop and discover their ministry gifts through a Fine Arts Festival and related ministries.
 - 3. Providing a leadership resource ministry that networks with our churches and youth leaders to further ministry development.
 - 4. Promoting Scripture memorization and study for students through the ministry of Bible Quiz.
 - 5. Providing varied resources for evangelism, discipleship, leadership development and missions ministry through National Youth Ministries resources and *On Course* magazine.
- C. *Sending through Student Missions*** - Further the cause of world evangelization by:
 - 1. Commissioning students and leaders for missions trips through Ambassadors in Mission (AIM).
 - 2. Providing Assemblies of God missionaries with transportation and communication equipment for the purpose of evangelism through Speed the Light (STL).

BYLAWS

SECTION 5. MEMBERSHIP

- A.** The membership of the Department of Youth Ministries of The Mississippi Assemblies of God shall consist of all local groups of students.
- B.** Each Youth Group shall define the membership requirements of its members.

SECTION 6. OFFICERS

A. District

- 1. The officers of the Association shall consist of a Director and Assistant Director.
- 2. The District Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the District Youth Department.

B. Sectional

- 1. There should be a Sectional Representative in each section in the District.

SECTION 7. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS

A. Director

The District Director shall be an Ordained minister of the Mississippi District, having resided at least 12 consecutive months in the District prior to appointment and actively engaged in the full time ministry at the time of his initial appointment.

B. Assistant Director

The Assistant Director shall have the same qualifications as those required for the Director.

C. Sectional Representative

The Sectional Representative shall be a mature person, filled with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4 with a thorough understanding of youth ministries and willing to perform his duties. He must be a member in good standing in an Assemblies of God church.

SECTION 8. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

A. Director

- 1. To preside at conventions and business sessions of the organization.
- 2. To be an ex-officio member of all committees and present at the meetings of the same.
- 3. To be present whenever possible at Sectional Rallies.
- 4. To perform any other functions, usual and customary, as a presiding officer or such as may be directed by the Youth Department organization.

BYLAWS

5. To visit local churches in the interest of the Youth.
6. To assist in organizing local Youth Departments.
7. He shall gather material for the Youth page in the District paper, "*The Advocate*," to provide information on Youth activities.
8. He shall be a full time officer.
9. By virtue of his office he shall be a voting member of the District Presbytery.

B. Assistant Director

1. To preside at all meetings in the absence of the Director.
2. To assist the Director generally in his other duties and activities.
3. He shall promote and be present at all Youth Department events.
4. To perform any other functions under the supervision of the Director.

C. Treasurer shall be the District Secretary-Treasurer

1. To keep a true and business-like record of all receipts and disbursements and to prepare a complete financial report for the annual District Council.
2. To be entrusted with all Youth Department funds, and to disburse the funds under the direction of the District Youth Director and the Executive Presbytery.

D. Sectional Representative

1. He shall promote and supervise the Youth activities in his section under the direction of the District Youth Department Director and in cooperation with the Sectional Presbyter.
2. He shall promote and direct Youth Rallies, and keep an up-to-date record of the local Youth leaders and pastors in his section.
3. He shall make a report of the Youth activities in his section as may be requested by the District Youth Department Director.
4. He shall assist in organizing local groups.
5. He shall receive and forward Sectional Rally offerings and other money to the District Treasurer.
6. He is to encourage local Youth groups to send in monthly offerings for the support of the District Youth Department.
7. He shall promote the events sponsored by the Youth Department and attend at least one major event each year.

SECTION 9. ELECTION/APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

A. Director

The director shall be appointed by the Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery.

B. Assistant Director

The Assistant Director shall be appointed by the District Youth Director in consultation with the District Superintendent.

C. Section Representative

Sectional Youth Representatives shall be appointed by the District Youth Director in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter.

SECTION 10. TERM OF OFFICE FOR OFFICERS

A. Director

The Youth Department Director shall serve at the pleasure of the District Superintendent with an annual review scheduled early in the year to confirm the unity and focus of the department with that of the overall vision of the District.

B. Assistant Director

The Youth Department Assistant Director shall be appointed for an indefinite term with an annual review.

C. Sectional Youth Representative

The appointment shall serve as long as the Representative and Director agree of its advisability.

SECTION 11. MEETINGS

A. There shall be a Youth Ministries Convention, Youth Camps, Speed-the-Light tour, and such other meetings as may be deemed advisable from time to time.

B. The dates for the District Youth Ministries Convention shall be decided by the District Youth Director in consultation with the District Executive Presbytery and/or the District Presbytery.

C. The Youth of each section shall hold Youth Rallies under the direction of the Sectional Youth Representative and in cooperation with the Sectional Presbyter.

SECTION 12. COMMITTEES

District

A. There shall be Youth Ministries Committees composed of persons interested in youth ministries who shall be appointed by the District Youth Director in consultation with the District Superintendent and serve under the authority of the District Youth Director.

BYLAWS

- B. The District Youth Director may appoint interested persons to assist him with district youth events such as: Summer Camp, Youth Ministries Conference, etc.

SECTION 13. FINANCE

A. Director's Salary and Expenses

He shall receive a salary in accordance with the policy formulated by the District Presbytery Board.

- B. **The mileage expense and other expenses** shall be set by the District Presbytery Board. The District Presbytery shall act to provide a suitable retirement program for the Youth Department Director through the Youth Department.

C. General

- 1 Each church is requested to annually budget a specified amount of monthly support of at least ten dollars, for the District Youth Department whether or not the church has an active youth group. This amount may be contributed in whole or in part by the local youth group of the church.
- 2 Each local youth group is requested to send tithes from all fund raising projects for the support of the District Youth Department.
3. All offerings from the Sectional Youth Rallies are to be sent to the District Youth Department unless a Sectional Fund has been established. In such cases the Sectional Fund Policy shall dictate the division of the offerings for the Sectional Youth Fund and District Youth Department.
4. When a District Youth Department officer visits a group, an offering should be taken to defray his expense.
5. The eighteen percent returned to the district under World Speed-the-Light shall be for furthering the work of district youth ministry through the district youth ministries office.
6. Two percent of all minister's tithes received by the District Secretary-Treasurer shall be designated for the District Youth Ministries.

