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2023-2024  
CONSTITUTION  
AND  
BYLAWS  
OF THE  
ARKANSAS DISTRICT COUNCIL  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

*Revised June 20, 2023*

**THE ARKANSAS DISTRICT OF THE  
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, INC.**

**PREAMBLE**

**WE BELIEVE**

That God's purpose concerning man is (1) to seek and to save that which is lost, (2) to be worshiped by man, (3) to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and (4) to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world.

That the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God exists 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, which enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs, adding a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God, and enabling them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Therefore, we recognize ourselves to be a cooperative fellowship of Pentecostal, Spirit-baptized saints from local Pentecostal assemblies of like precious faith in the Arkansas District of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, hereinafter called "General Council," whose purpose is neither to usurp authority over the various local assemblies, nor to deprive them of their scriptural and local rights and privileges; but to recognize and promote methods and order for worship, unity, fellowship, work and business for God, so that results of our efforts may be conserved and assemblies established and developed along the line of our distinctive testimony; and to disapprove unscriptural methods, doctrines, and conduct, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, "till we all come in the unity of the 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," (Ephesians 4:13)

**CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this body shall be "The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God."

**ARTICLE II - TERRITORY**

The Arkansas District Council includes the entire state of Arkansas. For efficiency and to expedite the work, the District shall be divided into Fellowship sections.

**ARTICLE III - NATURE**

The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God is a cooperative fellowship based on mutual agreements voluntarily entered into by its members.

#### **ARTICLE IV - PREROGATIVES**

1. To encourage and promote the evangelization of the world.
2. To encourage and promote the worship of God.
3. To encourage and promote the edification of believers.
4. To provide a basis of fellowship among Christians of like precious faith.
5. 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.
6. To establish and maintain such subdivisions, departments and institutions as may be necessary for the propagation of the Gospel and the work of the Pentecostal fellowship.
7. To establish churches and provide for their development.
8. To examine candidates for the ministry and to license and ordain as ministers, those who shall meet the standards of the Scriptures (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and the requirements of the District and General Council as set forth in their constitution and bylaws. It shall be amenable to The General Council of the Assemblies of God in matters of doctrine, and the personal conduct of all ministers who are permitted to have District endorsement.
9. To approve all scriptural teachings, methods and conduct, and to disapprove all unscriptural teachings, methods and conduct. As the creature of The General Council of the Assemblies of God it is subordinate thereto, and cannot be authorized in any way, to violate the principles of The General Council of the Assemblies of God constitutional agreements or bylaws. In the prosecution of the work in its prescribed field the District Council shall be expected to keep vigilant watch against any violation of the principles of spiritual unity and cooperative fellowship to which the Assemblies of God Fellowship is especially and unalterably dedicated.
10. To elect its own officers and committees, to arrange for its own meeting, and to govern itself.
11. 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.

#### **ARTICLE V - PRINCIPLES (FOR FELLOWSHIP)**

The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God shall as nearly as possible in detail represent the body of Christ as described in the New Testament Scripture, recognizing the principles inherent in that body as also inherent in this Fellowship, particularly the principles of unity, fellowship, cooperation, and equality. It recognizes that adherence to those principles will enable it to achieve its priority reason-for-being, and to maintain conditions under which it can, as a Fellowship, demonstrate those principles and their consequent development.

#### **ARTICLE VI - TENETS OF FAITH**

This District Council adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths adopted by the General Council as revised in 1969, as follows:

#### **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, 1

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 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; 1 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 "persons" as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures 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 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; 1 Cor. 1:24; Matt. 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 John 1:3, 4.)

### **C. Unity of One Being of Father, Son and Holy Ghost**

Accordingly, 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; not 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; 1 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; 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 relation 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; 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 the 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; 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; 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 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 newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; 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 (1 Cor. 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Cor. 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

### **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 endowment 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; 1 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 (1 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; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see 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" (1 Peter 1:15, 16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing our individual 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; Rom. 8:1, 2, 13; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:13; 1 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 Firstborn, 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 worshiped by man, and 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 (1 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; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 14:12).
- D. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists 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 a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 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 times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11, 12; 1 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) and (4) meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

### ***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 (1 Thess. 4:16, 17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 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; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezek. 37:21, 22; Zeph. 3:19, 20; Romans 11:26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalms 72:3-8; Micah 4:3, 4).

### ***15. The Final Judgment***

There will be a final judgment at 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; Rev. 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; Rev. 21, 22).

## **ARTICLE VII - RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Section 1. To the General Council and other district councils**

The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God is an integral part of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, a nonprofit religious corporation with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri, is subordinate and amenable to the said General Council as prescribed in



its constitution and bylaws, and has a cooperative working relationship with other district councils in matters of mutual concern.

### **Section 2. To the fellowship sections**

The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God shall prosecute its activities through its district offices and fellowship sections.

### **Section 3. To local assemblies**

- A. All true Pentecostal believers associating themselves in local bodies as Assemblies and accepting their full share of responsibility for maintaining of Scriptural order in the local body shall have the right to recognition by the district council.
- B. The local assembly shall be set in order by the district officary and shall be amenable to the district in doctrine, in conduct, and all other matters which affect the peace and harmony of the Fellowship. They shall have a standard for membership which may be determined either by the local Assembly itself or by agreement with the district council. They shall support the district organization and shall be entitled to representation in the district council through properly accredited delegates.
- C. The district council recognizes the sovereignty of the local Assembly in accordance with Article XI of The General Council Constitution. Affiliation with the district shall in no way destroy this sovereignty.

## **ARTICLE VIII - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1. Ministers**

All ordained, licensed, and certified ministers holding accredited fellowship certificates from The General Council and having their permanent residence within the boundaries of the district are considered members of the Arkansas District Council. Membership would also include the following: missionaries, retired ministers, those serving at General Headquarters, evangelists, those in the armed services, students, and faculty of our schools outside the District or any others who may be granted permission to retain membership even though they reside outside the District.

### **Section 2. Assemblies**

All General Council and District-affiliated churches, the individual members of which are considered members of the Assemblies of God, are considered to be member churches. Each assembly has the right of representation at the District Council according to the provisions in the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE IX - OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Executive officers**

The executive officers shall be the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, and the secretary. They shall be members of the district executive presbytery board and serve as its executive committee.

## **Section 2. Executive presbytery**

There shall be an executive presbytery made up of the executive committee, the General Presbyter(s), any honorary General Council general presbyter who is a resident member of the Arkansas District Council, any non-resident General Council executive presbyter who is a resident member of the Arkansas District Council, and such others as may be elected at the annual meeting of the district council.

## **Section 3. District presbytery**

There shall be a district presbytery made up of the executive presbytery together with the sectional presbyters according to provisions set forth in the bylaws.

## **Section 4. General presbyters**

The Arkansas District Council shall be represented on The General Council General Presbytery by three members, the district superintendent, together with two others, one of whom shall be an ordained pastor of a church located in the district. The general presbytery is the official policy-making body of the General Council when the General Council is not in session. (See Article IX, Sec. 3, General Council Constitution.)

## **Section 5. Nominee for General Council executive presbyter**

The Arkansas District Council shall nominate two ministers from its district to be presented to the General Council as nominees from its area to serve on the executive presbytery of the General Council. (See Article IX, Sec. 2, General Council Constitution, and Article II, Sec. 2.c, General Council Bylaws.)

# **ARTICLE X - MEETINGS**

## **Section 1. District Council**

- A. The District Council shall meet annually, time and place to be announced by the executive presbytery. Announcement shall be published not later than one month prior to the time of meeting.
- B. Special sessions may be called to meet any emergency that may arise within the district. Such call shall be issued by the secretary after the emergency has been fully considered and passed upon by a majority vote of the executive presbytery.
- C. The right of initiative in the matter of calling a special session shall be granted to any ordained minister of the district council. A statement setting forth the reason for the special session and signed by not less than 20 percent (20%) of the ordained ministers of the district may be considered sufficient reason for such a call, said statement to be filed with the district presbytery who shall issue the call, setting the time and place for the meeting.
- D. In the event of an emergency in which large meetings are not allowed or discouraged, the District Superintendent with the approval of the Executive Presbytery can call for an electronic district council. The technology that is used must allow for interaction of any registered minister/delegate who may have a question or wishes to speak to an issue. Voting must be done in a manner that allows the voter to cast a secret ballot.

## **Section 2. Sectional Councils**

Sectional councils shall be conducted annually, time and place to be determined by the executive presbytery in consultation with the sectional presbyters. In the event of an emergency in which large meetings are not allowed or discouraged, the District Superintendent with the approval of the Executive Presbytery can call for an electronic sectional council. If any voting is required, the technology that is used must allow for interaction of any registered minister/delegate who may have a question or wishes to speak to an issue. Voting must be done in a manner that allows the voter to cast a secret ballot.

## **ARTICLE XI - DISSOLUTION CLAUSE**

### **Section 1. Reversion**

In the event this District Council shall cease to function for the purpose herein set forth, then all property, real or chattel, and all assets remaining after satisfying debts and obligations, shall revert to the parent body, THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, a Missouri not-for-profit corporation, with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri. The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall have full authority to sell such property and to use the proceeds derived therefrom for the extension of the work of the Assemblies of God.

### **Section 2. Dissolution by incorporators**

The dissolution of the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God shall be done in accordance with the Arkansas Nonprofit Corporation Act of 1993. (A.C.A. 4-33-1401 - 4-33-1433)

### **Section 3. Transfer of properties and assets**

In the event of cessation of this District Council, its Board of Trustees (or Directors) shall transfer all properties and any remaining assets, in accordance with the foregoing provisions, within one year after the date of such cessation. If such transfer is not made within the time prescribed above or if the aforesaid General Council shall be unable or unwilling to accept the aforesaid transfer, then disposition thereof shall be made by the court of the county in which the district council headquarters office is located, provided that in such case proceeds of the dissolution shall be distributed to organizations having purposes nearest the purposes of the Assemblies of God.

## **ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS**

### **Section 1. Presentation requirements**

Amendments to the constitution may be made at any regular or special meeting of the district provided the proposed amendment has been submitted to the district presbytery first for consideration and then mailed to each member of the district council at least two months prior to the time of meeting. The members must approve the amendment by two-thirds of the votes cast or a majority of the voting power, whichever is less.

### **Section 2. Relationship to General Council constitution and bylaws**

Because the district council derives its rights to exist and its authority to govern itself from the General Council, it is of necessity circumscribed and limited in the scope of its legislative

and administrative powers. It would seem unwise, therefore, to adopt constitutional articles that elaborate those principles already set forth in the General Council, but rather to adopt articles of simplicity, basing the constitutional orders of this district on that of the General Council.

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I - VOLUNTARY COOPERATIVE FELLOWSHIP

#### Section 1. A voluntary cooperative fellowship:

The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God is a voluntary, cooperative fellowship based on mutual agreements entered into by its members.

#### Section 2. Voluntary cooperative fellowship Defined:

- A. The principle of voluntary cooperative fellowship upon which the General Council of Assemblies of God and the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God is based, involves the following:
1. By "voluntary" it is meant that upon learning the principles, doctrines and practices of the Assemblies of God, and by seeing the benefits one could derive from being associated with such an organization, a person of his own free choice decides to become a member, thus subscribing to all that for which the organization stands.
  2. By "cooperation" it is meant that, to the best of his ability, one will comply with all decisions setting forth and defining duties and responsibilities incumbent on members of the organization, and will respect the will of the majority, expressed through democratic processes, as long as he remains a member.
- B. "Voluntary cooperation" means that one, of his own free will, decides to become a cooperative member of the Assemblies of God; this cooperation being obligatory and not optional.

### ARTICLE II - PARLIAMENTARY ORDER

#### Section 1. Rules of Order

In order to expedite the work of the Council, and to avoid confusion in its deliberations, the Council shall be governed by the accepted rules of parliamentary procedure as given in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, in keeping with the Spirit of Christian love and fellowship.

#### Section 2. Order of Business

- A. The regular order of business of the District Council shall be:

Session open with prayer.

1. The reading of the names of all committees
2. Report of the Roster Committee
3. Summary Reports
  - a. District superintendent
  - b. Assistant superintendent
  - c. Secretary
  - d. Financial
  - e. Missions director

4. Election of officers
  5. Committee reports
  6. Unfinished business
  7. New business
  8. Adjournment
- B. Election of officers. For continuity of orderly business, the elections of officers may be interspersed by committee reports and resolutions.

## **ARTICLE III - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1. Voting Constituency**

- A. The voting constituency shall consist of all certified, licensed and ordained ministers present, who have presented to the roster committee their current fellowship certificates for their identification together with one duly seated lay delegate from each local assembly who has presented to the roster committee a letter of identification from the assembly which they represent. Members or delegates at the close of business on the business day preceding the day on which the notice is given for the annual or special called district council, or if notice is waived, at the close of business on the business day preceding the day on which the meeting is held, are entitled to notice of the meeting.
- B. Each sovereign assembly of this district will be permitted to send one delegate to the annual District Council in session and this person should be a person of business ability and of wisdom with a vision of God in His work in a broad sense. If possible, the delegate should be one of the leading members of the assembly, and one who can be expected to remain until all business of the council is concluded.
- C. The assembly expecting to be represented by a delegate in the District Council session is expected to furnish such duly elected delegate with a letter of identification. Such delegates should be elected prior to the Sectional Council meeting of their section before the District Council.
- D. No minister or lay delegate may vote by proxy, or cast votes cumulatively.

### **Section 2. Quorum**

All credentialed ministers and delegates of the district council who are present and registered by the roster committee at a duly called meeting, shall constitute a quorum. Ten percent (10%) of the votes entitled to be cast on a matter must be represented at a meeting of members to constitute a quorum on that matter.

