

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

MISSISSIPPI DISTRICT PREAMBLE

For the purpose of promulgating the Gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means in our District, so that the results of our efforts may be conserved and assemblies established and developed in general unity and cooperative fellowship along the lines of our distinctive testimony; and for the further purposes of cooperating with all other like districts in the work of the General Council at home and abroad; we, who are members of the General Council of the Assemblies of God hereby associate ourselves together for scriptural fellowship and recognize ourselves as The District Council of Mississippi, and agree to be governed by the following Constitution and Bylaws.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this body shall be the Mississippi District Council Assemblies of God with headquarters in Jackson, Mississippi.

ARTICLE II - TERRITORY

The District shall include the territory covered by the State of Mississippi.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

To fulfill the commission of the Church (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8), in the propagation of the gospel in its fullness, and to carry out the principles of The General Council of the Assemblies of God in the maintenance of scriptural doctrine and order.

ARTICLE IV - RELATIONSHIPS

SECTION 1.

This District Council shall recognize itself as a part of The General Council of the Assemblies of God with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri.

CONSTITUTION

SECTION 2.

The relationships between this District Council and its local Assemblies is set forth hereafter in The General Council of the Assemblies of God Constitution, Article X.

ARTICLE V - TENETS OF FAITH

This Council shall stand for the Holy Scriptures as the all-sufficient rule for faith and practice and adopt the Statement of Fundamental Truths approved by the General Council August 23-29, 1961, that we may all speak the same thing.

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."

CONSTITUTION

We, therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being or 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 Persons 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; I Cor. 1:24; Matt. 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 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 to 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 (Matt. 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Heb. 7:3; Heb. 1:1-13).

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; 1 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; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Rom. 14:11; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

j. Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

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

CONSTITUTION

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; 1 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; 1 Peter 2:22).
- c. **His miracles** (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d. **His substitutionary work on the cross** (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- e. **His bodily resurrection from the dead** (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Cor. 15:4).
- f. **His exaltation to the right hand of God** (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Phil. 2:9-11 Heb. 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 (Gen. 1:26.27: 2:17; 3:6; Rom. 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 Evidences 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 Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in the newness of life (Matt. 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

CONSTITUTION

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 exist expressly to give continuing emphasis to this 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

A 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). This 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).

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE VI - PREROGATIVES

In connection with its purpose to promulgate the gospel of Jesus Christ at home and abroad by all available means, this council shall have the following rights.

SECTION 1.

To supervise all the activities of the Assemblies of God in its prescribed field, in accordance with the rights conferred by Article X of the General Council Constitution.

SECTION 2.

To examine candidates for the ministry, and to license and ordain those who have met the requirements of the District, as set forth in its Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION 3.

To elect its own officers and committees, to arrange for its own meetings and to govern itself. It shall be subordinate to the General Council and amenable thereto in all matters of doctrine and the conduct of ministers who shall have District endorsement.

SECTION 4.

To establish churches, and to provide for their development, to establish and maintain such departments and institutions for the fellowship as may be necessary for the propagation of the gospel in its borders.

SECTION 5.

All departments, as creatures of the District Council, shall be amenable to the District Presbytery.

SECTION 6.

Incidental to, or in connection therewith, it shall have the right to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of such property. real or chattel, as may be needed for the prosecution of its work.

SECTION 7.

In the event that the District Presbytery should feel that the District Headquarters or Camp Grounds should be disposed of (in their entirety) and relocated, a resolution shall be prepared and mailed to each member of the District Council thirty days prior to the annual District Council Meeting.

ARTICLE VII - CONSTITUENCY

SECTION 1.

All Ordained ministers, Licensed ministers, and Certified Ministers who hold current accredited Fellowship Certificates from the General Council or the District Council, and who are affiliated with the District Council, shall be recognized as members.

SECTION 2.

Each assembly shall have the right to representation in the District Council meetings by one delegate. Each lay delegate should present a letter from the secretary or pastor of the assembly certifying his appointment to represent the assembly in the District meeting.

ARTICLE VIII - OFFICERS

SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Executive officers shall consist of the District Superintendent, Assistant District Superintendent, and District Secretary-Treasurer.

SECTION 2. EXECUTIVE PRESBYTERY

The Executive Presbytery shall consist of the District Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, the District Secretary-Treasurer, and no less than two Executive Presbyters. Such members to be elected at the District Council.

SECTION 3. SECTIONAL PRESBYTERS

There shall be one Presbyter for each Section in the District; each Presbyter to be elected by his respective Section.