SECTION 14. VACANCIES

A. Director

Vacancy in the office of the District Youth Department Director shall be filled by the District Superintendent in a timely but considered process to assure the continuity of the District vision statement, the appointment to be ratified by the District Presbytery.

BYLAWS

B. Sectional Representatives

In the event of vacancies the District Youth Director in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter shall make an appointment to fill the vacated office.

C. Area Representatives

In the event of vacancies, the District Youth Director in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter shall make an appointment to fill the vacancy.

SECTION 15. NEW GROUPS

When a local group of young people desire information concerning Youth Ministries of the Mississippi District Council, they shall contact the District Youth Director who will mail them necessary information.

SECTION 16. RELATIONSHIP

All local Youth Groups shall be considered a department of the local church under the supervision of the pastor whose counsel, advice and direction shall be respected in all activities of the group. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and must be honored as a guide in all matters of service and fellowship.

SECTION 17. LOCAL CLASS GOVERNMENT

Each Youth Group should secure a copy of suggested Constitution and Bylaws for local groups, published by the National Youth Ministries in Springfield, Missouri.

ARTICLE XXI - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION AND NAME

There shall be a District Christian Education Department of the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

- A.** To coordinate national, district, sectional, and local Christian Education efforts toward greater efficiency, growth, and development, and to encourage every Christian Educational department in the District to attain to the National Christian Education Standard.
- B.** To evangelize, as well as, to educate and indoctrinate all age groups and to stress Christian service through Christian Education by developing and suggesting methods of reaching the lost in obedience to Commission. Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18.
- C.** To stimulate a vision for World Missions.

BYLAWS

- D. To provide assistance to local schools when needed and requested.
- E. To promote greater efficiency and numerical growth among the already established schools.
- F. To promote methods of Christian Education work in harmony with our National Christian Education Department, and to cooperate with local pastors in fostering the development of Christian Education in the local assemblies.

SECTION 3. OFFICERS

- A. The officers of the department shall be a District Christian Education Director and a Sectional Representative from each section in the State.
- B. The Secretary-Treasurer of the District shall serve as treasurer of the Christian Education Department.

SECTION 4. QUALIFICATIONS

A. District Christian Education Director

The District Christian Education Director shall be a properly qualified, Ordained minister, who has resided in the District long enough to be thoroughly familiar with its activities and policies.

B. Sectional Representatives

The Sectional Representative shall be a Spirit-filled individual with knowledge, training, and experience in the field of Christian Education. He shall be a member in good standing with an Assemblies of God church in the section in which he resides. He must be willing to be further trained to better perform his duties.

SECTION 5. DUTIES

A. District Director

1. He shall direct the activities of the Christian Education Department of the District and assist in the opening and establishing of new Sunday Schools and other Christian education ministries in cooperation with the ministers, pastors, and presbyters in a given area.
2. He shall conduct District and Sectional Christian Education conferences, seminars, and generally promote the building of Christ-honoring schools.
3. He shall encourage monthly worker's conferences of local Sunday School personnel and shall be available, as his schedule permits, to assist in these conferences as requested by the local pastor.

BYLAWS

4. He shall encourage each church to conduct an annual Worker's Training Course.
5. He shall assist the Sectional Christian Education Representatives in carrying out the National and District Christian Education programs on the sectional level through rallies, seminars, etc.
6. He shall direct District Christian Education activities held in conjunction with District meetings.
7. He shall keep such files as are necessary in order to be familiar with the needs of local departments and to offer suggestions upon request.

B. Sectional Representatives

1. Assist the District Director in carrying out the programs of the District Christian Education Department.
2. To promote the Christian education program and policies in their respective sections in cooperation with the Sectional Presbyter and pastors in the section.
3. He shall report to the District Christian Education Director the Sunday School and other Christian education activities in his section.
4. His portfolio shall not include that of a Sectional Youth Representative.

SECTION 6. ELECTIONS

A. District Director

The portfolio of Christian Education Director shall be assigned to the District Youth Department Director or as directed by the District Presbytery.

B. Sectional Representative

He shall be nominated by the Christian Education Director and Sectional Presbyter, with the approval of the District Executive Presbytery, and ratified at the Sectional Council.

C. Filling a Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy between Sectional Councils, the District Christian Education Director in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter shall appoint a replacement.

SECTION 7. TERM OF OFFICE

A. District Director

Whereas, the Youth Department Director has the portfolio of the District Christian Education Director, his term of office shall

BYLAWS

conform to the District Youth Department Director's term of office. (If appointment is not changed by District Presbytery).

B. Sectional Representatives

The Sectional Representatives shall serve at the pleasure of the Christian Education Director's in consultation with the District Superintendent.

SECTION 8. FINANCE

- A. It is recommended that each Christian Education Department of the District systematically support this department with a tithe of their Sunday School offerings together with all offerings received at District and Sectional Sunday School Rallies and meetings which shall be used to support and defray the expenses of the District Christian Education Department.
- B. An offering shall be received for the director's expenses when he visits the local church.

ARTICLE XXII - DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

SECTION 1. NAME

This service organization shall be known as the Department of Woman's Ministries of the Mississippi District Assemblies of God structured to include Event Evangelism, Interest Groups, and the Auxiliary Program, Girls' Ministries for girls.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The purpose is to blend together the talents, abilities, and time of all women in the church, by involving them in prayer, Bible study, church hospitality, literature ministry, visitation, Missions study, mentoring and fellowship for a satisfying, fulfilling, and purposeful ministry.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this organization is to train all the women for effective ministry in the balanced support of World and Home Missions, Benevolence, District, Local and Community.

SECTION 4. MEMBERSHIP

All women who are members of the local church and other women who are born again and embrace the teaching and doctrines of the Assemblies of God and are in good standing with the local Assembly shall be eligible for membership in Women's Ministries.