### **Section 3. Officers**

- A. Named
1. The executive officers shall be: the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, and the secretary.
  2. General and executive presbyters
  3. Sectional presbyters
- B. General Eligibility

All ordained ministers without regard to gender, race, nationality or origin.

C. Qualifications

1. The Superintendent

- a. He shall be an ordained minister of mature experience and sound judgment.
- b. He shall be a cooperative member of the district for a period of at least two years immediately prior to his election in order to be familiar with the district work.
- c. He shall possess recognized executive and business ability.

2. The Assistant Superintendent

The assistant superintendent shall have the same qualifications as the superintendent.

3. The Secretary

The secretary shall be a cooperative, ordained minister, a member of the district for a period of at least two years immediately prior to his election, of honest report, with training and/or experience in administration and record keeping. He shall be one capable of compounding the expressed thoughts of the presbyters into readable and understandable form, and shall be able to intelligently arrange the matters passed on by the body so as to make minutes readable to the public without changing the meaning.

4. General Presbyters

Any elected general presbyter shall have the same qualifications as the superintendent and shall be an ordained, resident pastor of a church within the Arkansas District.

5. The Executive Presbyters

The executive presbyters shall be cooperative, ordained ministers and members of the district for a period of at least two years immediately prior to their election, of mature experience and sound judgement, and who possess recognized executive and business ability. One member of the Executive presbytery shall be an ordained female minister.

6. The Sectional Presbyters

The sectional presbyter shall be an ordained pastor and resident of the section, cooperative with district and sectional policies and events. They shall be well known in the section, recognized for leadership skills and of mature experience. They shall be a resident of the district for a period of two years immediately prior to their election.

7. Honorary Executive Presbyters

Any honorary General Council General Presbyter who is a resident member of the Arkansas District Council or any non-resident General Council Executive Presbyter who is a resident member of the Arkansas District Council shall serve as an honorary Executive Presbytery.

8. Honorary District Presbyters

Former full time executive officers may be elected to serve as honorary district presbyters. The criteria for eligibility and service will be developed by the Executive Presbytery. Honorary district presbyters will be nominated by the Executive Presbytery and ratified by the district council.

D. Terms of Office

1. The terms of office of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and secretary shall be for four years. Elections shall alternate to provide for the elections of no more than one executive officer per year.
2. In the event the assistant superintendent is not a pastor, any elected general presbyter will serve a four year term.
3. The term of office for the executive presbyters shall be for three years, and not to exceed two terms in succession, elections alternating and electing three people, or the number necessary to bring the number of elected executive presbyters to 8 members, one of whom must be an Ordained female, elected at large. This additional member will be a position reserved for an Ordained female. The designation of this position does not limit other Ordained females being nominated and elected for one of the other 7 member places on the executive presbytery.
4. The term of office for sectional presbyters shall be for two years. Presbyter elections will be held on even numbered years for all sections. In case of a vacancy a special election will be held to fill out the unexpired term.

#### E. Nominations and Elections

1. All nominations for district offices except for secretary shall be nominated by secret ballot. A nominating ballot for the office of executive presbyter, the office of General Presbyter (if required), and for non-resident executive presbyter shall be sent to each qualified voter in the Arkansas district during the first two weeks of January. To be accepted as a nomination, the ballot must be returned to the district office by the last day of February. The nominees shall be contacted as to their qualifications and willingness to serve. Those who are qualified and willing to serve will then be presented at the next District Council as the nominees for the office of executive presbyter, the office of general presbyter (if required) or non-resident executive presbyter nominee. The first ballot would then be the first electoral ballot. This procedure shall not infringe upon the rights of any incumbent or nominee. All names shall be balloted upon until one receives a two-thirds majority of all votes cast, and, if no such majority is reached after the second electoral ballot, all names are to be eliminated except the three highest.
2. The secretary of the district shall be elected in the following manner: The Executive Presbytery, serving as a nominating committee shall be entrusted with responsibility of making careful investigation concerning the qualifications and general fitness of available men for this strategic position and shall select by secret ballot one or more names for this office to be presented to the district council in session for election. In this election, the first ballot shall be declared a nominating ballot with the privilege given to the body of adding nominations to those presented by the nominating committee. Election shall be by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority is required for election.
3. On any elected office in which the bylaws spell out a pre-nominating process, additional nominees cannot be made at the district council in session unless the bylaws specifically spell out that option for a particular office.



#### **Section 4. General Presbyters**

The district shall be represented in the general council activities by three General Presbyters: the district superintendent and assistant superintendent (unless said person is not a pastor within the Arkansas District), and the District Secretary. In the event the assistant superintendent is not a resident pastor, an individual meeting the qualifications shall be elected in the manner prescribed by Bylaw Article III, Section 3, Paragraph E, Sub-paragraph 1.

#### **Section 5. Gulf Region Nominee for Non-Resident Presbyter**

- A. There is no residency requirement. The nominees must be an ordained minister of mature experience and ability, whose life and ministry are above question.
- B. The Arkansas district at its district council prior to the General Council session shall nominate two ministers from the district, one of whom is not an elected full-time district official, to be presented to the General Council as nominees from the Arkansas district.
- C. Elections shall be by secret ballot with a simple majority required for an election. In the event there are three nominees who receive a simple majority, the two nominees with the highest number of votes will be declared elected.

#### **Section 6. Other General Council Executive Presbyter Nominees and General Presbyters Election.**

At the District Council prior to the General Council in which the under 40 representative or female representative to the Executive Presbyter is to be elected, a nominee that meets all the General Council requirements for this position shall be selected and presented to the General Council as the Arkansas nominee.

Every six years Arkansas is to select at its District Council a male under 40 years of age who meets the General Council qualifications and a lady who meets the General Council qualifications who will represent the Gulf region at the General Presbytery meeting for that year. The District Presbytery shall select an ordained under 40 male active in ministry and an ordained female active in ministry to serve a one-year term on the General Presbytery the year designated by the General Council to provide representation from Arkansas.

#### **Section 7. Principles and Procedures**

- A. A two-thirds vote of all ballots cast shall constitute an election except any nominations for General Council positions, which will only require a simple majority. In the event two-thirds of the votes cast are received by a qualified candidate on the nominating ballot, an election shall be declared. Written ballots shall be cast for elective offices. All other voting shall follow normal parliamentary procedure.
- B. No minister of the Arkansas district council shall be permitted to hold more than one elective office except by virtue of his office.
- C. In elections for multiple offices, only one ballot shall be passed and all names entered on it.
- D. An incumbent in a district office shall be permitted to withdraw after the first electoral ballot.
- E. A membership list of all ministers shall be maintained and kept for inspection at the district council office.

- F. Each member and delegate may cast one vote during each ballot of an election. No proxy voting is permitted. There shall be no cumulative voting ballots for which there is more than one position. Action required or permitted in the bylaws must be approved by a meeting of members and delegates. No written consent without a duly called meeting is allowed.
- G. All elections involving nominees for General Council executive presbyters require a simple majority.

### **Section 8. The Order of Election**

(a) district superintendent, (b) assistant district superintendent, (c) district secretary and missions director, (d) general presbyter, (e) other necessary executive presbyters, (f) nominees for Gulf Area executive presbyter, and (g) any other General Council nominees that are called for by the General Council.

### **Section 9. Vacancies**

- A. In the event of any vacancy in any office or position where provision is not made by the bylaws for a successor, such vacancy shall be filled by the executive presbytery.
- B. Where provision is made for a successor in the bylaws, he shall be officially installed by the executive presbytery.
- C. Any office may be declared vacant by a two-thirds vote of the executive presbytery when circumstances warrant such action.
- D. In the event someone is selected to fulfill an unexpired term of a district position in which there is less than one-half of the term remaining, the appointment or selection shall be to fulfill the unexpired term plus one additional term of office.

## **ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Superintendent**

- A. The superintendent shall act as president of the district corporation in all legal matters, and shall serve as a district trustee.
- B. He shall be head of the district office and shall supervise the work of the office during the interim of the district council according to policies adopted by the executive presbytery.
- C. He shall preside at all meetings of the district council, of the executive committee, of the executive presbytery and the district presbytery, and he shall receive all communications addressed to those bodies.
- D. He shall be the superintendent of all work of the district council and shall assist assemblies with personal advice and ministry.
- E. He shall administer discipline in all cases where advised to do so by the executive presbytery. He shall have the prerogative of taking the initiative to investigate any charges of misconduct against any minister.
- F. He shall be an ex-officio member of all district and department committees and boards, and he shall approve all appointments of district and sectional workers.
- G. He shall be responsible for the disbursement of all district and department funds. He shall appoint a business administrator who is competent in accepted accounting practices. This

appointment will be ratified by the executive presbytery. The business administrator will work under the supervision of the superintendent according to the policy set forth by the superintendent and executive presbytery. The business administrator is not an officer of the district.

- H. He shall serve as a General Presbyter by virtue of his office, and shall represent the district at all sessions of the general council and of the General Presbytery.
- I. He shall perform any other function usual and customary for the presiding officer, or such as may be directed by the executive presbytery or the district council.

## **Section 2. Assistant Superintendent**

- A. The assistant superintendent shall assist the superintendent.
- B. He shall serve as vice-president and as a trustee of the corporation and preside at meetings of the executive presbytery and the district presbytery in the absence of the superintendent.
- C. He shall serve as a member of the executive committee and the executive presbytery.
- D. He shall serve as a General Presbyter by virtue of his office as long as he is a pastor, and shall represent the district at all sessions of the general council and of the General Presbytery.
- E. He shall perform any other functions under the supervision of the superintendent, or such as may be directed by the district council or the executive presbytery.
- F. He shall fill vacancy in the superintendent's office should one occur. In the event of a vacancy, he shall be installed by the executive presbytery.

## **Section 3. Secretary**

- A. The secretary shall keep a true record of the proceedings of the district council meetings and shall publish the same as approved and directed by the executive committee.
- B. He shall be the custodian of the official seal and shall, under the direction of the district credentials committee, keep a record of all ministers and assemblies in the district.
- C. He shall be authorized to sign all official and legal documents as secretary and as a trustee of the corporation.
- D. He shall serve as secretary of the executive presbytery and district presbytery and any other boards and committees as directed by the executive presbytery. He shall keep accurate minutes of the deliberations of these bodies and shall make the minutes available as directed by the executive presbytery.
- E. He shall perform such other functions as are customary to the office of secretary or as may be directed by the district council or the executive presbytery.
- F. He shall serve as the district missions' director.
- G. He shall serve as a General Presbyter by virtue of his office, and shall represent the district at all sessions of the general council and of the General Presbytery.

## **Section 4. General Presbyters**

The district shall be represented in the general council activities by three General Presbyters: the district superintendent and assistant superintendent (unless said person is not a pastor within the Arkansas District), and the district secretary. In the event the assistant

superintendent is not a resident pastor, an individual meeting the qualifications shall be elected in the manner prescribed by Bylaw Article III, Section 3, Paragraph E, Sub-paragraph 1.

### **Section 5. Executive Presbyters**

The executive presbyter is one chosen from the district at large without any thought to representation of any specific area. He serves according to the guidelines in the bylaws and by call and oversight of the district superintendent. His function is fulfilled within the confines of the Executive Presbytery meeting. He has no leadership status beyond this without assignment from the district superintendent or the Executive Presbytery.

### **Section 6. Executive Presbytery**

- A. The executive presbytery shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation with the superintendent serving as chairman of the board. The business and ministry of the Arkansas District Council shall be managed by the board of directors. It shall be authorized to act for the fellowship in all matters that affect its interest while the district council is not in session and shall make report to the district council of its activities in behalf of the fellowship as may be directed. It shall provide for its own meetings.
- B. The district superintendent, assistant superintendent, and secretary shall constitute the executive committee of the executive presbytery and shall act as trustees of the corporation. They shall sign all legal documents as directed by the executive presbytery. The executive committee shall act as a standing editing committee for the minutes.
- C. Relations
  - 1. In all matters relating to an individual section, the executive presbytery shall invite the sectional presbyter of that section to be present. In matters involving ministerial discipline, the sectional presbyter in whose section the offense was committed shall be invited to the meeting in which this matter is discussed.
  - 2. The executive presbytery shall authorize a letter of information be sent to each sectional presbyter regarding the status of ministers who have been disciplined and also information pertaining to major decisions which affect the entire district.
- D. The executive presbytery shall act as a standing credentials committee.
- E. All funds sent to the district office are to be used as designated by the executive presbytery, according to provisions in the bylaws.
- F. The executive presbytery shall arrange for date and location where district meetings are to be held.
- G. All decisions of the executive presbytery shall be final unless reversed by a decision of the district council.
- H. The removal of directors shall be administered under the procedures set forth in Article XII. Discipline, to the exclusion of all other removal procedures.
- I. Vacancies on the board of directors shall be filled pursuant to the procedures set forth in Article III. Nominations and Elections.

### **Section 7. District Presbytery**

- A. The executive presbytery and the sectional presbytery shall be the district presbytery.

- B. The district presbytery shall function in an advisory and consultatory capacity. The action of this board shall be subject to ratification by the executive presbytery in session, except in cases provided for by Article XVII, Finance, Section 1.E.
- C. Meetings of the district presbytery shall be called by the superintendent as the need may arise.