SECTION 4. DISTRICT PRESBYTERY

The District Presbytery shall consist of the Executive Presbytery together with General and Sectional Presbyters and the Youth Department Director of the District.

SECTION 5. GENERAL PRESBYTERS

The District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, and the Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as General Presbyters and shall represent the District in the General Presbytery. The Assistant Superintendent shall be an Ordained minister and pastor of a church. General Council Constitution, Article IX, Section 3.

ARTICLE IX - COMMITTEES

Standing committees shall consist of the Credentials Committee, the Devotional Committee, the Home Missions Committee, and the Roster Committee, together with such other committees as may be required.

ARTICLE X - MEETINGS

SECTION 1.

- A. The District Council shall meet annually, time and place to be selected, and announced by the District Presbytery at least thirty days prior to convening.
- B. The District Council shall begin on Tuesday evening and conclude on Thursday night.
- C. The district presbytery and/or executive presbytery shall decide the appropriate schedule.

SECTION 2.

Special sessions may be called to meet any emergency that may arise within the District. Such a call shall be issued by the Secretary after the emergency has been fully considered and approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the District Presbytery. (See Bylaws Article V, Section 7 B,C).

SECTION 3.

The right of initiative in the nature of calling a special session shall be granted to any Ordained minister of the District Council. A statement setting forth the reasons for the special session and signed by not less than twenty percent of the Ordained ministers of the District may be considered sufficient reasons for such a call, said statement to be filed with District Presbytery, who shall issue the call, setting the time and place for the meeting.

ARTICLE XI – LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

SECTION 1. DESIRING AFFILIATION

Local assemblies desiring recognition and affiliation as members of the District Council may apply, therefore, to the District Presbyter of the section where they are located or to the Superintendent of the District. The District, through its appointed representatives, may receive such assemblies into fellowship if they meet constitutional requirements, and may also refuse membership, to assemblies if it sees fit.

SECTION 2. CLASSIFICATION OF ASSEMBLIES

There are five classifications of Assemblies defined as follows:

SECTION 3. GENERAL COUNCIL AFFILIATED ASSEMBLY

A General Council affiliated assembly is one that has applied for and has received Certificate of Affiliation from the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

CONSTITUTION

A. Described

1. A church which has met all requirements and qualifications of the General Council and District Council Bylaws and Constitution; and
2. Has made request to the District Superintendent or Sectional Presbyter that it become sovereign and General Council affiliated; and
3. A duly called business meeting has been conducted by the District Superintendent for the purpose of it becoming sovereign, and a General Council affiliation application has been completed; and
4. Has applied for and received a certificate of affiliation from the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

B. Requirements for affiliation. Churches desiring to be affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God shall meet the following requirements. They shall:

1. Accept the tenets of faith of the Assemblies of God;
2. Adopt a standard of membership that may be determined either by the local assembly or by agreement with the District Council;
3. Have a minimum active voting membership of 20 persons who shall accept responsibility to maintain scriptural order in the local body. 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.
4. Adopt articles of Incorporation, a constitution or bylaws compatible with models recommended by the District Council, or district approved governance models that provide for adequate accountability, amenability, and safeguards so that a pastor and/or governing body cannot directly or indirectly exert dictatorial control over a church;
5. Have an adequate number of spiritually qualified members to fill the offices of the church called for in its constitution or bylaws; and
6. Make provision for a pastor who is a credentialed minister in good standing with the General Council and a district council.

C. Procedure for becoming General Council affiliated.

1. Churches desiring to become affiliated with the General Council may make request for the same with the District Superintendent through the Sectional Presbyter in the section in which the church is located. The District Superintendent, or someone he appoints, may respond to the request. (See Bylaws Article XIX Section 1).
2. A duly called business meeting of the church shall be announced not less than two Sundays prior to the meeting by the pastor or church secretary.
3. The District Superintendent, or someone he appoints, shall preside over the meeting.
4. Application for recognition as a General Council affiliated church with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, furnished by the General Secretary's office, shall be completed. One copy is retained at the church and two copies are sent to the District Office, one of which is sent to the General Secretary's office.
5. Upon approval by the General Secretary's office, a certificate of affiliation and the official letter of affiliation are issued by the General Secretary's office. A copy of the official letter is also sent to the District Office.

D. Relationship to and support of the General Council and district councils. A General Council affiliated assembly should cooperate in the work and support the programs of the General Council and District Council and may send delegates to the General Council and District Council.