SECTION 5. OFFICERS

- A. The Women’s Ministries Executive Officers** shall consist of the District Women’s Ministries Director, Assistant Director, District Girls’ Ministries Coordinator(s), and Women’s Ministries Secretary.
- B. Other Officers** shall be one Women’s Ministries Representative and one Girls’ Ministries Representative from each section of the District.
- C. Qualifications:**
1. All officers must be born again believers, Spirit filled according to Acts 2:4, a member in good standing with one of the local Assemblies of God churches in the Section which she represents. Officers shall have completed the applicable training manual within three months of election or appointment.
 2. Director and Assistant Director. Only those women shall be eligible for office who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4, and whose life and ministry are above question. They shall be of mature experience and ability and be in agreement with the purpose of the District Women’s Ministries, and shall have resided in the district for twelve consecutive months prior to election. They shall have completed, within three months of election, the “Girls’ Ministries Leader Training Guide” and “A Leader’s Guide for Successfully Ministering to Women”.
 3. District Girls’ Ministries Coordinator. The District Girls’ Ministries Coordinator shall have completed, within three months of appointment, the “Girls’ Ministries Leader Training Guide” and “A Leader’s Guide for Successfully Ministering to Women”. She shall serve under the supervision of the District Women’s Ministries Director.
 4. Secretary. Women eligible for appointment shall have knowledge of general business practices and shall be in agreement with the purpose and objective of District Women’s Ministries.
 5. Sectional Women’s Ministries Representatives. Women eligible for appointment must be members in good standing in a local Assembly of God in the section they are to represent. They must be in agreement with the purpose and objective of district Women’s Ministries and be willing to be

BYLAWS

trained for effective promotion of Women's Ministries by completing the current Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries leadership training courses and by attending workshops provided for training.

D. Elections / Appointments of Officers

1. The Director shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery.
2. The Assistant Women's Director shall be appointed by the Women's Ministries Director in consultation with the District Superintendent.
3. The District Women's Ministries Secretary and District Girls' Ministries Coordinator(s) shall be appointed by the District Women's Ministries Director, in consultation with the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery and announced to the District at the earliest convenience and means possible.
4. The Sectional Women's Ministries Representative shall be appointed at the time of the Sectional Council by the District Women's Ministries Director in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter.
5. The Sectional Girls' Ministries Representative shall be appointed at the time of Sectional Council by the District Women's Ministries Director and Girls' Ministries Coordinator in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter.

E. Term of Office

Those appointed to their respective positions shall serve an indefinite period with an annual review by the person for whose pleasure they serve.

SECTION 6. WOMEN'S MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The Women's Ministries Committee shall consist of the Director, Assistant Director, Girls Ministries Coordinator(s), Secretary and the Sectional Women's Ministries and Girls Ministries representatives.

SECTION 7. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

A. Director.

1. The District Director works with Women's Ministries on four different levels: National, District, Sectional, and Local.
2. She will represent the Mississippi District Women's Ministries at national meetings for Women's Ministries.

BYLAWS

3. She will prepare an annual budget, calendar, proposed plans, and annual report to be submitted to the District Superintendent.
4. She will provide pictures, news, and information for district publications.
5. She will develop plans, promote and conduct special events, activities, and projects for promoting and supporting the five areas of Women's Ministries.
6. She will solicit from the groups the items needed to maintain the Heartline Room.
7. She will maintain a supply of current literature for distribution to Women's Ministries groups.
8. She will maintain regular communication with local Women's Ministries groups, supplying them with Quarterly Report forms, and sharing new ideas, updates, and information.
9. She will encourage and promote participation in the national Women's Ministries programs – Touch the World Fund, Library Fund, and Adoption Plan.

B. Assistant Director

She will assist the director wherever needed in developing and promoting the activities of the District Women's Ministries.

C. Secretary

1. The official Women's Ministries secretary will be responsible for recording minutes of all Women's Ministries Committee meetings.
2. She will assist the director as needed at Women's Ministries events.

D. Treasurer

1. The District Treasurer will serve as Women's Ministries Treasurer.
2. He will disburse funds under the direction of the Women's Ministries Director in consultation with the Executive Presbytery.

E. Sectional Representative

1. The Sectional Representative shall attend all district and sectional Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries meetings, conventions, retreats, seminars, events and planning meetings.

BYLAWS

2. She will plan and promote sectional events for promotion of Women's Ministries purposes and projects. She will maintain contact with the Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries groups and be available for speaking engagements and training courses.
3. She will promote the formation and development of new Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries groups in all Assemblies of God churches in the section.
4. She will work in consultation with the Sectional Presbyter in planning and promoting meetings and projects.
5. She will send a copy of all her correspondence to the District Women's Ministries Director.

F. Girls' Ministries Coordinator

1. The District Girls' Ministries Coordinator shall complete the "Girls' Ministries Leader Training Guide" and "A Leader's Guide for Successfully Ministering to Women".
2. She will plan the District Girls' Ministries Celebration.
3. She will plan, promote, and conduct Girls' Ministries Camps.
4. She will be available, upon request, to teach Girls' Ministries Leadership training courses and to assist in organizing new clubs.
5. She will provide workshops for local Girls' Ministries leaders and Sectional Girls' Ministries Representatives.
6. She will cooperate with the District Women's Ministries Director in promoting all district projects.

SECTION 8. FINANCE

- A.** Support for the operation of the District Women's Ministries Department will consist of tithes from all Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries groups, annual chartering, budgeted support from churches, and percentages from Lovelink funds approved by the District Executive Presbytery.
- B.** Local churches or groups are requested and encouraged to pay the expenses for travel when the Director visits for ministry. Funds lacking in meeting the travel expenses to churches and when it is necessary for her to travel in the interest of District Women's Ministries shall be paid from the District Women's Ministries fund.
- C.** The District Women's Ministries Director shall tithe to the National Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries Department

BYLAWS

from the District Women's Ministries and Girls' Ministries funds in accordance with National Women's Ministries guidelines.

SECTION 9. ACTIVITIES

The Women's Ministries program of the Assemblies of God is built upon a solid foundation of vision and service, providing the local groups with an organizational pattern, a standard of excellence, and a sense of direction. We recommend special emphasis be placed on the following: Leadership training, regularly planned meetings, balanced ministry, adequate records, faithful stewardship, continuous enlargement and Girls' Ministries sponsorship.