**Section 8. Sectional Presbyters**

- A. The sectional presbyter is a district presbyter chosen from the section within which he resides. He is to work in consultation with the district superintendent as a representative of the district to the section, and as a representative of the section to the district. His leadership is confined to the churches and ministers within the particular section which has chosen him as their overseer. He shall meet with the executive presbytery as needs arise. In matters of interest and concern to his particular section, he is a member of the district presbytery with the right to vote on those matters. As the overseer and supervisor of all ministers and churches within his section, he must give special attention to the district affiliated churches in the section. He shall keep an up-to-date record of ministers and churches and report to the district office as needed and requested. He shall interview and be part of the process for granting credentials to ministerial applicants from his section.
- B. The sectional presbyter shall take the initiative in settling all difficulties which may arise in his particular section. He shall take the initiative in the investigation of any charge submitted in his respective section against any minister. An exception is made for moral charges which are the responsibility of the superintendent.
- C. The sectional presbyter shall be associated with each of the ministries that come out of the district office in the promotion of the ministry. Any sectional ministry leaders are to be appointed by district ministry leaders in consultation with the sectional presbyter and district superintendent under guidelines developed by the executive and sectional presbytery.
- D. He shall serve as the sectional missions director.

**ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Standing Committee**

- A. A standing committee shall be defined as one whose work is of such scope and nature that meetings during the council year must be necessary.
  - 1. The term of office of such committees shall be for the remainder of the council year in which their appointments or reappointments shall be made as soon after the district council as is feasible.
  - 2. All committees shall be appointed by the district superintendent, except those whose selection is called for in a different manner in these bylaws.
- B. Committees.
  - 1. Executive committee. The district superintendent, the assistant superintendent and the secretary shall comprise the executive committee. Their duties shall include authority to sign all legal documents as trustees and as directed by the executive presbytery and shall be responsible for the editing of the bylaws following the district council.

2. Credentials committee. The credentials committee shall consist of the executive presbytery. A special credentials committee shall be appointed to function whenever meetings are scheduled to examine credential applicants. They shall consider applications for ministerial recognition and credential promotions. This committee shall be amenable to the entire executive presbytery whose decision will be final. Routine renewals, reinstatement of disciplined, delinquent or lapsed ministers shall be the responsibility of the executive presbytery.
3. Finance committee. A finance committee shall be appointed to examine fiscal policies, practices and budgets of the district and make recommendations to the superintendent, secretary and the executive presbytery.
4. Campground committee. The district superintendent shall appoint a campground committee comprised of at least two pastors, the department leaders selected by the superintendent and four at large members. One of the members selected shall be an executive presbyter. The superintendent shall select one of the members to serve as chairman. The committee shall meet when called upon by the chairman or district superintendent. The committee shall work with the superintendent to assist in the planning and developing of new facilities and the upgrading of current facilities. Their recommendations will be presented to the executive presbytery for consideration. The maintenance and upkeep of the campground shall be under the direction of the district superintendent.
5. Sectional executive committee. The sectional presbyter, with the approval of the district superintendent shall appoint two resident ministers to serve with him as a sectional executive committee. One shall serve as assistant presbyter and the other shall serve as secretary/treasurer for the section.

## **Section 2. Other Committees**

- A. Other committees may be formed by either the initiative of the district council in session, the district superintendent or the executive presbytery.
- B. The expenses of all committees shall be provided for by the executive presbytery from the general fund of the district.
- C. Committees to serve at the district council may include the following:
  1. A roster committee is to provide an accurate roster of qualified voters at the district council. Every minister and delegate must be registered with this committee in order to vote on any district council business.
  2. An ushers committee will take care of the usual duties of ushers.
  3. A tellers committee will officially count the results of secret ballot votes at the business sessions of the district council.
  4. A parliamentary committee will advise on parliamentary order and decisions when called upon by the chairman.
  5. A resolutions committee will edit, examine and place in proper form all resolutions presented to them.

- a. Procedure for presentation of resolutions. All resolutions for presentation to the district council, except emergency measures, shall be presented to the district secretary's office at least 60 days prior to a district council session. The resolutions committee shall prepare the resolutions in printed form and mail them to the district council ministers and churches 30 days prior to the district council. This does not apply to business from the executive presbytery, district presbytery or committee meetings just prior to the district council. Resolutions of an emergency nature shall be brought to the floor only by the decision of a two-thirds vote of the council in session.
  - b. Appropriateness of resolutions. The resolutions committee shall, by a two-thirds vote, determine the appropriateness of a proposed resolution as to any possible conflict with the corporate charter, constitution or bylaws. They shall eliminate duplication where similar resolutions relating to a specific subject will be offered in a logical sequence.
  - c. Sponsorship policy. The author or sponsor shall sign all resolutions presented to the committee. When a resolution is presented for the consideration of the district council in session the author, sponsor, or a spokesperson thereof shall be expected to be the first speaker on the behalf of the resolution. Any resolution will be presented to the council, provided at least one-third of the committee deems it wise to do so. If the resolutions committee determines that a resolution is inappropriate, it shall advise the author and shall apprise him of his right to present the proposed resolution to the house for determination as to appropriateness.
- D. These committees shall meet at the call of the superintendent. Instructions shall be given at the time of appointment or at the first meeting of the committee.

## **ARTICLE VI - FELLOWSHIP SECTIONS**

### **Section 1. Purpose**

The district shall be divided into fellowship sections. They shall promote district departmental activities, afford opportunity for ministerial fellowship and counsel, and promote inter-assembly fellowship.

### **Section 2. Boundaries**

The sectional boundaries are as follows:

#### *Section 1. Fayetteville Section*

Section 1 shall be made of churches within the following counties: Benton County, Washington County, and Madison County.

#### *Section 2 West. Harrison Section*

Section 2 West shall be made up of churches within the following counties: Boone County, Newton County, and Carroll County.

#### *Section 2 East. Mountain Home Section*

Section 2 East shall be made up of churches within the following counties: Baxter County, Marion County, Searcy County, Van Buren County, Stone County, Viola, First Assembly and Viola, Mitchell Assembly in Fulton County, and Calico Rock, Dolph in IZARD County.

*Section 3. Batesville Section*

Section 3 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running south from the Missouri line to a point about four miles south of Brownsville, from there east to the Poinsett County line north for about four miles, thence east to a point about three miles east of Weiner, thence north to the Missouri line.

*Section 4. Jonesboro Section*

Section 4 shall consist of the territory lying directly in the northeast part of the state and bounded by a line beginning at the Missouri line and running south to a point about three miles east of Weiner thence east to the Mississippi River.

*Section 5 North. Van Buren Section*

Section 5 North shall consist of all churches north of the Arkansas River to the south boundary of Section 1, and west of the boundary of Section 6.

*Section 5 South. Fort Smith Section*

Section 5 South shall consist of all churches south of Arkansas River to the north boundary of Section 9, and west of the boundary line of Section 6.

*Section 6. Morrilton Section*

Section 6 shall consist of a territory bounded by a line running south from a point about six miles south of Fort Douglas to a point about ten miles south of Ava, from there east to a point about four miles east of Paron, thence north to Antioch, thence east to Warsaw, thence southeast to Holland, thence north to Brownsville, thence west to the point of beginning.

*Section 7. Kensett Section*

Section 7 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running south from a point about four miles south of Brownsville to Holland, thence southeast to a point just east of Lonoke, thence south to a point about three miles south of Sizemore, thence east to the Cache River, thence north, northeast, east and north, following the Monroe, St. Francis, Cross and Poinsett County lines to a point about thirteen miles east of Newport, thence west to the point of beginning.

*Section 8. Wynne Section*

Section 8 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running west from the Mississippi River to a point about eight miles west of Weiner thence southwest and south, following the Jackson, Woodruff and Prairie County lines to the Cache River, thence east to a point about three miles east of Aubrey, thence south to the Mississippi River.

*Section 9. DeQueen Section*

Section 9 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running east from the Oklahoma line to a point about ten miles south of Ava, from there south to a point about five miles south of Beirne, thence west to the Oklahoma line.

*Section 10. Malvern Section*

Section 10 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running south from a point about ten miles south of Ava to a point about five miles south of Beirne, from there east to the Saline



River, thence north to Woodson, thence west to a point just east of Lonsdale, thence north to a point about four miles east of Paron, thence west to the point of beginning.

*Section 11. Pine Bluff Section*

Section 11 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running north from the Mississippi River to a point about three miles east of Aubrey, thence west to a point about three miles south of Sizemore, thence south to Blakemore, thence southwest to Woodson, from there south to the Saline River, thence east to the Mississippi River.

*Section 12. Hope Section*

Section 12 shall consist of the territory lying directly in the southwest part of the state and bounded by a line running east from the Oklahoma line to a point above five miles south of Beirne, from there south to the Louisiana line.

*Section 13. Camden Section*

Section 13 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running north from the Louisiana line to a point about five miles south of Beirne, from thence east to the Saline River, thence south to the Louisiana line.

*Section 14. Monticello Section*

Section 14 shall consist of the territory lying directly in the southeast part of the state and bounded by a line running north from the Louisiana line to the Saline River, thence east to the Mississippi River.

*Section 15. Central Section*

Section 15 shall consist of the territory bounded by a line running east from Antioch to Warsaw, from there southeast to a point just east of Lonoke, thence west to a point just east of Lonsdale, thence north to the point of beginning.

**Section 3. Adjustments of Boundary Lines**

Adjustments of sectional boundary lines may be made by the mutual consent of the sections involved in an adjustment with the approval of the executive presbytery.

**ARTICLE VII - LOCAL ASSEMBLIES**

**Section 1. Recognition of Assemblies**

The General Council recognizes four classes of church:

1. The General Council affiliated assembly,
2. The district council affiliated assembly,
3. The district council cooperating assembly,
4. The parent affiliated church (PAC)

The Arkansas district executive presbytery establishes the guidelines under which the PAC church operates. PAC churches are not represented by a delegate at sectional or district meetings.

There are four classes of Assemblies in our district which are recognized and given the privileges of affiliation as set forth in the General Council and District Council bylaws. These are:

1. The General Council affiliated assembly,

2. The district council affiliated assembly,
  3. The district council phase-in assembly,
  4. The district council cooperating assembly.
- A. The General Council affiliated assembly.
1. Requirements for affiliation. Churches desiring to be affiliated with The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall meet the following requirements. They shall:
    - a. Accept the tenets of faith of the Assemblies of God.
    - b. Adopt a standard of membership that may be determined either by the local assembly or by agreement with the district council.
    - c. Have a minimum active voting membership of 20 persons who shall accept responsibility to maintain a scriptural order in the local body.
    - d. 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.
    - e. Have an adequate number of spiritually qualified members to fill the offices of the church called for in its constitution or bylaws; and
    - f. Make provision for a pastor who is a credentialed minister in good standing with the General Council and the district council.
  2. Relationship to and support of the General Council and district council. A General Council affiliated assembly should cooperate in the work and support the programs of the General Council and the district council and may send delegates to the General Council and the district council.
  3. Right of self-government. 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.
  4. Subordinate in matters of doctrine and conduct. A General Council affiliated assembly shall be organized under the jurisdiction of the district and shall recognize that the district council or the General Council of the Assemblies of God has the right to approve scriptural doctrine and conduct and the authority to withdraw its Certificate of Affiliation if deemed necessary.
  5. 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.

6. 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. (GC Constitution Article XI. Local Assemblies, Section 5. Assemblies of God Total Giving Participation)
  7. 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 General Council Constitution, Article XI, Section 1, paragraph 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.
- B. The district council affiliated assembly.
1. The district council affiliated assembly is one that is not yet able to meet the minimum requirements for General Council affiliation.
  2. The churches under district supervision by action taken through Article VII, Section 5 shall be considered as a district council affiliated assembly. These churches shall be sent a letter for their file by the district superintendent or sectional presbyter notifying the church of its status and its relationship to the district while under supervision.
  3. These churches shall receive a letter of recognition from the district office as a district council affiliated assembly.
  4. These churches are held under the general oversight of the district superintendent and sectional presbyter who shall provide pastoral care and appoint necessary officers.
  5. The governing board of these churches is the district superintendent, sectional presbyter, and appointed pastor. In the event the sectional presbyter pastors a district council affiliated assembly, the district secretary shall serve on the governing board along with the superintendent and the pastor.
  6. These churches through the pastor and/or the church secretary shall send monthly a report to the district superintendent and sectional presbyter giving information on attendance, finances, the spiritual condition of the church and any expected changes in officers of the church.
  7. These churches shall be under close supervision of the sectional presbyter working closely with the district superintendent. No business transactions shall be made either concerning property, or the election of officers, etc. without the prior consent of the sectional presbyter.
  8. District affiliated churches shall be required to have in force at all times proper and adequate property and liability insurance as approved by the district office. The monthly report form sent by the district affiliated churches will provide opportunity for the church to state that they have property and liability insurance in force and to list the company

through which that insurance is secured. Any district affiliated church found to not have property and liability insurance in force will be notified by certified letter to secure such coverage. If that coverage is not secured within 60 days of the receipt of said certified letter, the board of that church (district superintendent, sectional presbyter, and pastor) shall secure property and liability insurance using funds from said local church.

9. These churches may be released from district supervision when in the opinion of the district superintendent and sectional presbyter conditions warrant such release.

C. The district council phase-in assembly.

1. The district council phase-in assembly is one which is in a district program developed to bring churches from the district council affiliated status to General Council affiliated status.
2. The phase-in program shall be for a minimum period of one year. It shall grant self-government to a local church while it remains under limited district supervision.
3. The district council phase-in church shall be evaluated at the end of one year by the sectional presbyter and the district superintendent. If it can be determined that the phase-in has been successful, the church shall make application for General Council Certificate of Affiliation.

D. Cooperating assemblies

Provision 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 the 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.

E. General regulations.

1. Churches holding business meetings at which a sectional presbyter is present to conduct the meeting, are required to receive an offering to be given to the sectional presbyter.
2. Churches are to have the assistance of the district in settling difficulties which have caused disturbance in the assembly to such proportion that confusion prevails. The district may take oversight of the assembly until a normal condition prevails again in the church.
3. Churches or ministers shall not use the name Assemblies of God in connection with any effort until district approval is given.