E. Right of self-government (Sovereign Rights). Each General Council affiliated assembly has the right of self-government under Jesus Christ, its living Head, and shall have the power to choose or call its pastor, elect its official board, and transact all other business pertaining to its life as a local unit. It shall have the right to administer discipline to its members according to the Scriptures and its constitution or bylaws. It shall have the right to acquire and hold title to property, either through trustees or in its corporate name as a self-governing unit. The fact it is affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God shall in no way destroy its rights as above stated or interfere with its sovereignty. The governance model adopted by the local assembly shall conform to the guidelines of General

CONSTITUTION

Council Constitution Article XI, Section 1, paragraph B, subparagraph (6).

- F. Subordinate in matters of doctrine and conduct.** A General Council affiliated assembly shall recognize that a District Council or The General Council of the Assemblies of God has the right to approve scriptural doctrine and conduct and to disapprove unscriptural doctrine and conduct and the authority to withdraw its Certificate of Affiliation if deemed necessary. (See General Council Article IX of the Bylaws.)
- G. Right of appeal.** When in need of counsel or advice, the General Council affiliated assembly may appeal to the district officers for help. It may appeal from a decision by the district officers to the Executive Presbytery of The General Council of the Assemblies of God when there is a question whether or not the assembly has received proper help from the district. When exceptions are taken to the decisions of the Executive Presbytery, either by the General Council affiliated assembly or by the district presbytery, appeal may be made to the General Presbytery.
- H. Voting Privilege.** The General Council affiliated assembly may have representation at the General Council, District Council, and Sectional Council meetings, by one 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.

SECTION 4. DISTRICT COUNCIL AFFILIATED ASSEMBLIES

A. Provisions for District Council Affiliated Assemblies

Provision shall be made by the district councils for district council affiliated assemblies which shall be under the supervision of the District Council, in accordance with the provisions of the district council constitution and bylaws. These assemblies shall be encouraged to proceed to the status of sovereign General Council affiliated assemblies.

B. A District Affiliated Assembly

1. One newly organized.
2. One in a Home Missions status under three years of age.
3. One which may not have matured to a state in which it is able to elect a qualified board of three deacons or three

CONSTITUTION

trustees, in compliance with the District Constitution or recommended Constitution and Bylaws for Local Assemblies. (Bylaws Article XIX, Section 6).

4. One which does not have twenty qualified adult members.
5. A church which was sovereign, whose membership declined below the required twenty adult members and not granted an exception as stated at Article XI, Section 3., paragraph B.3., or has been declared by the District Officiary or General Secretary to have lost its sovereignty.
6. These assemblies shall not receive recognition as sovereign, but should remain in a District affiliated status until such time as the assembly gives evidence of sufficient maturity to warrant sovereignty.
7. Such assemblies do not receive an official letter of recognition as sovereign and General Council affiliated until the District Officiary and Sectional Presbyter consider it the proper time and the necessary procedure and requirements are met.

SECTION 5. DISTRICT SUPERVISED ASSEMBLY

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 all offices and positions are thereby vacated, with the exception of the pastorate, except as hereafter set forth in Bylaws Article XIX Section 7.
3. The assembly shall not conduct any business such as election of officers and receiving members, without the consent of the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyter.

SECTION 6. HOME MISSIONS CHURCH

A Home Missions Church is dealt with fully in the Bylaws in Article XVII World Missions, Section 2 - Home Missions.

SECTION 7. PARENT AFFILIATED CHURCHES

Provision shall be made by the Mississippi District for the recognition of Parent Affiliated Churches (PAC) which shall be

CONSTITUTION

under the supervision of a parenting church, in accordance with the parenting church's constitution and bylaws.

SECTION 8. COOPERATING ASSEMBLY STATUS

Provisions may be made by the District Council and the General Council Executive Presbytery for the status of a cooperating assembly, which would allow churches that subscribe to Article V, Statement of Fundamental Truths, of the General Council Constitution to enter into a cooperative status with a district and the General Council on a temporary basis (4 year term, renewable by the request of the local church congregation at the discretion of the district council in cooperation with the General Council Executive Presbytery), before officially affiliating with the District Council and the General Council.

SECTION 9.

Each local assembly affiliated with this District Council may have representation at the District Council meetings by one lay delegate. Such delegate shall be able to interpret and represent the desires of his assembly and shall be entitled to full speaking and voting privileges at the Council. Such delegate must provide himself with a letter from his church stating his appointment and authorization as its delegate.

SECTION 10.

Local assemblies are expected to recognize and respect the officers of the General Council and of the District Council and to share in the missionary and other joint enterprises of these Councils. It is recommended that regular missions giving be included in the church budget and that offerings, pledges and conventions be utilized to promote Home and World Missions.

SECTION 11.