ARTICLE XXIII-- DEPARTMENT OF MEN'S MINISTRIES

SECTION 1. NAME

This organization shall be known as the department of Men's Ministries of the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to stimulate the organization of local units of the Men's Ministries in the various churches of this District and to unite them together in fellowship and cooperative service.

SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Department of Men's Ministries shall consist of all duly organized local groups of Men's Departments.

SECTION 4. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

- A. The Department Officers of this organization shall be the District Director and others that may be appointed to assist him such as an Assistant Director and Secretary.
- B. They shall be amenable to the District Presbytery.

SECTION 5. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS

Men's Ministry officers shall be credentialed ministers in good standing with the Mississippi District Assemblies of God, having served in the District one year prior to appointment.

SECTION 6. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

- A. The District Men's Ministries Director shall be appointed by the District Superintendent with ratification by the District Presbytery.
- B. The Assistant Director, the Secretary, and the District Light for the Lost Representative shall be appointed by the Men's Ministry Director in consultation with the District Superintendent and shall be ratified by the District Presbytery.

BYLAWS

1. They shall have been a member of the Mississippi District for a period of one year prior to appointment.
 2. They shall meet the same qualifications as the Director at the time of their appointment.
- C.** In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Men's Ministry Director, a replacement shall be appointed by the District Superintendent in a timely but considered period of time and ratified by the District Presbytery.

SECTION 7. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND APPOINTEES

A. District Director

1. It shall be the duty of the District Director to encourage the organization of local men's departments in churches of the District, working in harmony with local pastors and the sectional committee.
2. He shall plan the various ministries of the Men's Ministries Department, working in harmony with local pastors and the sectional committee.
3. He shall plan the program at the District Men's Ministries meetings and preside at all other District Men's Ministries meetings.
4. He shall have the privilege of accepting invitations from pastors to preach and promote the Men's Ministries.
5. He shall hold quarterly staff meetings for the purpose of casting vision, planning events and strategizing.

B. Assistant Director. He shall assist the Director, perform such duties as may be assigned to him by the Director and shall attend all called and planned meetings.

C. Department Secretary. He shall record minutes of the meetings, perform other duties as may be directed by the officers of the Men's Department and shall attend all called and planned meetings.

D. Light for the Lost Representative

1. He shall promote and encourage the organization of Light for the Lost, the men's missionary program, in the churches of the District.
2. He shall plan meetings for the purpose of raising funds to provide our missionaries with printed evangelism literature and bibles.

BYLAWS

- E. Sectional Representatives.** They shall serve under the supervision of the Director, assist in promoting all facets of the Men's Ministry at sectional rallies, etc., in harmony with pastors and the sectional committee and attend all meetings called and planned.
- F. District Department sponsored activities.** All planned activities sponsored by the District Men's Department, such as Men's Retreats, Royal Ranger Pow-Wows, etc., shall be made in consultation with the District Superintendent, and it should be understood that all positions, elected or appointed, are considered to be active working positions.

SECTION 8. DISTRICT ROYAL RANGER COMMANDER

A. Appointment

1. The District Royal Ranger Commander shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery.
2. In the event of a vacancy, the District Superintendent shall appoint a replacement to fill the vacancy.

B. Duties

1. He and his staff shall serve under the supervision of the District Men's Director.
2. The District Commander shall, upon request, assist in organizing local Royal Ranger Outposts and conduct such Leadership Training Seminars, Commanders Conferences, Pow-Wows, etc. that are deemed necessary and helpful in implementing the Royal Ranger Ministry in the District.

C. Qualifications

1. The District Royal Ranger Commander shall be a man of mature Christian experience and filled with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4.
2. He shall be a member in good standing with an Assembly of God church in the District and have the recommendation of his pastor.
3. He shall be thoroughly acquainted with the District Royal Ranger Ministry and a resident of the District.
4. He shall have completed all training courses, including National Training Camp (NTC), the Leadership Training Course (LTC), and have Instructor Trainer (IT) status. He shall also meet the qualifications of a good commander as stated in the Royal Ranger Leaders' Manual.

BYLAWS

5. He shall have demonstrated a genuine interest in and involvement with the Royal Ranger Ministry, and adaptability for leadership, and in working with others.
6. His life must be free from any involvement in unlawful or criminal conduct.
7. He shall adhere to the descriptions and qualifications of a good commander as are stated in the Mississippi District and National Royal Ranger Guidelines and Regulation Manuals.
8. He shall be exemplary in integrity, Christian commitment, conduct and attitude as a commendable influence on the men and boys of the District Royal Ranger Ministry.

SECTION 9. DISTRICT ROYAL RANGER SUPPLY CENTER

- A. A Royal Ranger Supply Center may be established for the provision of supplies, materials, and related items useful to this worthy ministry.
- B. The Royal Ranger Supply Center shall be operated by a policy established by the District Royal Ranger Commander, Men's Ministries Director, and Executive Presbytery, and ratified by the District Presbytery Board.

SECTION 10. MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called by the District Director with the consent of the District Presbytery or the District Superintendent.

SECTION 11. FINANCE

- A. Support for the operation of the District Men's Ministries Department will consist of regular monthly offerings from local Men's Ministries groups, support from churches, and as provided for by Article VII, Section 1.
- B. It is recommended that local churches or Men's Groups receive an offering for the Director or Royal Ranger Commander when he visits the local church. If the offering is not adequate to cover the traveling expenses, the deficit shall be paid by the Treasurer from the Men's Ministries Fund. If an offering is not received for Men's Department officers when they participate in Sectional, District, or General Council meetings, expenses shall be paid from the District Department of Men's Ministries.

SECTION 12. LOCAL GROUPS

It is recommended to local Assemblies of God within this District that they organize the men of their churches by incorporating this

BYLAWS

article in their local church bylaws under the title of The Department of Men's Ministries.

A. Membership

There shall be a Department of Men's Ministries in this church consisting of all men who wish to attend.

B. Purpose and Objectives

In general, the purpose of this fellowship is to provide opportunity for the men of this church to have closer fellowship with each other and cooperate in assisting the pastor in accomplishing the objectives for which the church exists.