## **Section 2. Privileges**

- A. All General Council affiliated assemblies shall have the right to representation in the sectional, district and general councils by one lay delegate elected by the assembly prior to the respective council. District council affiliated assemblies shall have the right to

representation in the sectional and district councils by one delegate chosen under the supervision of the sectional presbyter and pastor.

- B. Local church credential. A local church credential shall be administered by the local General Council affiliated 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 General Council affiliated church).
- C. That in affiliation with the district and General Council, all church property shall be owned, leased, rented, or deeded to be used and contracted by the duly chosen trustees for the benefit of the local assembly.
- D. That all property be so joined to the district as to prevent any portion of the membership from diverting it to another church organization or church interests, and that our churches deed their property so as to make it safe for the Assemblies of God organization in time of crises or division.

### **Section 3. Church Responsibilities**

Churches are to cooperate fully with the district council in all matters of finance, discipline, unity and other matters pertaining to the district welfare, as stated in its constitution and bylaws.

### **Section 4. Safeguarding the Assemblies**

- A. It is known that many unreliable and unsafe teachers and preachers go about seeking entrance into assemblies without any recommendation; therefore, all pastors, workers and leaders of assemblies should make proper investigation regarding such persons not known to them, and the platform be denied strangers and those who have been dropped from our list until proper recommendations be forthcoming. We advise against any minister giving recognition to such person or persons as mentioned above.
- B. Since the use of non-Assemblies of God evangelists may bring confusion and problems detrimental to the Fellowship, it is recommended that Assemblies of God churches use Assemblies of God evangelists.
- C. The advice and counsel of the district presbytery should be sought in such cases and in all matters of importance when at all possible. Pastors and officary should notify each other reciprocally of any such person when unreliability becomes manifest.
- D. We discourage ministers coming into the district and securing pastorates without cooperating by consulting the officary in such matters. When affiliated assemblies are calling pastors from other localities or from other districts when the methods and ministry of the one being called is not generally known, the deacons will first get the approval of the district superintendent or executive presbytery before placing the name of a candidate before the church for election. Otherwise, the election will be considered out of order. No Assemblies of God church will be permitted to call a pastor who does not hold ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God.
- E. In the event pastors are appointed because of the church being in the hands of the district, the district superintendent and the sectional presbyter shall make the appointment. In the

event the sectional presbyter pastors a district affiliated church, the pastoral appointment will be made by the Executive Committee. All appointments shall be reviewed after the first year and reappointment will be made for two or three years or until such time as the church has completed phase-in. The district superintendent and the sectional presbyter shall have the right of review at any time. Upon recommendation of the presbyter and the district superintendent, a district council affiliated church may be allowed to give an expression or vote of confidence for a pastor. Such vote will serve only as a guide for future appointment.

- F. In the event a misunderstanding between pastor and assembly which cannot be adjusted among themselves should arise, it shall be the privilege of either the pastor or the assembly to call for the help of the sectional presbyter to make necessary adjustments.
- G. In the event either party (minister or church majority) is dissatisfied with the decision rendered by the presbyter, the case may be appealed to a joint advisory of said presbyter and district superintendent.
- H. In the event where such joint advisory fails to reach a satisfactory agreement, the superintendent shall present the matter to the executive presbytery for a final decision.
- I. In the event of a breach having arisen between an assembly and a pastor in charge, said pastor should, on the advice and judgment of the sectional presbyter and district superintendent, resign the pastorate in helping effect a reconciliation.
- J. In the event a pastor is not returned to his office by election, or he is not reappointed to a district council affiliated church, or he resigns at the request of the church board or district officials, he shall have a period of 30 days to vacate the office of pastor and to vacate the parsonage. An exception may apply in such cases where the sectional presbyter and district superintendent feel it advisable for the pastor to leave immediately.
- K. The expense of all presbyterial gatherings held for the purpose of adjusting difficult matters in assemblies shall be met by the assembly calling for such service.

### **Section 5. Intervention of District in a Local Assembly**

- A. Circumstances requiring intervention: While the right of a local assembly to self-government is a basic general council principle, it is also recognized that the assembly has a responsibility to the district council and general council, and both have a responsibility to the assembly. Some of the circumstances which require intervention by the district officary are as follows:
  - 1. Division resulting in disruption.
  - 2. Assumption of dictatorial authority by the pastor or board.
  - 3. Prolonged absence of pastoral leadership.
  - 4. Deviation or departure from Assemblies of God principles and practices.
  - 5. Attempt to disaffiliate from Assemblies of God Fellowship.
- B. Intervention Procedure: The district has the right to meet with the board or congregation, or the district officary may be extended an invitation. This can come about in the following ways:
  - 1. By the request of the pastor.

2. By action of the board.
  3. By petition of the congregation according to the bylaw provision. Simple majority of membership present and voting in this meeting could request supervision.
- C. Intervention in a General Council affiliated church: In the event circumstances require district intervention in a General Council affiliated church, it shall become a district council affiliated church subject to all of the regulations for a district council affiliated church.

## **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 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, 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 - CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

Each church is urged at the earliest convenient time to adopt a suitable constitution and bylaws for the governing of the local church. It is required that local constitution and bylaws meet the approval of the district and General Council. Changes in the local constitution and bylaws should be approved.

An assembly that has not adopted its own local constitution and bylaws shall be governed by this article of the district bylaws. The district presbytery shall provide a constitution and bylaws that will be the governing documents for all district affiliated churches. The executive committee is authorized to make minor changes to the approved bylaw to accommodate any unique local situations. Any issue not covered by the bylaws of a local church shall be governed by this article of the district bylaws.

The executive presbytery in consultation with the sectional presbyters shall provide basic policies and procedures for all district affiliated churches. The board of the church may also develop policies and procedures for operations.

The following procedures are recommended in local church activities:

### **Section 1. Membership**

#### **A. Qualifications**

1. A person who has reached the age of accountability, who has been born of the Spirit (John 3:5), who does not use tobacco in any form, who is a total abstainer from alcoholic beverages and does not depend upon illegal physical stimulants, who lives a consistent Christian life, who is in cooperative fellowship with our testimony both in fellowship and doctrine and who will share the responsibility for the support of the church in its activities according to his ability.
2. In no case shall persons be accepted into membership who are known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony. Divorced and remarried persons may become members. They are to be given all opportunities for Christian service for which these believers may be qualified.

B. Procedure for membership applications

1. Persons desiring to become active members of the assembly shall present an application to the pastor, who shall examine the applicant according to the standard of membership. It is recommended that all churches use the application for membership cards.
2. In a General Council affiliated church. The pastor shall present to the official board the names of those who apply for membership together with his recommendation. Membership will be granted to those who receive approval by a majority of the board. All persons who shall have met the membership requirements and have been approved shall have their names added to the church membership roster and shall be received into the assembly at any of the regular public services.
3. In a district council affiliated church. The pastor shall present the names of those who apply for membership together with his recommendation to the sectional presbyter. The persons who have been approved by the sectional presbyter shall have their names added to the church membership roster and shall be received into the assembly at any of the regular public services.
4. Names should never be placed upon the roll in private, nor removed without due action of the entire board of the church.
5. The pastor and official board 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 may have fallen into sin and whose lives may have become inconsistent with the standards and teachings of the assembly. A record shall be kept giving the names and reasons for removal of a name.
6. Appeal procedure regarding removal of membership
  - a. In a General Council affiliated church, if a name is removed for cause, the one whose name is removed shall be notified by mail of the action of the pastor and the official board. 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. Appeal must be in writing and presented to the pastor or church secretary within ten days. The action of the assembly, by a majority vote, shall be considered final.



- b. In a district council affiliated church the one whose name is removed for cause shall be notified by mail of the action of the official board. If appeal is made, the appeal must be made in writing within ten days and presented to the pastor, sectional presbyter, or district superintendent. The appeal will be considered by the executive presbytery, whose action shall be considered final.
- C. Voting membership: Legal voting membership of the church shall consist of all members above the age of 16 whose names appear on the assembly roll, who are above reproach and in good standing with the assembly, who have not willfully absented themselves fully from the regular services for a period of 30 days, and who have not been active in any services which were of an opposing or antagonistic nature either in doctrine or spirit prior to the business meeting. No non-Assemblies of God credentialed ministers shall vote or participate in any business meeting. The officers of the assembly shall be chosen from the voting membership.
- D. Transfer of membership
  - 1. Any member of an assembly desiring a transfer of membership to another assembly shall ask for an official letter of transfer.
  - 2. Letter of transfer shall be given following formal action of the church board and shall not be given by pastor's action only. An official letter of transfer shall be considered only as a recommendation, and any church may exercise the right of self-government to accept or deny such application.
  - 3. When a pastor knows of the departure of those who are church attendants of his church and Sunday School services, he should notify the pastor of the church in the locality to which they have moved, that he may encourage them to attend services.
- E. Discipline and restoration of disciplined members
 

The District Presbytery Board will be responsible for providing a policy and procedure statement for all district council affiliated churches to use in regard to the discipline and restoration of disciplined church members. This policy and procedure statement will also be made available for all General Council affiliated churches.

## **ADDENDUM**

### **Policy and Procedure for Restoration of Disciplined Members**

- 1. Precautionary Status:
  - A. No person who has been convicted of any crime involving sexual misconduct, or whose name appears on the central registry for child abuse may work with at-risk individuals. A person who has shown restoration through redemption, deliverance, and a proven life-style of faithfulness, may be a member of a church, however, such involvement should be limited to such a nature as to protect both themselves and others.
  - B. A person accused of misconduct shall show a spirit of humility and honesty to assist in resolving the allegations and reconciling differences. The accused will accept conditions for membership as recommended by the official board during the course of the investigation into allegations.

2. Probationary Status: A person accused of misconduct, accompanied by a confession of guilt or substantiated by evidence, shall be placed on probation for a period of not less than one year. A review of said probationary status shall be conducted:
  - A. After six months or
  - B. Upon the allegation being unsubstantiated, whichever should occur first.  
 A determination would then be made as to whether the probationary status would continue for the balance of the year or be withdrawn. The accused shall not hold any position in the church, or have voting privileges during the term of probation. During the term of probation, the accused shall show a spirit of humility, demonstrating repentance by attitude and conduct becoming of a believer.
3. Recommended Restoration:
  - A. Restoration for a disciplined person shall be conducted at the discretion of the pastor or in the event a church is without a pastor, at the discretion of the official board.
  - B. Restoration would include, but not necessarily be limited to pastoral counseling and/or professional counseling, as each individual situation would determine.

**Other Categories of Disciplinary Action:**

1. Adultery/fornication or child maltreatment (physical abuse or neglect): Article IX, Section 1, Paragraph E establishes the criteria and procedure for disciplinary action for these areas of misconduct.
2. Child Sexual Abuse/Pedophilia and Homosexuality: Any person who exemplifies a homosexual life-style or is a pedophile, or has engaged in the sexual abuse of a child, accompanied by a confession of guilt or substantiated by evidence, shall immediately have their membership revoked. The revocation of membership shall be reported in writing to the district superintendent, with such information to be released only at the discretion of the district superintendent.
  - A. Any person whose membership has been revoked because of the misconduct set out in this section, is prohibited from obtaining membership with any Assembly of God church until:
    1. They have been treated by a licensed professional who specializes in the treatment of individuals in that particular area of misconduct;
    2. Said licensed professional having been approved by the district council and/or General Council; and
    3. At such time as the person is deemed to have successfully completed treatment for said misconduct.
  - B. Any individual whose membership is reinstated shall not be allowed to work or minister in any areas which could jeopardize that individual or others.
3. The church must maintain a standard against sexual immorality, especially that which targets the recruitment of others. Basis for such discipline is found in I Corinthians 5:9-13 and II Corinthians 2:6-8.

## **Section 2. Government and official functions**

### **A. Principles of government**

1. God's method by which the church of Jesus Christ has moved forward down through the centuries is that God selected man to be the leader (the pastor) and then gave the leader men (deacons) who serve as support to the leader and as fellow servants to the congregation.
2. It is understood that God has always chosen to give the leadership the vision for the work of the Lord. A pastor and board working together for the enlargement of the kingdom of God is a rewarding experience.
3. The vote of the church is considered the highest authority in local church matters.

### **B. Terminology used with church boards**

1. District council affiliated churches
  - a. Official board. The official board of a district council affiliated church shall be the pastor, sectional presbyter and district superintendent.
  - b. Trustees. The official board shall serve as trustees. When there is no pastor, the district secretary shall serve as a trustee.
  - c. The official board may by agreement give approval for a local board of trustees and/or a Board of Advisors to assist the pastor in an advisory capacity in routine functions of the local church.
2. General council affiliated churches
  - a. Official board. The pastor and deacons shall be the official board. There shall be a deacon board of not less than three well-qualified men. Deacons shall be elected who meet the Scriptural and bylaw qualifications.
  - b. Deacons. The deacons shall be men chosen from among the congregation to "serve the church" in practical, spiritual and temporal matters of that body of believers.
  - c. Trustees. It is recommended that the deacons serve as trustees. Trustees are persons chosen from among the congregation to be custodians of the church property and to serve as signatories.

### **C. Relationships of all boards**

1. To the pastor: The board member is the pastor's advisor, helper and prayer partner. In this position he is a loyal supporter to the pastor, assisting him to fulfill the vision and goals God has given him for the local church. The pastor is the chairman and a voting member of the church boards.
2. To each other: Board members are a team, working together within the scope of their assignment with the view to achieving the successful advancement of the church. Board members should seek to develop a close relationship through mutual prayer, worship and cooperative co-laboring with the pastor and his staff.
3. To the congregation: Board members should promote goodwill in the congregation and should strengthen the people's confidence in their pastor and his leadership. The spiritual interest and welfare of the congregation are their concern and responsibility.