The Constitution and Bylaws for Local Assemblies as recommended by the Mississippi District Council in harmony with those recommended by the General Council of the Assemblies of God under which the Local Assemblies of this District are required to operate are in this Yearbook.

All assemblies will be governed by the same unless the local assembly has adopted a governance model compatible with the district recommended model or a model approved by the District which is in harmony with the policies and governmental practices of the General and District Council, so as to preserve adequate accountability, amenability and safeguards so that the pastor and/or

CONSTITUTION

governing board cannot directly or indirectly exert dictatorial control over a church. Changes in the governance model inconsistent with these guidelines would not be acceptable.

SECTION 12.

Each church of the Assemblies of God is requested to keep an up-to-date record of its membership and a report of the same shall be sent annually on forms provided to the office of the District Secretary and the General Council Secretary.

SECTION 13.

The standard of individual membership in local assemblies of this District Council as set by the District Council is as follows: no one shall be admitted as a member in local assemblies of this District who shall not:

- A. Be born again.
- B. Be baptized in water by immersion.
- C. Disapprove of and refrain from participation in worldly amusements, theaters, movies, cards, dancing, etc.
- D. Abstain from drinking intoxicating liquors of every kind and the use of tobacco in any form.
- E. Refrain from the sin mentioned in Gal. 5:19-21.
- F. Accept the ruling on remarriage and divorce according to the General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 2, d.
- G. Undertake to contribute regularly to the financial support of the church of which he is a member.
- H. Believe in all the orthodox doctrines of the Christian faith including the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in other tongues as the initial physical evidence, Divine healing, and the pre-millennial second Coming of Jesus Christ.

SECTION 14. INSURANCE COVERAGE

All assemblies which have financial obligations on buildings and properties that are underwritten by the District shall maintain sufficient insurance to cover the obligations.

SECTION 15. SHARING IN MISSIONS ENTERPRISES

Local assemblies are encouraged to share in missionary and other joint enterprises of the General Council and District Council.

SECTION 16. NAME

In order that we may attain uniformity in our identity, and to distinguish our assemblies from other denominations and branches of Pentecostal organizations, it is recommended that all assemblies include in their name their affiliation with the Assemblies of God.

CONSTITUTION

SECTION 17. DEEDS

All church properties shall be deeded according to the sample deeds in the District Council Bylaws or comparable thereto.

SECTION 18.

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 free from entanglements in his marriage relationship.

SECTION 19.

The District council advises all of its local assemblies not to elect to their official boards, men who hold Ordination, License, or Certified Ministers credentials.

SECTION 20.

- A.** No assembly shall call as its pastor one who is not a member in good standing in the General Council or one of its District Councils.
- B.** No assembly shall call as its evangelist a minister who is not in good standing in the General Council or one of its District Councils, or the equivalent thereof, in character and doctrine.
- C.** It is recommended that each assembly call its pastors for indefinite periods.
- D.** It is requested also that the Sectional Presbyter and District Superintendent be advised immediately upon a pastorate becoming vacant.

SECTION 21.

The District Council disapproves of private ownership of church properties. A disregard of this may seriously affect the standing with the Council of both the owner of such property and the church worshipping therein.

SECTION 22.

Any local assembly which shall disobey or fall below the requirements for local assemblies set forth in this Constitution, and shall reject or ignore the request and warning of the District representatives to return to assembly standards and requirements, may be suspended or expelled from membership in this District Council by action of the District Presbytery.

SECTION 23. ASSEMBLIES OF GOD TOTAL GIVING PARTICIPATION

All assemblies are expected to have an interest in, and contribute regularly to, the Assemblies of God Total Giving plan.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE XII – CREDENTIALING

SECTION 1. CREDENTIALING AUTHORITY

The district council shall have the authority to examine and present candidates who qualify as certified ministers, licensed ministers, or ordained ministers in accordance with Article XVI of the Bylaws. The applications of such candidates shall be forwarded to the general secretary of The General Council of the Assemblies of God for presentation to the General Council Credentials Committee for final review and issuance of the ministerial credential if the qualifications prescribed by Article XVI of the Bylaws are satisfied. Any level of formal academic achievement (diploma or degree) shall not be a requirement for credentials, but it shall be required of applicants that they take such courses and pass examinations as shall be prescribed by the General Presbytery unless an exception is provided for in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution may be made at any regular meeting of the District Council provided the proposed amendments have been submitted to the District Secretary-Treasurer's office for review by the Executive Presbytery 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 the district ministers and churches 30 days prior to the District Council.

Amendments of the Constitution shall require a two-thirds majority of all members present for adoption.