In particular, the objectives of the Men's Ministries are:

1. To win unsaved men to Christ.
2. To help spread the doctrine of our church.
3. To conduct or assist in the outreach and evangelistic ministries of the church.
4. To promote and participate in the Foreign and Home Missions programs.
5. To assist in the promotion of Christian Education ministries and other educational activities of the church.
6. To exercise a fatherly interest in and care for the boys of the church.
7. To support and promote the benevolent enterprises of the church such as: disaster relief, aid to the needy, aged ministers assistance, orphanages, Ministers Benefit Association (MBA), or the pastor's pension fund.
8. To assist with the ministry of the Gospel message through various means of communication.
9. To assist the pastor and official board in carrying the financial burden of the church.
10. To aid in advertising the church and its activities.
11. To help in maintaining the physical properties of the church.
12. To take care that the church is officially represented by delegates at Sectional, District and General Council meetings.

C. Officers

The officers of this Department of Men's Ministries shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary-Treasurer. These officers shall form the Executive Committee of the Men's Department. The Executive Committee shall hold its own meetings at least monthly, at the call of the President.

BYLAWS

D. Meetings

Regular meetings of this Department of Men's Ministries should be held at least monthly; special meetings may be called by the pastor or the executive Committee of the organization. The time and place of all meetings shall be set by the Executive Committee in consultation with the pastor.

Business meetings of this organization shall be held annually, at which time there shall be an election of officers. A majority vote shall be required for election. All officers shall be elected for a term of one year from among the members of the department. The officers shall be members of this local church.

E. Relationship

The Men's Department shall always be loyal and cooperate with the pastor of the church and to its program. Care should be taken not to conflict in its services with the regular services of the whole church or to launch any program which is not consistent or in harmony with the general program of the church as promoted by the pastor or the official board.

The Men's Department of this local church considers itself a part of and a unit in any Sectional, District, or general organization of the Department of Men's Ministries of the Assemblies of God which may develop, and will cooperate with such larger units.

F. Finance

It is recommended that each local Men's group send a monthly offering to the District office for the promotion of the Department of Men's Ministries on the District level.

ARTICLE XXIV – DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESPONSE

SECTION 1. NAME

This service organization shall be known as the Department of Disaster Response of the Mississippi District Assemblies of God.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The purpose is to respond to disasters that occur within the geographical boundaries of the State of Mississippi as well as such occurrences in other states.

SECTION 3. FOCUS AREAS

The disaster response team will focus on administrative, safety and training, communications, logistics, volunteers and outreach.

BYLAWS

SECTION 4. RESPONSE TEAM

- A. The response team will be comprised of a District director, assistant director, volunteer management director, safety and training coordinator, communications director, logistics coordinator and outreach coordinator; a person may serve in more than one position.
- B. The director and team leaders of the MS District Disaster Response Department may be compensated for their service as outlined in the MS District Disaster Response Department Policy and Procedures Manual.

SECTION 5. QUALIFICATIONS

Members of the response team may be ministers or laypersons. Each must have administrative skills and abilities in the specific area of responsibility. A background of training and experience in emergency and disaster events is required or one must be willing to receive such training.

SECTION 6. APPOINTMENTS / VACANCIES

- A. The department director shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery Board - said appointment shall be announced at the District Council.
- B. The assistant director and other response team members are to be appointed by the director in consultation with the District Superintendent - said appointments shall be announced at the District Council.
- C. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the director, the District Superintendent shall appoint a replacement in a timely but considered process and be ratified by the Presbytery Board. Other team member vacancies shall be filled by appointment as outlined in Section 7-B, completing an unexpired term.

SECTION 7. TERM OF OFFICE

- A. The director shall serve at the pleasure of the District Superintendent.
- B. The assistant director and all other team members shall be appointed annually; term of office to begin 30 days following the District Council.

SECTION 8. DUTIES OF TEAM MEMBERS

All team members are responsible for the duties set forth in the current Disaster Response Team Manual adopted by the District Presbytery Board. A copy is presented to the team members at the time of appointment.

BYLAWS

SECTION 9. FINANCING

- A. The director shall, in consultation with the response team and the Executive Presbytery, prepare and present to the District Presbytery Board an operational budget, annually. Such budget to be approved by the said Board.
- B. Churches, individuals and others are encouraged to regularly support this department. The director may solicit support by mail, phone, personal visit to churches and other venues.
- C. Support shall also come from special appeals.

SECTION 10. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- A. All equipment and supplies belonging to the Disaster Response Department, being used, stored or warehoused, remains the property of the department and is to be used solely for the purpose set forth for the operation of the department and its disaster response efforts.
- B. The director is the agent of responsibility for all equipment and supplies.

SECTION 11. OPERATIONAL POLICY

There shall be a written policy by which the Department of Disaster Response operates as adopted and revised by the District Presbytery Board.

ARTICLE XXV - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the District Council by a majority vote of all members present.

RECOMMENDED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS FOR LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF

Adopted this _____ day of _____, state of _____

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, Our Heavenly Father to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Ghost may be honored according to our distinctive testimony to

BYLAWS

assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands; we, whose names appear on the assembly roster under the above date, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with and a part of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

**CONSTITUTION
ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this Assembly shall be _____ of the city of _____ state of _____

ARTICLE II - PREROGATIVES

SECTION 1. TO GOVERN

This assembly shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph, 4:3,13.

SECTION 2. TO ACQUIRE AND DISPOSE

In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purpose; all in accordance with its Constitution and Bylaws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

SECTION 3. TO COOPERATE

This assembly shall cooperate with the District Council and the General Council to extend the work and kingdom of God throughout the world. It shall support the missionary program as agreed upon. It shall participate in District Council and General Council sessions through its chosen delegates and share in the support of the ministries of these bodies.

SECTION 4. TO RECOGNIZE

This assembly shall recognize that the District Council and the General Council have the authority and right to approve scriptural

BYLAWS

doctrine and conduct and to withdraw their certificates of membership if deemed necessary.