4. To the community: Board members should be the church's public relations men in the community. Their lives should be a testimony of true Christianity, conducting themselves in a manner that will honor Christ.

#### D. Duties of church officers

*Special Note:* Elder or Eldership: The use of the word in the original Greek (Acts 20:17, 18; I Tim. 5:17; James 5:14, etc.) shows that the word "elder" or "eldership" refers to the same office as pastor, bishop or overseer. The pastor is God's gift to the church; board members are the church's gift to the pastor.

##### 1. Pastor

- a. There shall be a pastor who is a credentialed minister in good standing with the Assemblies of God.
- b. The pastor is the spiritual governor of the church and all of its activities. He shall provide for all services of the assembly, and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions or revival campaigns. No person should be invited to speak or preach in the assembly unless it is in full accord with the pastor's wishes.
- c. The pastor is the chairman with voting privileges in all of the business meetings of the assembly and in the meetings of the official board. He shall appoint all standing committees and shall serve as an ex-officio member and supervisor of all committees, departments and visitation work.
- d. The pastor shall be the leader in evangelism and in the discipling of members. He shall examine all applications for church membership and shall present his recommendations to the official board.

##### 2. Ministerial staff

Ministerial staff such as associate pastor, youth pastor, music director, discipleship ministries director, etc., shall be amenable to the senior pastor. Staff persons should be given a job description by the senior pastor in order to enhance working relationships.

##### 3. Deacons

- a. The deacons when meeting together with the pastor shall be the official board of the assembly. When the church is temporarily without a pastor, the official board shall choose a chairman from its membership.
- b. The deacons shall act in an advisory capacity with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the church and its spiritual life, the administration of its ordinances, in considering applications for membership, and also in the administration of the discipline of the assembly.
- c. The official board of the church shall serve as an editing committee to incorporate into the bylaws the changes that have been adopted by the General Council and district council in their regular sessions. The membership shall be notified of these changes by letter, bulletin board announcement or pulpit announcement.
- d. All matters of the church shall be carried on by the official board except matters which, in the opinion of the board, affect the entire church body, and in such case,

the action of the board shall pass as a recommendation to the assembly for ratification.

- e. All committees and departments shall function under the supervision of the pastor and official board.
- f. The official board may elect one of its members to serve as secretary to the board. The church secretary shall be the custodian of the minutes.

4. Trustees

- a. They shall act in the name of, and for the benefit of, the assembly to hold the legal title to the church properties. The trustees shall be authorized to sign all official and legal documents relating to the acquiring or disposing of said church properties.
- b. The trustees, serving as custodians of the church property, shall be responsible for the proper maintenance and insurance, etc., of these properties.
- c. The trustees shall act under the supervision of the pastor and official board. It is recommended that the deacons serve as trustees.

5. Secretary

- a. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the assembly. The secretary shall also be the custodian of the minutes of the official board meetings, as well as custodian for all other legal documents.
- b. The secretary shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of the office.
- c. The office of secretary and treasurer may be held jointly.

6. Treasurer

- a. The treasurer shall be entrusted with all finances of the assembly which are committed to him/her.
- b. The treasurer shall deposit all funds in a responsible bank in the name of assembly, and shall disburse the same by check as authorized by the pastor and official board.
- c. The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements in order to make a full itemized report at the regular meetings of the official board and at the regular church business meetings.
- d. The treasurer shall sign all checks and shall have them countersigned by the pastor, or in the absence of the pastor, by another board member, or one designated by the pastor and official board.
- e. The office of treasurer and secretary may be held jointly.

E. Qualifications of church officers

1. Pastor

Only duly credentialed ministers in good standing with the Assemblies of God are eligible to serve as pastor.

2. Ministerial staff

Ministerial staff such as associate pastor, youth pastor, music director, discipleship ministries director, etc., should hold credentials with the Assemblies of God or be a member in good standing with an Assemblies of God church.

### 3. Deacons

A man's life and character must pass certain criteria before he can qualify to serve. The Scriptures dictate the qualifications.

- a. The deacon must be chosen from "among you" (Acts 6:3), a lay member of the local congregation for at least one year.
- b. The deacon must be a man of good reputation, "men of honest report" (Acts 6:3). The confidence and trust of the congregation and community are essential.
- c. The deacon is in a spiritual ministry, "full of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 6:3), according to Acts 2:4 and continuing to be "full" (Ephesians 5:18).
- d. The deacon is required to make decisions in practical and temporal matters as well as giving support to the pastor in spiritual matters. Sound direction and wise counsel needs "wisdom" (Acts 6:3).
- e. The deacon must be willing to be involved in the work of God through the church; he is to "serve" (Acts 6:2).
- f. The deacon is to be "grave" (I Tim. 3:8), i.e., steadfast and serious.
- g. The deacon is "not double-tongued" (I Tim. 3:8) i.e., a man of his word, dependable.
- h. The deacon is "not given to much wine" (I Tim. 3:8), i.e., he is a total abstainer from alcoholic beverages and does not depend on physical stimulants.
- i. The deacon is "not greedy of filthy lucre" (I Tim. 3:8), i.e., he is a faithful steward with his tithe, generous, and not motivated by money.
- j. The deacon is proper in his doctrine, "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (I Tim. 3:9), fully subscribing to the tenets of faith of the Assemblies of God.
- k. The deacon is a mature believer, "and let these also first be proved" (I Tim. 3:10).
- l. The deacon has not experienced matrimonial mix-ups, but is the husband "of one wife" (I Tim. 3:12). We recommend that this standard be upheld by all our assemblies, except when 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 Article XI. Doctrines and Practices Disapproved, Section 6. Divorce and Remarriage, Paragraph C, subparagraph 1.)
- m. The deacon leads his home in Christ, "ruling their children and their own houses well" (I Tim. 3:12).
- n. The deacon's wife must be an example of the Christian life, "grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" (I Tim. 3:11).

### 4. Trustees

- a. It is recommended that deacons serve as trustees.
- b. They shall be persons of mature experience with business ability who live a life above reproach and meet the standards of membership according to Article IX, Section 1.

### 5. Secretary and Treasurer

They shall be a cooperative member of the church for a period of at least one year prior to their election. They shall be of honest report and possess the abilities to fulfill the duties of the office.

6. All leaders of the assembly.

They shall be members in good standing, cooperating with the policies and standards of the local church and fellowship according to Article IX, Section 1, Membership.

### **Section 3. Business meetings**

- A. There should be an annual business meeting of each church. The pastor or the deacons by a majority agreement may call a business meeting at any time, due notice being given to each member of the church or announcements having been made to insure general knowledge of all members regarding such a business meeting. During the interval between pastors when the church is conducting a pastoral search, the official board can declare the church in a continual "state of business" in order to vote upon a candidate minister either the weekend of their ministry or within the next few days. Failure to give notice of such a meeting would bring it under question and might classify it as out of order provided the complaint is duly filed before the sectional presbyter within ten days after such a complaint to justify action in the matter.
- B. Appeals. Appeals from a local church to the sectional presbyter and/or district superintendent must be made within ten days after the meeting in question. Sufficient evidence must accompany the complaint to justify district involvement in the matter.
- C. Meetings by petition. Any member of good standing in the church, upon securing written consent of at least one-third of the church membership, may call a special meeting at any time, provided due notice is given and explanation of the nature and need of such a meeting is fully set forth in such announcement. The petition shall be given to the pastor or church secretary in order for arrangements to be made for the meeting. The meeting shall be chaired by the superintendent or other district official assigned or designated by the district superintendent.
- D. Absentee voting. Absentee ballots may be accepted in business meetings of the Assembly from active voting member who are unable to attend by reason of illness, infirmity, workers on duty, or those out of town for valid reasons. Absentee ballots shall be qualified if:
1. The ballot shall be placed in a plain envelope inside another envelope with the voter's signature on the outside envelope.
  2. The ballot shall denote the decision or the position being voted upon. It shall be either by use of a printed form provided by the assembly or on a blank sheet of paper providing the required ballot information.
  3. The ballot shall be in the hand of the pastor, church secretary or deposited in the church office, at least 24 hours prior to convening of the business meeting. Such ballot may be delivered by mail or in person.

4. The official secretary of the assembly, the deacons, and the pastor shall check all absentee ballots to see whether they are qualified. If so, the ballot shall be counted on the first ballot cast for the position and may not be counted on any subsequent ballots.
  5. If the validity of an absentee ballot is in question, the active voting members present shall make the final decisions as to its validity.
  6. Absentee ballots shall not be accepted for meetings called by petition for the removal of officers or other church leaders.
- E. Resolutions regarding the business of the church, not affecting the constitution and bylaws nor the election of officers, shall require a simple majority vote.
- F. Quorum
1. Church business meetings. Those members present and voting at a duly announced meeting, shall constitute a quorum.
  2. Board meetings. A majority of the members present shall constitute a quorum if each member of the board has been informed in due time of the meeting.

#### **Section 4. Elections and Vacancies**

##### **A. Elections**

All officers of the church shall be elected by secret ballot at the annual business meeting or at a duly called business meeting for that purpose.

##### **1. Pastor**

- a. The pastor shall be nominated by a two-thirds majority of the board for the first election.
- b. Subsequent elections on an incumbent pastor can be by nomination of the official board or by request of the pastor with or without the endorsement of the official board.
- c. The term of office will be for at least two years at the first election. However, it is recommended that the pastor be elected for an indefinite period of time. The term of office shall be agreed upon by the pastor and the board before the election.
- d. Majority to elect. The first election will require a two-thirds majority vote to elect the pastor. Subsequent elections will require a simple majority vote to retain the pastor.

##### **2. Deacons**

- a. Nominations may be made from the floor, however, it is recommended that a method be adopted to determine eligible nominees before the business meeting by one of the following ways:
  - 1) By using a nominating committee of the pastor and official board.
  - 2) By using a special ballot box for members to make nominations for the office of deacon prior to the business meeting.
- b. With any method adopted, the following procedures should be used to determine those eligible and available to serve as deacons:
  - 1) Spiritual qualifications shall be considered as stated under "Qualifications."



- 2) The nominee shall be an active member who faithfully supports the local church with his attendance and finances.
- 3) The nominees should understand the Assemblies of God church government.
- 4) Before the nominee is presented, the pastor should share his philosophy and vision and determine the person's willingness to serve.
- c. The term of office shall be for three years for a three-man official board with staggered terms so that one term would expire each year.
- d. A simple majority is required to elect.
3. Secretary and Treasurer
  - a. Nominations shall be made by the board.
  - b. The term of office shall be for one year.
  - c. A simple majority is required to elect.
- B. Vacancies
  1. Any office, except for the office of senior pastor, may be declared vacant by an act of majority of the church board in an official meeting. An appeal of the board's decision can be made to the membership in a special called meeting for that purpose. In the event of an appeal, a majority vote of the church membership shall be required to sustain the action of the church board.
  2. The church board may, by majority vote, request the resignation of the senior pastor. In the event the senior pastor chooses to not resign, he shall immediately invite the district officary to mediate with him and the church board.
  3. Any office may be declared vacant by an act of majority membership at any regular or special business meeting of the church.
  4. All vacancies shall be under the supervision of the official board except in such cases where the district officary has the oversight of the church.
  5. In the event a pastor's office is declared vacant, the office is to be vacated immediately and the church shall be responsible for severance pay and housing for a period of at least 30 days. An exception may apply in such cases where the sectional presbyter and district superintendent feel it advisable for the pastor to leave immediately and/or to forfeit severance pay and housing.

## **Section 5. Discipline**

The matter of discipline should be considered very sacred and serious, since it involves our welfare throughout eternity. Strictly Scriptural methods should be employed. All local difficulties should be settled as nearly as possible by the local church. The procedure should be:

- A. Going to the offender in the spirit of meekness with the view of reconciling him to the church or the offended party.
- B. If the matter cannot be resolved after a private conference with the offending member, the matter will be considered by the official board of the assembly. The official board of the church will set up a meeting to discuss the offense in order to determine if charges should be filed against the member. If charges are filed, the offending member would be notified of

the charges by registered mail with receipt requested. The member being charged would be requested to meet with the official board for the purpose of defending himself. If the member refuses to appear before the board, it would be considered an admission of guilt and the action of the board would be final. Following the hearing with the member, the board would make its decision regarding the matter and notify the member in writing of the action taken. The member shall also be advised that he could appeal the decision of the board to the membership if the appeal is presented to the board within ten days of the notice being received.

- C. If an appeal is made and a hearing is conducted before the membership, a district official shall be invited to officiate at such a hearing. After the board has presented the reasons for its action, the member being disciplined would present his defense before the membership. The membership would, by secret ballot, express whether to sustain the action of the board. It would require a majority of the membership present to sustain the board's action. If a fair hearing has been conducted, the action of the church would be final.
- D. If the issue involved doctrine, unscriptural practices or sinful conduct and the church failed to sustain the action of the official board, the board of the church shall request the executive presbytery of the Arkansas district to make an investigation into the matter. If, in the opinion of the district officary, guilt had been established, the district would notify the church membership that it would need to reconsider its decision, since violations in these areas could not be condoned by a church affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

## **Section 6. Property**

- A. The title of all church property shall be vested in the local church body with the responsibility and benefits thereunto.
- B. The sales of any property shall be under the supervision of the official board of the church, but no property shall be mortgaged, leased, sold, or otherwise disposed of without the consent of the church body. If the church has ceased to function and title of said property has reverted to the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God, then the executive presbytery shall be authorized to dispose of the property for the benefit of the Assemblies of God. When a reversion clause in favor of the Arkansas District appears in the deed to any church property, the local church body shall have the right to mortgage or sell such property, and the executive committee shall execute proper documents (See Article V, Section 1, B).
- C. All church property shall be deeded so as to make it safe for an Assemblies of God church organization in times of crisis or division, and to prevent its being diverted by any portion of the church body to other church interests or organizations. In the event of an affiliation with such interest, or should it for any reason fail to function as Assemblies of God church, all property rights are to come under supervision and into the hands of the executive presbytery of the Arkansas District of the Assemblies of God with headquarters now at Little Rock, Arkansas, until an Assemblies of God church can properly function or the proceeds be used to promote the Assemblies of God church interest elsewhere. In case church property shall

revert to the district and a decision is made by the executive presbytery to dispose of it, the executive committee shall execute proper documents.