ARTICLE III - AFFILIATION

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs, this assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith associated in the Mississippi District Council, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoyed by that affiliation. By its affiliation, the assembly - pastors, officers, and members - agree to submit to the authority of and be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of both the Mississippi District Council of the Assemblies of God and the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

ARTICLE IV - TENETS OF FAITH

This assembly shall accept the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule for faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths approved by the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing. I Cor. 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this Statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full Gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all Biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Tim. 3:15-17; I Thess. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (Deut. 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

THE ADORABLE GODHEAD

a. **Terms Defined**

The terms 'Trinity' and 'Person', as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scripture, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We, therefore, may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely Scriptural (examples, Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:16,17).

b. **Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead**

Christ taught a distinction of Person in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained. (Luke 1:35; 1 Cor. 1:24; Matt. 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; I John 1:3,4).

c. **Unity of the One Being of Father, Son and Holy Ghost**

According, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Ghost which constitutes Him the Holy Ghost and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore, the Father is the Begetter, the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Ghost is the one proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18;15:26; 17:11,21; Zech. 14:9).

d. **Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead**

The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are never identical as to Person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence, neither Person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30,32,37; John 8:17, 18).

e. The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

The appellation, "Lord Jesus Christ," is a proper name. It is never applied, in the New Testament, either to the Father or the Holy Ghost. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Rom. 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

f. The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore acknowledged to be both God and man; who, because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us (Matt. 1:23; I John 4:2, 10:14; Rev. 1:13,17).

g. The Title, Son of God

Since the name "Immanuel" embraces both God and man in the one Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title, Son of God, describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title, Son of God, belongs to the order of eternity, and the title, Son of Man, to the order of time (Malt. 1:21-23; 2 John 3; I John 3:8; Heb. 1:1-13,7:3).

h. Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the Doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title, Son of God, solely from the fact of the incarnation, or because of His relationship to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2, 14, 18,29,49; I John 2:22,23;4:1-5; Heb. 12:2).

i. Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ. He sent the Holy Ghost that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all. (Heb. 1:3; I Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Rom. 14:11; I Cor. 15:24-28).

j. Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

BYLAWS

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Ghost to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of Deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead (except those which express relationship. See paragraphs B,C, and D), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father. (John 5:22,23; I Peter 1:8; Rev. 5:6-14; Phil 2:8,9; Rev. 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- a. His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
- b. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; I Peter 2:22).
- c. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d. His substitutionary work on the cross (I Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; I Cor. 15:4).
- f. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2-17; 3-6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

a. Conditions to Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life. (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

b. The Evidence of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

a. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they have also been raised with Him to walk in the newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47; Romans 6:4).

b. Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements -- bread and the fruit of the vine, is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4), a memorial of His suffering and death (I Cor. 11:26) and a prophecy of His second coming (I Cor. 11:26), and is enjoined on all believers "till He comes!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Ghost

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; I Cor. 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Ghost come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Heb. 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His word and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost

The Baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (I Cor. 12:4-10, 28), but different in purpose and use.

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Rom. 12:1,2; I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see

BYLAWS

the Lord." (Heb. 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (I Peter 1:15, 16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Rom 6:1 - 11, 13; 8:1, 2, 13; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:12, 13; I Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshipped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His son, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15, 16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (I Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints, being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12:28; I Corinthians 14:12).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to the reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4)
- b. Adds a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God (I Corinthians 2:10-16; I Corinthians 12:13, 14).
- c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament time for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; I Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11, 12; I Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

The divinely called and scripturally Ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the church in: (1) Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20). (2) Worship of God (John 4:23, 24). (3) Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16).

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matt. 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (I Thess. 4:16, 17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 15:51,52).

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zech. 14:5; Matt. 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). The millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19, 20; Romans 11:26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3, 4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

"We, according to His Promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:22).

ARTICLE V - ORDINANCES

SECTION 1. The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matt. 28:19) shall be administered to all those who have repented of their

BYLAWS

sins and who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation. (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12).

SECTION 2. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures. (Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-26).

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Membership Eligibility.

- A. Membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who give evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who voluntarily subscribe to its tenets of faith and agree to be governed by its Constitution and Bylaws as herein set forth.
- B. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within 30 days before an annual business meeting or within 10 days before a special business meeting.

SECTION 2. Voting Membership. All those who meet the Scriptural standards for membership, whose names appeared on the original membership roll of the assembly at the time the assembly was first organized, together with those names which shall be added from time to time, shall constitute the legal voting membership of the assembly, provided they are sixteen years of age or over, that they regularly attend the means of grace and take part in the services, that they are living consistent Christian lives and are in agreement with our distinctive testimony.

SECTION 3. Inactive Membership. Enrolled members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of three consecutive months or more, and who cease to contribute of their means to its support, who may be out of harmony with its teachings or its ministries, or who shall be under charges for misconduct, or who may have fallen under condemnation through sinful or worldly practices, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship.

SECTION 4. Transfer Members. A member in good standing of another Assembly of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of Article VI may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of a majority of the church board.

BYLAWS

SECTION 5. Junior Members. Junior membership shall be available for young people under 16 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, meet the scriptural standards for membership as specified in these bylaws, and are approved by majority vote of the church board.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS

SECTION 1. Officers. There shall be a Pastor, a board of Deacons, Trustees, a Secretary and Treasurer. Other officers shall be added as may be needed.

SECTION 2. Deacons

A. The Board of Deacons consisting of not less than three members under the oversight and guidance of the Pastor. shall be responsible for the spiritual management of the assembly. Of this Board of Deacons, one may be the Secretary and one the Treasurer.

B. The Deacons shall be men of mature Christian experience and knowledge who shall as closely as possible meet the requirements as set forth in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. No Assembly shall elect as one of its deacons any man who is not an active member thereof, in good standing, filled with the Spirit according to Acts 2:4 and neither he nor his wife has a former spouse living, unless the divorce from that spouse occurred prior to his or her conversion.

C. All matters of church government shall be carried on by the Official Board except in matters affecting, the entire body. In such cases they shall present their recommendations to the church for ratification. Members of the Official Board shall be at least 21 years old, and shall have been members of the assembly for at least six months.