### **Section 7. Pentecostal Standards**

- A. In view of the alarming erosion of national and 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 world” (1 John 2:15-16). In its teaching regarding worldliness, the Scripture warns against participation in activity which 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 affections for spiritual things (Luke 21:34, 35; Romans 8:5-8; 12:1, 2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 2:8-10; 4:12; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17; Titus 2:12).
- B. All pastors should make their congregation aware of all the General Council approved position papers and the conduct of all individuals should be consistent with the standards of present and future positions and position papers.
- C. The standard of the local church should be that all persons in any official position of authority, leadership, or instruction shall govern their personal conduct according to the scriptures, shall have been baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues, and shall teach and practice the same.

## **ARTICLE X - MINISTRY**

### **Section 1. Ministry Described**

- A. Christ’s gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11); exhorters, administrators, leaders and helpers (Rom. 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.
- B. In terms of maturity of ministry, three classifications of ministry are recognized, viz., the ordained minister, the licensed minister, and the certified minister. All ministers holding current ministerial credentials are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church.
- C. All such credentialed ministers of the Arkansas district are considered to be self-employed, and are not employees of the church.

### **Section 2. Basic Qualifications and Requirements**

The following qualifications pertain to all applicants for ministerial recognition:

- A. Salvation. Every applicant must have a testimony of having experienced the new birth according to John 3:5.
- B. Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Every applicant must have a testimony of having received the Baptism of 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. (Article VI, Paragraph 10, Constitution).

- C. Evidence of a call. There must be clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidence by a personal conviction, confirmed by a work of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of fellow ministers.
- D. Christian character. A blameless Christian life-style and a good report of those who are without is essential (Titus 1:7, I Timothy 3:7). No person shall be granted ministerial recognition whose conduct and Christian experience is not in full accord with Article IX, Section 1. Any minister who violates this provision shall be subject to discipline according to the constitution and bylaws of the Arkansas district council.
- E. Doctrinal position. There must be a thorough understanding of an agreement with the doctrinal position as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.
- F. Assemblies of God polity. The applicant must have 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. Commitment to fellowship. There must be an active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of the brethren and those in positions of authority.
- H. Basic education 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 examination approved by the General Presbytery whereby they demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Assemblies of God doctrines and ministerial practices.
  - 2. Either successfully complete equivalent training to that indicated in paragraph three below, preferably, in an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school; or in a seminary, college, Bible college or school approved by the General Council credential committee; or
  - 3. Successfully complete courses, prescribed by the General Presbytery, offered in correspondence through the Berean College of Assemblies of God or the Arkansas School of Ministry (ARSOM); or
  - 4. Be recommended by the district credentials committee as qualifying for credential through self-study and ministerial experience. Such candidates shall have a proven and fruitful ministry of substantial duration. Requests for such a candidate shall be presented to the General Council Credentials Committee and may be granted on a case-by-case basis.
  - 5. That applicants from non-Assemblies of God educational institutions and those who apply on the basis of life experience be required to complete a study course on Assemblies of God History, Missions and Governance. The additional courses of Introduction to Theology and Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine may be required on an

individual case by case basis. These applicants may take the actual courses or the course final examination.

- I. Marriage status. The Assemblies of God disapprove of any married persons holding ministerial credentials or the district council granting credentials to such, if either marriage partner has a former companion living, unless the divorce occurred prior to his or her 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) except as hereinafter provided.
- J. Annulments, marriage dissolutions, and divorces. 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 the 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 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 preconversion divorce, they shall be decided on an individual basis just as those that deal with ecclesiastical annulments. Appeals of the decision of the General Council executive presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.
- K. 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 have developed in the ministry of the Word so that their ministry is acceptable generally, and who have proven their qualifications in actual service, and who have met all the requirements of the credentials committees, are entitled to whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and the right to administer the ordinances of the church when such acts are necessary.
- L. Ministers from other organizations. If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the credential committees of the district council and the General Council are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate's 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, letters 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. Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credentialing bodies.
  6. Take the credentials examination.
  7. Meet with the district credentials committee for an oral interview.
  8. Be recommended by the district council credentials committee for the approval of 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 will relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council credentials committee upon recommendation of the 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.
- M. No person associated with the Masonic Lodge or any other secret order shall be permitted to hold ministerial credentials with the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God.

### **Section 3. Specific Qualifications for Levels of Credentials**

- A. Residency requirements of applicants. Applicants for all credentials must be residents of or hold credentials in the Arkansas district, where they shall make application and appear before the credentials committee.
- B. Certified minister
  1. General requirements. The applicant shall show promise of usefulness in gospel work and shall devote full or part time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the district credentials committee, 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 shall be expected to advance to license to preach within two (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.
  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 credentials committee to be essential to the continuity of a church or a ministry outreach for which a duly credentialed and qualified minister is unavailable. 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 he accepts another qualifying assignment. Other limitations are:

- a. The ministry certificate on a provisional basis will be issued for one 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 three-year period.
- C. Licensed minister. Qualifications for license shall include a 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.
- D. Ordained minister. Scriptural qualifications for ordination are outlined in the New Testament (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7, 9). In addition:
- 1. Candidates for ordination will not make personal application for ordination, but shall be recommended by any ordained minister.
  - 2. Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
  - 3. They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
  - 4. No person may be ordained to the ministry until having held a ministry license and has been actively engaged ministry and proclamation of the gospel for at least two full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.
  - 5. Each candidate for ordination shall be required to have read the entire Bible through prior to ordination.
  - 6. Residency requirements of applicants.
    - a. Applicants must be residents of or hold credential in the Arkansas district, making application and appearing before the credentials committee. No applicant for ordination who has been licensed in another district shall be approved until the minister resides in the Arkansas district at least one year and shall have met the requirements of the district. If the applicant has not been a member of this district for two full consecutive years, he must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officary of the district in which license was previously held, as well as the Arkansas district.
    - b. An exception to residency requirements may be made in the event that an applicant has qualified and been approved for ordination by the district of his former residence before being publicly ordained. The Arkansas district credentials committee may waive the one-year residency requirement and grant ordination upon the approval of the former district.
  - 7. 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. Procedures for ministerial recognition and promotion**

- A. Authority. The General Council credentials committee delegates to the Arkansas district council credentials committee 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 Arkansas district council.

- B. Initiative. In harmony with basic principles of voluntary unity and cooperation, the initiative should originate with the applicant. An exception is made for ordination candidates who shall be recommended for ordination by an ordained minister.
  - 1. The applicant shall contact the district secretary who shall inform the sectional presbyter. The sectional presbyter shall interview the applicant as to general fitness for ministry and shall report his recommendation to the district secretary.
  - 2. The General Council applications shall be sent to the applicant. These applications, properly completed, shall be forwarded to the district secretary's office sixty (60) days prior to the credentials committee meeting for processing and following up references.
  - 3. The district secretary, after approving the documents, shall have the sectional presbyter arrange a proctor for the appropriate test to the applicant.
  - 4. The applicant shall meet the credentials committee for an oral interview.
  - 5. The district credentials committee shall forward their recommendations to the General Council credentials committee who will make the final decision and notify the district and the applicant.
- C. Application fee. The credentials committee shall set the application fee for all grades of ministry. The fee shall be mailed with the application to the district office and is nonrefundable.
- D. Required study.
  - 1. All applicants for ministerial recognition and promotion shall be required to study the General Council and Arkansas district council constitutions and bylaws before coming to the credentials committee.
  - 2. All applicants for credentials must satisfy the credentials committee that they have qualified themselves according to the basic education requirements set forth in Article X, Ministry, Section 2, H.
- E. Written examinations. All applicants shall pass a written examination on the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God, as well as other questions felt necessary to determine the applicant's qualifications. Such examinations are to be those prescribed by the General Council and/or approved by the district council credentials committee. Any applicant who does not pass such tests must obtain special permission from the district credentials committee to retake the test. It is understood that the successful passing of the Berean Bible courses, Arkansas School of Ministry courses, or the written examination does not constitute sufficient reasons for the candidate to receive credentials.
- F. Interview examinations. All applicants shall appear in person before the credentials committee at one of the meetings scheduled by the district superintendent in consultation with the credentials committee for this purpose. Such meetings shall be announced well in advance. This meeting shall also be an orientation for newly credentialed ministers and ministers new to the Arkansas district.



- G. Ordination service. All ordinations shall take place under the auspices of the district council after approval of the credentials committee of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

## **Section 5. Minister Classifications.**

### **A. Active**

All credentialed ministers who are currently involved in regular ministry appointments or responsibilities are classified as active. Active ministry is defined as regular ministry responsibilities whether a minister gives full time to that ministry or part time.

When a minister, regardless of age, is inactive for two 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 requests otherwise by letter. An exception can be made by the district if the inactivity is due to illness or infirmity.

### **B. Senior retired ministers**

In respect and honor to those ministers who have given years of service to the Fellowship, the term senior-retired shall be used for those who are 65 years of age or older and who have ceased to engage in any regular appointed ministry. If a minister has reached the age of 65 and is no longer actively engaged in ministry, the minister may request through the district secretary's office to be classified as senior retired. Senior retired ministers have no financial obligation to the district or General Council, but are encouraged to contribute free will offerings to the support of each.

In the event a senior retired minister returns to active ministry, the senior retired classification is changed to active.

### **C. Disabled ministers**

A permanently disabled or permanently ill minister whose illness prevents him or her from engaging in active ministry shall be indicated as disabled. The credential status of the disabled minister shall remain unchanged. The annual renewal of his or her credentials shall take place in the regular manner. Disabled ministers thus approved by the district shall not have further obligation of financial support to the district and General Councils. A letter from a medical doctor is required for this classification.

## **Section 6. Transfer of Credentials**

Certificate of transfer. When a member minister takes up residence in another district, a certificate of transfer shall be issued within sixty (60) days by the Arkansas district, unless there are definite charges pending against him or her. 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 general offices;
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 the 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 world 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 transdistrict ministry.

## **Section 7. Credential Renewals and Reinstatements**

- 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. Renewal fee. The annual renewal fee for credentials shall be determined by the credentials committee. The annual fee shall accompany the minister's renewal.
- C. 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. All ministers shall receive their renewal application from the secretary's office of the General Council. In the event a minister does not receive his renewal form by December 1, he should notify the district office.
- D. Grace period until January 15. All who shall have failed to renew their fellowship certificates on or before December 31 shall be considered as delinquent and shall be required to pay a late fee of \$50 up until January 15, to be divided equally between the district and General Council.
- E. Reinstatement of lapsed minister. Ministers whose renewal applications are not postmarked by January 15 shall be recorded as lapsed as of the expiration date 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. Other fees may be required to comply with additional General Council requirements. These ministers shall not be subject to the minimal time-lapse required of those who credentials have been terminated for other causes.
- F. 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 six 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. Other fees may be required to comply with additional General Council requirements. (See General Council Bylaws Article X, Section 12, paragraph b, for reinstatement of dismissed minister.) The Arkansas district 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.

- G. The personal account records shall be made available to our credentials committee at any time and, in the event that ministers seeking promotion are found to be noncooperative, that promotion will be withheld from them until such time as they manifest a willingness to cooperate with our policies, and if they persist in their noncooperative attitude, renewal of their fellowship certificates will be withheld.
- H. A report form will be mailed to each minister monthly. To be cooperative, a minister shall contribute 75% of ministerial tithe into the district treasury on a monthly basis. Each minister who does not have ministerial tithe to support the district shall send a minimum of \$50 per month. A report form will be mailed to each minister for the convenience of the tithe and other offerings for district support. (Ref: Article IX, Section 9. Responsibilities and Requirements, Paragraph G. Financial Responsibility, subparagraph 3. Accountability.)

### **Section 8. 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 ministers letter.
  - 2) Resigned. Ministers who elect to remove themselves from the fellowship shall submit a letter of resignation to the district. 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 ministers letter as resigned.
- B. On the initiative of the district
  - 1) Not renewed. If in the opinion of the credentials committee a minister's credentials should not be renewed short of disciplinary action, the minister's name shall be published as not renewed in the ministers 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, or 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 9. Responsibilities and Requirements**

- A. Adherence to sound doctrine. A person who has a declared open change in doctrinal views inconsistent with our statement of Fundamental Truths can no longer be eligible for endorsement as an Assemblies of God minister. (See General Council Bylaws Article IX, B.)
- B. Representation of our distinctive Pentecostal testimony. It is expected that Assemblies of God ministers shall correctly represent our distinctive Pentecostal Testimony in teaching, practice and personal conduct.
- C. Cooperative relationship to the General and district councils. (See General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 8)
  - 1. Amenability and cooperation. All ministers holding credentials shall be amenable to both the Arkansas district council and The General Council of the Assemblies of God in matters of doctrine and conduct. 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, and compliance with General Council principles and practices.
  - 2. Affiliation with district of residence. All credential holders residing within the boundaries of the Arkansas district, shall be expected to affiliate and work in close cooperation with this district.
    - a. Exception. Ministers who reside in one district but pastor a church located in another district shall be required to be a member of the district in which the church is located.
    - b. Nationally appointed home missionaries. Nationally appointed home missionaries shall become members of the district in which they serve. They may also retain honorary membership in the Arkansas district, be listed as a missionary under national appointment in the Arkansas district yearbook, and be extended voice and vote in the Arkansas district.
  - 3. Cooperation with other district councils. Ministers shall be expected to cooperate with other district councils in which they may labor temporarily.
- D. Personal conduct separate from the world and above reproach. It is the responsibility of the minister to set the example and uphold the standard of scriptural conduct. (Reference Article XI, Section 7)
- E. Competent, efficient and effective ministry. It is expected that any person holding Assemblies of God ministerial credentials shall give evidence of fruitfulness in ministry.
  - 1. Our council declares its disapproval of such methods as dry-eyed conversions, card-signing, church-joining propositions, unwarranted, extravagant reporting of conversions, healings, etc.

2. We reaffirm our faith in the real Baptism in the Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking with tongues as recorded in Acts 2:4.
3. We believe our ministry should continue to place the same emphasis upon such Baptism as is outlined in Luke 24:49; Acts 8:14-17; and Acts 19:2.

F. Ministerial Ethics and Courtesy

1. In relation to pastors and assemblies: (See General Council Bylaws Article IX, Sec. 8).
  - a. All discourteous conduct is disapproved, and all ministers are advised against interfering with pastors and 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.
  - b. Any minister who so offends shall be subject to scriptural discipline as an offender by the district officary or by the General Council executive presbytery. Such discourtesy will seriously affect the granting of annual fellowship certificates, and may be the basis for their recall.
2. Ministers holding office in local Assemblies. Credentialed ministers affiliated with the Arkansas district council and non-Assemblies credentialed ministers shall not be elected to the office of deacon or any other official position (i.e., trustee, secretary, treasurer, etc.) in the local church and in the event he is considered by the local church to serve in such capacity, he shall decline from such position. The exception would be that some official positions, other than deacon, might be open to the credentialed companion of a pastoral staff member. No credentialed minister shall take any part in the business of the church and he or she shall decline the right as a member in voting upon any matter which must be determined by a vote of the local church. (Exception: staff members and their companions.) A local church may, at its discretion, grant any such rights to a senior retired minister.
3. In relation to privileged communications: (See General Council Bylaw Article VII, Sec. 13). Assemblies of God ministers are encouraged to respect as sacred the 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 or to prevent the commission of a crime.
4. All credentialed ministers who serve on the staff at a local assembly are amenable to the senior pastor. They should recognize the senior pastor as the leader of the church, working closely with him as he directs the ministry of the church and help promote harmony throughout the church body. It is recommended that credentialed ministers serving in staff positions submit their resignations upon the resignation of the senior pastor.

G. Financial responsibility

1. To the General Council. The work of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, in its program of developing the spirit of cooperation and fellowship in US and world missions, incurs considerable expense, including the financial support of the executive officers and offices.
  - a. From ministers.
    - 1) Ordained ministers should recognize their obligations to contribute \$25 per month from their tithes, or as an offering or through their influence. Licensed ministers should contribute \$20 per month and certified ministers \$10.00 per month. All who can are strongly urged to give more than the suggested amount, either personally or through the assemblies they pastor.
    - 2) 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 an opportunity to meet this deficit with their renewal.
    - 3) The district shall carefully analyze the annual report of each minister and, in their knowledge of local situations, determine if he has been voluntarily cooperating with the General Council financial program.
  - b. From assemblies. It is recommended that each church send to the General Council at least one offering for each calendar year toward the support of the administrative offices of the General Council. The offering shall be called a Fellowship Partnership offering and shall be included with the Annual Church Ministries report. It is suggested that each church's minimal offering be based upon its average Sunday morning attendance. A church averaging less than 50 is asked to send \$25 for the year; less than 100 but more than 50, \$50; Less than 250 but more than 100, \$100; less than 500 but more than 250, \$250; less than 1,000 but more than 500, \$500; less than 2,000 but more than 1,000, \$1,000; over 2,000, \$2,000.
2. To the District Council
  - a. From ministers. The minister shall contribute 75% of ministerial tithe to the district treasury general fund on a monthly basis. If a pastor is bi-vocational, receiving remuneration from a church and having other income, the minimum that shall be sent in support of the district treasury general fund shall be the greater of 75% of ministerial tithe or \$50 per month. Each minister who does not have ministerial tithe shall support the district with a minimum of fifty dollars (\$50) per month. A report form will be mailed to each minister for the convenience of the tithe and other offerings for district support.
  - b. From assemblies. Each local church shall be requested to send a monthly contribution to the general fund of the district in the following amounts, based on the average annual attendance: churches 0 – 50 ten dollars (\$10) per month, 51-100 fifteen dollars (\$15) per month, 101-150 twenty dollars (\$20) per month, 151+ twenty-five dollars (\$25) per month.
  - c. From missionaries.

- 1) World missionaries. World missionaries will be asked to contribute the same minimum amount that other ministers are asked to contribute. The executive committee is authorized to lower this amount for missionaries who may be working in situations that require them to contribute 25% or more of their tithe to a field fellowship.
  - 2) Chaplains. All chaplains, military and institutional, who work in Arkansas will be asked to contribute the greater of 25% of their tithe from income earned from the chaplaincy or the same minimum amount that other ministers are asked to contribute. Chaplains who work outside Arkansas but Arkansas is their home district will be asked to contribute the greater of 10% of their tithe earned from chaplaincy or the same minimum amount that other ministers are asked to contribute.
  - 3) US missionaries. Nationally appointed or approved US missionaries and credentialed AGUSM missionary associates shall contribute to the Arkansas district an amount equal to 50% of their tithe less the amount of General Council dues for their level of credentials. Those Arkansas missionaries who work in another district shall contribute to the Arkansas district an amount equal to 25% of their tithe less one-half of the amount of General Council dues
3. Accountability (See Article XXVII, Section 1,B)
    - a. Each minister who has not complied with the financial policy of the General Council and Arkansas district council shall send a statement of explanation with the annual credential renewal.
    - b. Each minister of the Arkansas district council should carefully review his or her contributions to the district and General Councils each year when filing the minister's renewal form to be sure that he or she has complied with district and General Council policy. This should be done with proper thought being given to the fact that honesty and integrity are to be the hallmark of the minister of the gospel, and that as a member of a cooperative fellowship, one must fully cooperate to make the fellowship strong. In the event that there is obvious noncompliance with the financial policy of the district, the minister shall initially be interviewed by the district superintendent or by a committee of executive presbyters appointed by the district superintendent. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the superintendent or this committee may refer this matter to the Arkansas district executive presbytery.
    - c. A minister's first year of failure to comply with district policy will require the minister to meet with the credentials committee. Any minister failing to fulfill the policy for two consecutive years will not be renewed until a satisfactory agreement has been reached with the district executive presbytery.
  4. Ethical and responsible handling of personal finances. It is expected that ministers will live within their means and avoid the habit of running into debt which brings reproach upon the cause of Christ.

## **ARTICLE XI. 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 of the believer**

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 (I 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 (Rev. 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. (General Council Bylaws Article IX, B, 1)

### **Section 2. Legalism**

- A. Matters of conscience. The Assemblies of God disapproves of those who hold to matters of conscience, such as the eating or not eating of meats, who press their personal opinions on others.
- B. Adding conditions to salvation. The Assemblies of God also disapproves of those who hold to issues which seem to add conditions to salvation, such as the keeping of the seventh day, who press their opinions on others. (General Council Bylaws Article IX, B, 2, b)

### **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 universalism (Matthew 25:46; Rev. 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; I Thess. 5:2). It is always 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 ministers teach the imminent coming of Christ, warning all men to be prepared for that coming, which may occur at any time, and not lull their minds into complacency by 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 years' 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 an issue is made. We recommend that should any of our ministers embrace any of the foregoing eschatological errors, they 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; I Thess. 5:9, 10; II Thess. 1:4-10; Rev. 3:10, 19, 20). (General Council Bylaws Article IX, Section 3)

#### **Section 4. Membership in Secret Orders**

- A. 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).
- B. 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 (II Cor. 6:14). The spirit, philosophy, the general influence of such secret orders aim at the improvement of the natural man only (I Cor. 2:14; Colossians 2:8), thus wrongly channeling by incorrect interpretation important spiritual truths (II Peter 3:16).
- C. 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 (Eph. 2:8, 9).
- D. In consideration of the foregoing, all ministers affiliated with the Arkansas district council shall refrain from identifying themselves with any of the secret orders which we recognize as essentially of the world and we advise any minister or church leader (deacon, trustee or local board member) who may have identified themselves with such order to sever their connections therewith (II Cor. 6:7). Furthermore, our ministers and church leaders are requested to use their good influence among our lay members to dissuade them from such fraternal affiliates (I Tim. 4:12; II Tim. 2:24-26). (See General Council Bylaws Article IX, Section 4)
- E. No person associated with the Masonic Lodge or any other secret order shall in any way hold a leadership position within any Assemblies of God church in the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God.

#### **Section 5. The Ecumenical Movement**

The General Council of the Assemblies of God disapproves of ministers or churches participating in any of the modern ecumenical organizations on a local, national or international level in such a manner as to promote the Ecumenical Movement, because:

- A. We believe the basis of doctrinal fellowship of said movement to be so broad that it includes people who reject the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the universality of sin, the substitutionary atonement, and other cardinal teachings which we understand to be essential to biblical Christianity.

- B. We believe the emphasis of the Ecumenical Movement to be at variance with what we hold to the biblical priorities, frequently displacing the urgency of individual salvation with social concerns.
- C. We believe that the combination of many religious organizations into a world super church will culminate in the religious Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18. (See General Council Bylaws Article IX, Section 11)

## **Section 6. Divorce and Remarriage**

- A. Membership.
  - 1. Membership for those having marriage entanglements previous to conversion. There are now among Christian people those who became entangled in their marriage relations in their former lives of sin who do not see how these matters can be adjusted. We recommend that these persons be received into the membership of local assemblies and that their marriage complications be left in the hands of the Lord (I Cor. 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 of 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 (Matt. 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 as he walks in the light of God's Word (I Cor. 7:15, 27, 28).
- C. Local church leadership.
  - 1. Standard for offices of bishop, or elder, and deacon. Since the New Testament restricts divorces 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; I Tim. 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 the recommendations are not binding, but local assemblies shall maintain the prerogative of setting their own standards (in accord with provisions of Article IX of the General Council Constitution).
- D. Performing marriage ceremonies.
  - 1. Ministerial guidelines. We disapprove of any Assemblies of God minister performing a marriage ceremony for anyone who has been divorced and whose former companion is still living, unless his case is included in the exceptional circumstances described in Article IX, B, Section 5, b, of the General Council Bylaws. Any minister of our Fellowship who performs a ceremony for such a disapproved marriage (indicated above), unless he has been innocently deceived into doing so, may be dismissed from the Fellowship.

2. Violation of conscience not required. We realize that the remarrying of such persons included in the exceptive circumstances in General Council 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, 7; 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 the performing of the ceremony. A minister may not perform ceremonies for persons who, in the minister's opinion, approach marriage without proper forethought, wisdom and sobriety.
- E. Ministerial credentials. We disapprove of any married minister of the Assemblies of God holding credentials if either minister or spouse has a former companion 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. (See also General Council Article IX, Section 5, Paragraph E.)

## **Section 7. Worldliness**

In view of the alarming erosion of national and 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 world" (1 John 2:15-16). In its teaching regarding worldliness, the Scripture warns against participation in activity which 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 affections for spiritual things (Luke 21:34, 35; Romans 8:5-8; 12:1, 2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 2:8-10; 4:12; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17; Titus 2:12). (See also General Council Article IX, Section 6.)

## **Section 8. 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 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.
  - a. Leaders in local projects shall have unquestioned freedom in local churches or communities.
  - b. Projects of general interest to the district must have authorization of the district officers.
  - c. 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.
  - d. 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 Arkansas district and 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 Arkansas district and 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 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 9. Ministry in a non-Assemblies church**

- A. 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.
- B. 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.

- C. 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 shall be expected to refrain from conducting services for the church.
- D. Ministers who violate this principle shall be subject to discipline. (See General Council Bylaws Article IX, Section 9)

### **Section 10. 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 shall refrain from taking any attitude toward offenders that would tend to nullify or set at naught the solemn verdict of the brethren entrusted with this responsibility. Those who fail to support said verdict shall be subject to reprimand or, if persisted in, appropriate discipline. (See General Council Bylaws Article IX, Section 10).

### **Section 11. Divine healing and professional medicine**

The Arkansas district and 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. (See also General Council Article IX, Section 12.)

## **ARTICLE XII - DISCIPLINE**

### **Section 1. The nature and purposes of discipline**

- A. 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.
- B. 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. (See General Council Bylaws, Article X, Section 1)

### **Section 2. The relationship between Arkansas district and General Council**

The executive presbytery of the General Council is the credentials committee of the General Council of the Assemblies of God and shall have final authority in matters of doctrine and the personal conduct of all ministers. District actions related to the termination of credentials or the remedial discipline of restoration are to be in the form of recommendations to the General Council credentials committee.

### **Section 3. Causes of disciplinary action**

Violation of Assemblies of God principles as stated in these Constitution and Bylaws may give cause for disciplinary action by the credentials committee. (See General Council Bylaws, Article X, Section 3) Among such causes for action shall be:

- A. Any 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 represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly.
- F. A contentious or noncooperative 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. A habit of running into debt which brings reproach upon the cause.
- K. A marriage in violation of our stand on marriage and divorce.
- L. Violations of ministerial courtesy.
- M. Ministry without prior approval in a non-Assemblies church.
- N. An improper attitude toward those dismissed from the Fellowship.