SECTION 3. Trustees. Three trustees may be elected for the holding of all church property. Their terms of office shall be from one to three years.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 2. There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place and the report of all officers shall be read. This meeting to be held on the _____ of

BYLAWS

each year (Example: Third Monday in January). The time and place shall be announced by the Pastor. Due notice shall be given on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of said meeting.

SECTION 3. Special business meetings of the assembly may be called when necessary, after proper notice has been given by the Pastor or by the Secretary of the assembly, provided the meeting has been agreed upon by a majority of the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 4.

A. A special meeting may also be called by petition having been signed by not less than one-third of the active membership of the assembly; the petition to be placed in the hands of the Pastor or the Secretary and announcement made on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of meeting. (Only those members who have regularly attended services of, and supported, this assembly for a period of at least 3 consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.)

B. No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any 12-month period. No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting.

SECTION 5. Quorum. No record of any special or regular business meeting of the assembly; shall be made unless one-third or more active members shall be present to constitute a quorum.

SECTION 6. All business meetings of the church shall be governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Revised, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship.

SECTION 7. The Board of Deacons, with the Pastor, shall meet monthly for the transaction of routine business for the assembly, time and place to be announced by the Pastor.

ARTICLE IX-- DEPARTMENTS

SECTION 1. In General. This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and such organizations as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work. All such departments and organizations shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the pastor and church board, and the pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees or departments.

BYLAWS

SECTION 2. Sunday School. The Sunday School shall be considered as that department of the church which particularly provides for the teaching ministry of the church and the spiritual care of the young of the flock. The pastor and the superintendent of the Sunday School shall have the right to appoint all officers, teachers, and other workers of the Sunday School and, in consultation with the workers of the school, determine all policies and programs of the school.

SECTION 3. Youth Ministries. The young people of the assembly shall be organized into a Youth Department as soon as their number is sufficient. This organization shall elect its own officers, conduct its own services, and plan its own activities, subject to the authority of the church through the pastor and the church board.

SECTION 4. Men's and Women's Ministries. There shall be a Men's Ministries Department and Women's Ministries Department which shall be formed and made operable under the supervision of the pastor and church board.

ARTICLE X -- FINANCES

SECTION 1. General. All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions or the tithes and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the pastor and Board of deacons and shall be administered by the Treasurer under their direction. (Matt. 3:10, Luke 6:38, I Cor. 16:1-2, 2 Cor. 9:6-8.) A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving.

SECTION 2. Pastoral Remuneration.

A. Regular Remuneration. The pastor shall be remunerated for his service by a salary or by other means agreed upon by the church board and himself. The church board shall review the pastor's remuneration at least annually.

B. Reimbursement for Expenses. The pastor shall be given consideration by the church board for expenses incurred by his attendance at District Council, General Councils, and other District functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the church as determined by the church board.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE XI - PROPERTY

All property of the assembly shall be deeded to the assembly and held in its name. No property of the assembly shall be sold, leased, or mortgaged or otherwise disposed of without the same shall have first been recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership who are in attendance at a regular meeting or a special meeting of the assembly which has been called for the consideration of the proposal. The pastor and the secretary of the assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized and recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership of the assembly who were in attendance at a regular meeting or a special meeting of the assembly which was called for the consideration of the proposal.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the assembly in attendance at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made at all the services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the time of such meeting. It shall be understood that this does not apply to the article of Faith, which stands regardless of majority.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The Pastor shall be considered as the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall direct all of its activities. He shall be the president of the corporation and shall act as chairman of all the business meeting of the assembly and of the Board of Deacons. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees or departments. He shall provide for all the services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions, or revival campaigns. No persons shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without his approval.

SECTION 2. The Board of Deacons is chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in an advisory capacity with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the assembly in its spiritual life and in the ministry of its ordinances. They shall act in the examination of applicants for membership, and also in the administration of the discipline.

A majority present at any meeting of the Board of Deacons shall constitute a quorum, provided all the members have been notified

BYLAWS

to be present. In the event the assembly is temporarily without a Pastor, or the Pastor is unable to be present, the Board of Deacons shall be empowered to provide for its own chairman from its membership in order to transact business for the assembly.

SECTION 3. The trustees shall be custodians of all the real property of the assembly. They shall meet for the discharge of their duties as necessity may demand, subject to the call of the pastor who shall serve as chairman. Trustees must be members of the local Assembly, in good standing and 21 years of age or older.

SECTION 4. The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Board of Deacons and of the annual and special business meetings of the assembly. He shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his duties. He shall be the custodian of all legal documents, and be in possession of the corporate seal (Where the assembly is incorporated).

SECTION 5. The Treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly which may be committed to him. He shall deposit all funds in a responsible bank in the name of the assembly, and shall disburse the same by check, as authorized by the pastor and Board of Deacons. All checks shall be countersigned by the secretary. The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of the receipts and disbursements. He shall make an itemized report at the regular meetings of the Board of Deacons and a summarized report to the assembly quarterly and at its regular business meetings. His accounts shall be audited under the direction of the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE II - ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES

SECTION 1. The Pastor may be elected to serve for one or more years or for an indefinite period of time as may be determined at time of election. He shall be nominated by the Board of Deacons, or by secret ballot. Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special meeting called for the purpose. A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election. Only one candidate may be considered at a time.

SECTION 2. The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected annually. They shall be chosen from the membership of the assembly and may be nominated by a nominating committee or from the floor and shall be elected by a majority vote at the annual

BYLAWS

business meeting. Their terms of office shall be for one year from the time of election.

SECTION 3. The Board of Deacons shall be chosen from the membership of the assembly. They may be nominated by a nominating committee, or from the floor and shall be elected by a majority vote at the annual business meeting. Their terms of office shall be from one to three years from the time of election.

No assembly shall elect as one of its Deacons any man who is not an active member thereof, in good standing, be filled with the Spirit according to Acts 2:4 and neither he nor his wife has a former spouse living, unless the divorce from that spouse occurred prior to his or her conversion. The Deacons shall be men of mature Christian experience and knowledge, who shall as closely as possible meet the requirements as set forth in 1 Tim. 3, and Titus 1. They shall not hold ministerial credentials.

SECTION 4. The Trustees shall be nominated by a nominating committee or from the floor, and shall be elected by a majority vote at the annual business meeting of the assembly. Their term of office shall be from one to three years. Trustees must be members of the local assembly, in good standing and 21 years of age or older.

SECTION 5. Vacancies

A. The Pastor. If the pastor has been called for a definite period of time, such as one or two years, the tenure of office shall terminate at the end of his term of service. It would then be necessary to vote for his re-election by a two-thirds majority vote, just as though his name came before the assembly for the first time.

In the event a Pastor has serious charges preferred against him or his ministry has ceased to be effective, or no provision has been made for the termination of his ministry, power is vested in the Board of Deacons to ask for the resignation of the Pastor at any of its regular business meetings. If such resignation is refused, the pastorate shall not be considered vacant until the action of the Board of Deacons has been confirmed by a majority vote of the congregation at a meeting called for the purpose, such meeting to be presided over by the District Officiary.

When a vacancy in the pastorate shall occur, a supply shall be arranged for by the Board of Deacons until a Pastor shall be chosen as prescribed in Section 1. In the case of a Pastor's

BYLAWS

removal from office a report of such action shall be made to the District Officer.

B. Other Officers

1. Any office may be declared vacant by an act of a majority of the membership of the Board of Deacons at any regular or special business meeting.
2. Ground for such action shall be: (a) Unscriptural conduct. (b) Doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith. (c) Incompetency in office. (d) For any good and sufficient cause.
3. Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing of his case before the assembly if he so desires.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. The Standard of Membership

The standard of membership of this assembly shall be:

- A.** Evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration (the new birth). (John 1:12, 13; 3:3-8; I Peter 1:18-25);
- B.** Evidence of a consistent Christian life. (Rom. 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13, 14; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:2-15; I John 1:6,7);
- C.** To fully subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in the Constitutional rules of order adopted by the Assembly.
- D.** Willingness to contribute regularly to the support of the assembly according to his or her ability.

SECTION 2. Reception of Members

- A.** Persons desiring to become active members of the assembly shall make the fact known to the pastor, who shall examine the applicant according to the standard of membership.
- B.** The pastor shall present the names of those who apply for membership with his recommendation to the Board of Deacons, who shall act upon said recommendation and render a final decision. All persons who shall have met the membership requirements and have been passed on favorably shall be received into the assembly publicly at any of the regular services and their names inscribed on the roster.

SECTION 3. Discipline

- A.** Any member of the assembly who shall willfully absent himself from the regular services for a period of three consecutive months, or who shall be under charges, shall be temporarily

BYLAWS

suspended from active voting membership pending investigation and final decision in his case.

- B.** Unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith held by this assembly shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as a member. (Matt. 18:15-18; Rom. 16:17, 18; I Cor. 5:11; Gal. 1:8,9; Titus 3:1-15)

SECTION 4. Members in good standing, who may wish to sever their relationship with the assembly, or who may desire to be transferred to some other congregation, may apply to the secretary for a letter, which shall be granted on the approval of the pastor and Board of Deacons, said letter to be signed by the pastor and secretary of the assembly.

SECTION 5. The pastor and Board of Deacons shall be authorized to revise the membership roll of the assembly annually, and to remove from the list of active members all names of those who may have become deceased during the year, together with the names of those who may have withdrawn from the fellowship, or who have fallen into sin and whose lives may have become inconsistent with the standards and teaching of the assembly. The following rules and instructions shall be observed as occasion may require. (Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; II Thess. 3:6-15)

If a name is removed for cause, the one whose name is removed shall be notified of the action of the pastor and Board of Deacons through the secretary. If appeal is made to the Board for reconsideration of their action and reinstatement is not granted, the dismissed member may appeal to the congregation. The action of the assembly, by a majority vote, shall be considered final.

ARTICLE IV- DEPARTMENTS

SECTION 1. In General. This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and sub organizations as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work. All such departments and organizations shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the pastor and church board, and the pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees or departments.

SECTION 2. Sunday School. The Sunday School shall be considered as that department of the church which particularly provides for the teaching ministry of the church and the spiritual

BYLAWS

care of the young of the flock. The pastor and the superintendent of the Sunday School shall have the right to appoint all officers, teachers, and other workers of the Sunday School and, in consultation with the workers of the school, determine all policies and programs of the school.

SECTION 3. Youth Ministries. The young people of the assembly shall be organized into a Youth department as soon as their number is sufficient. This organization shall elect its own officers, conduct its own service, and plan its own activities, subject to the authority of the church through the pastor and the church board.

SECTION 4. Men's and Women's Ministries. There shall be a Men's Ministries Department and Women's Ministries Department which shall be formed and made operable under the supervision of the pastor and church board.

ARTICLE V - PROPERTY RIGHTS

SECTION 1. All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the corporate name of the assembly, or if the assembly is not incorporated, by trustees and their successors in office.

SECTION 2. No real or chattel property of the assembly shall be sold, leased, mortgaged or otherwise alienated without the same shall have been authorized by at least two-thirds majority vote of the membership.

SECTION 3. The pastor and the secretary of the assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized by the vote of at least two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the membership of the assembly who were in attendance at a regular meeting or special meeting of the assembly which was called for the consideration of the proposal.

SECTION 4. In the event that this assembly ceases to function as a church body, then the said property, real or chattel, shall revert to the Mississippi District Council, Jackson, Mississippi. The Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God shall forthwith have full authority to use or dispose of the property at their discretion. In the event of the sale of the property by the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God, the proceeds derived thereof shall be used by the said Mississippi District Council in furtherance of the gospel of Christ.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE VI - ORDER OF BUSINESS

The regular order of business for the annual meeting of the assembly shall be as follows:

- A.** Devotional.
- B.** Reading of previous minutes by Secretary.
- C.** Report of Treasurer.
- D.** Report of Committees.
- E.** Unfinished business.
- F.** Election of officers.
- G.** New business.
- H.** Adjournment.

ARTICLE VII- AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the assembly by a majority vote of the membership present, provided the proposed amendment has been announced publicly on the two Sundays prior to the date of meeting, announcement to be made by the pastor or the recording secretary.