Notwithstanding the above, when more than seven 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 when, in view of all the circumstances, it would appear that such discipline would serve only 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 brethren, 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 the alleged offense is reported to have occurred shall be recognized as having the prior right of initiative in matter 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 the General Council credentials committee. In the event the district fails to take action within ninety (90) days after a matter has been referred to it, it shall be the

responsibility of the credentials committee of the General Council of the Assemblies of God to see that action is initiated. (See General Council Bylaws, Article X, Section 4)

### **Section 5. Investigation of reports or complaints of alleged violations or confessions of violations of Assemblies of God principles**

Within the Arkansas district. Reports or complaints of alleged violations of Assemblies of God principles (Article XII, 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 three month intervals until such investigation has been completed resulting in either clearing the person of the allegations or filing formal charges.

### **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, members of the district officary making the investigation may prefer charges based on the evidence in their possession. The person against whom charges have been filed shall be informed in writing by certified mail of the charges made in keeping with Article XII, Sec. 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 requested to appear at the hearing in the hope the matter can be resolved.

- B. Forfeiture or rights of accused. A hearing shall not be considered as final disposition of the case until the accused be present and 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 on his part to take advantage of his 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 Article XII, 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 restoration 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 the General Council of the Assemblies of God. (General Council 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 restoration 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. Restoration**

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 best be served with mercy, an effort should be made to lead the offending minister through a program of restoration, administered in love and kindness. The following provisions for restoration shall apply.

- A. Basis. Those found to have violated any of the Assemblies of God principles (Article XII, Section 3) may request a program of restoration as an alternative to dismissal. Restoration is a privilege granted out of mercy and not a 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 of restoration for the individual minister.



1. Restoration requirements. The specific terms and conditions of the restoration 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 restoration.
  - b. Terms and Conditions.
    - 1) Period of time. The program for restoration shall continue for not less than one year except when the violation involves misconduct defined in Article XII, Sec. 3, paragraph A, in which case it will be for not less than two years.
    - 2) Authority. The General Presbytery shall be authorized to establish guidelines and policy in regard to terms and conditions of restoration. Such guidelines and policy shall be consistent with provisions of the bylaws.
  - c. Extent of ministry. The extent to which he may be permitted to minister, if any, shall be determined by the executive presbytery of the Arkansas district, subject to the approval of the General Council credentials committee and compatible with the guidelines and policy established by the General Council general presbytery.
  - d. District membership. The minister shall not be permitted to transfer his or her membership to another district during the period of restoration.
  - 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 ministry has been terminated, the minister must become established in a local church working under the supervision of a pastor and presbyter. Such a minister shall not be permitted to remain as a member of an assembly unless he has proven himself to the Arkansas district council.
  - h. Reports. The minister must submit reports quarterly to the district superintendent.
  - i. Ministerial benefits. During the program of restoration the minister shall continue to be eligible for benefits such as the ministers' group insurance and Ministers' Benefit Association.
  - j. Program administration. The approved restoration 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 restoration of ministers under discipline.
3. Completion of restoration. When the restoration period has been satisfactorily completed, the suspension shall be lifted and the minister shall be restored to good standing.

4. Transfer of information. A restoration information form for district use shall be completed by the district in which the restoration occurred when the rehabilitated minister requests a transfer to a new district. The completed restoration form shall accompany the Certificate of Transfer to another district. A disciplined minister shall, as a condition of entering a restoration program, sign a Limited Disclosure Agreement approved by the General Council general presbytery allowing the basis of his or her restoration 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 restoration 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 restoration program as prescribed in Section 7 of this article. The dismissed minister shall not be eligible for reinstatement until the requirements for restoration 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 restoration.

## **Section 9. Referral for Action to the General Council Credentials Committee**

- A. District recommendation.
  1. Restoration. When a minister is to be placed in a restoration program in accordance with Section 7 of this article, the district shall forward to the General Council credentials committee the specific charges and recommended terms of restoration. 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 who has been found guilty of violating any of Assemblies of God principles set forth in Article XII, Section 3, and it is determined that restoration 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.
- 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 Arkansas district for review and reconsideration. The district shall report the results of its recommendation to the General Council credentials committee for final disposition.
- C. 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 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 4, 5, 6 and 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. 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 decision was mailed to appeal to the General Presbytery. 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. 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 one year, except it

shall be two years for a minister who has been dismissed because of charges as stated in Article XII, 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 General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 10, for other renewals and reinstatements.)

- C. Restoration obligatory. When a minister has been dismissed from our fellowship and applies for reinstatement, he or she shall comply with the procedures for restoration outlined in Section 8, paragraph d, of this Article.
- D. Option to refer to the General Presbytery. The General Council credentials committee may also hold the matter of a minister's reinstatement 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 the body.
- E. Reinstatement fee. When applying for reinstatement, the minister must include a \$100 reinstatement fee with the application to be divided equally between the district council and the General Council. Other fees may be required to comply with additional General Council requirements.

### **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.

## **ARTICLE XIII - MISSIONS**

### **Section 1. Authorization and Purpose**

- A. Authorization. The Arkansas District of the Assemblies of God shall assume responsibility for the spread of the gospel throughout the state, nation and the world.
- B. Purpose. To help churches and individuals be obedient to the command of Christ to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

### **Section 2. Organization**

- A. District missions director. There shall be a district missions director who shall serve by virtue of having been elected to the office of district secretary. The expenses shall be reimbursed from the district general fund.
- B. Sectional missions director. The sectional presbyter serves as the sectional missions director. The Sectional executive committee shall serve as the sectional missions committee.

### **Section 3. U.S. Missions and World Missions**

The Arkansas Assemblies of God shall cooperate with the ministries of Assemblies of God U. S. Missions and Assemblies of God World Missions in raising funds for its programs, support of missionaries and the establishment of new churches.

Churches are encouraged to receive a monthly missions offering and to support Arkansas missionaries on a monthly basis. Churches should view missionary pledges as a sacred obligation.

The missions department shall be funded by authorizing the executive presbytery to take 5% to 10% from the monthly ministerial tithes and offerings and transferring to the missions department. An amount equal to five percent (5%) of the monthly ministerial tithes and offerings will be allocated for church planting and revitalization. The remaining funds transferred may be used to fund the bylaw allocation to SAGU, the Ministers' Resource fund and other missions projects agreed upon by the Superintendent and Missions Director. The actual percentage will be set by the executive presbytery on a yearly basis. These funds will be disbursed according to the guidelines and allocations set by the executive presbytery board.

### **Section 4. Arkansas US Missions**

- A. The district missions director will work with all nationally appointed and district appointed missionaries who work in Arkansas to provide general oversight and coordination of their work. He shall provide oversight to all those ministries that are a part of national U. S. Missions. The specific job description for the missions director will be approved by the executive presbytery.
- B. Church plants
  - 1. Prior to beginning any effort, those desiring to start a new church shall contact the district superintendent and the district missions director.

## **ARTICLE XIV – DISTRICT MINISTRIES**

### **Section 1. Age specific ministries**

The age specific ministries/departments are aligned as Children, Youth and Adults. Each department shall be structured to meet current needs with flexibility to respond to changing opportunities. Adult ministries will also include gender specific ministries for men and women.

### **Section 2. Selection process**

After a vetting process, all ministry directors/coordinators are appointed by the superintendent and ratified by the district presbytery board.

### **Section 3. Structure and function**

The structure and function of each ministry/department shall be outlined in a policy manual approved by the district presbytery board. That manual will include the following:

- A. The vetting process and the qualifications/criteria a person needs for the specific ministry that will be under their supervision.
- B. Job descriptions for each position.
- C. Performance review criteria.

#### **Section 4. Term of office**

Each ministry director/coordinator will serve at the pleasure of the Superintendent. In the event of a transition in the office of superintendent, the new superintendent will have the authority to appoint new personnel, but will not be required to do so.

#### **Section 5. Non-age specific ministries.**

Non-age specific ministries such as music, stewardship and others may be added as needed with the approval of the district presbytery. The selection of the coordinators for these type of ministries will be spelled out in the policy manual developed by the district presbytery.

### **ARTICLE XV - BENEVOLENCES, INSURANCE AND RETIREMENT**

#### **Section 1. Benevolence ministries**

Benevolence ministries will be under the supervision of the district superintendent working with the sectional presbyters to promote the various benevolence ministries of the Assemblies of God. These ministries include Aged Ministers' Assistance, Assemblies of God Family Services Agency (Compact), the Disaster Relief Fund and other ministries that may be added.

#### **Section 2. District ministers' benevolences and resources**

District ministers' benevolences and resources will be provided as follows:

Ministers' resource fund. A ministers' resource will be established and financed by special offerings and an appropriation from the general fund as authorized by the executive presbytery. The funds will be disbursed by the district superintendent to help ministers in need and provide ministry resources and materials for ministers using guidelines established by the executive presbytery.

#### **Section 3. Health and life insurance**

- A. Life insurance. Ministers are encouraged to participate in some type of life insurance program and also to explore the insurance options that are available through Assemblies of God Financial Solutions.
- B. Health Insurance. The district leadership will encourage church boards to provide some type of health insurance for the pastor as part of their salary/benefit package.

#### **Section 4. Ministers' Benefit Association (MBA)**

- A. The Assemblies of God Ministers' Benefit Association (MBA) shall be the official district retirement program for the Arkansas district council.
- B. Each church is encouraged to enroll their pastor in the program. Each church is encouraged to contribute a minimum amount equal to 10% of the pastor's weekly salary to the retirement program. Churches should also assist visiting evangelists who are members of the program. One of the district's administrative officers shall send out an annual reminder addressed to the secretary of the board of each local church, quoting Section 8, paragraph B.
- C. Ministers are encouraged to contribute to their own personal MBA account.

## **ARTICLE XVI - DISTRICT PROPERTIES**

### **Section 1. Real estate**

Real estate is to be provided for the use of the district activities as follows:

- A. A district office, to be located in Little Rock, Arkansas.
- B. District campground, located on the Ozark-Lithia property near Hot Springs.

### **Section 2. Title**

Title to these properties shall be in the name of the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc.

### **Section 3. Maintenance**

Repairs, alterations, etc., shall be under the supervision of the executive presbytery.

### **Section 4. Location**

Changes of locations of these properties must be approved by the district council, if the proposed changes are outside of the general area of the present locations.

## **ARTICLE XVII - FINANCE**

### **Section 1. Tithing and tithe fund**

- A. Tithing in the local church. As a matter of biblical form it is suggested that people pay their tithe into the Assembly treasury and that the minister be supported from this treasury.
- B. Tithing to the district. To be cooperative, a minister shall contribute 75% of ministerial tithe to the district treasury general fund on a monthly basis. If a pastor is bi-vocational, receiving remuneration from a church and having other income, then a minimum that shall be sent in support of the district treasury general fund shall be the greater of 75% of ministerial tithe or \$50 per month. Each minister who does not have ministerial tithe shall support the district treasury with a minimum of fifty dollars (\$50) per month. A report form will be mailed to each minister for the convenience of the tithe and other offerings for district support.
- C. Designated funds. All checks and money orders should be made payable to the "Arkansas District Council, Assemblies of God." All funds sent to the district treasury are to be used as designated under the supervision of the executive presbytery.
- D. Support of district personnel. All salaries, traveling expenses, housing allowances or other remuneration for district personnel shall be set by the executive presbytery, and shall be reviewed annually.
- E. Any resolution affecting the finances of the district shall be submitted in writing to the district presbytery sixty (60) days prior to the district council, so that proper determination can be made of how it will affect the district finances.

### **Section 2. Local church contributions to the general fund**

Each local church shall be requested to send a monthly contribution to the general fund of the district in the following amounts, based on the average annual attendance: churches 0 – 50 ten dollars (\$10) per month, 51-100 fifteen dollars (\$15) per month, 101-150 twenty dollars (\$20) per month, 151+ twenty-five dollars (\$25) per month.

### **Section 3. Executive and sectional presbyters' expenses**

Expenses incurred by executive and sectional presbyters shall be paid from the general fund as directed by the executive presbytery.

### **Section 4. Finance for age specific ministries/departments**

Churches are encouraged to follow one of the options to finance the age specific ministries:

#### **A. Option 1: Designated offerings**

1. Children's Ministry: Churches are encouraged to send a tithe from their Sunday School/Christian Education offerings to the district children's ministries department. In addition, a suggested offering of \$10 per month from Girls Ministry groups designated for Girls Ministry and \$10 a month from Royal Ranger groups designated for Royal Rangers.
2. Youth Ministry. Churches are encouraged to send \$15 a month to the support of the district youth ministries department.
3. Adult Ministries. Churches are encouraged to send \$15 a month to district men's ministries and \$15 a month to district women's ministries.

#### **B. Option 2: General offerings for age specific ministries.**

Churches can send one offering for the support of all the age specific ministries with the funds distributed to the age specific ministries using a formula approved by the executive presbytery.

### **Section 5. Arkansas US missions**

The Arkansas US missions department is to be financed by:

- A. Freewill offerings from all the constituency of the district.
- B. A portion of the missions funds received from the general fund shall be allocated by the executive presbytery board to new church plants and church revitalization projects.
- C. Each assembly shall give a monthly offering according to its ability and shall send it to the district US missions director.

### **Section 6. World missions**

The offering received by the local assembly on the first Sunday of each month for world missions is to be sent to the Missions Department, Springfield, Missouri.

### **Section 7. Southwestern Assemblies of God University**

- A. Six thousand dollars (\$6,000) per quarter shall go to support Southwestern Assemblies of God University.
- B. The district council recommends that each church support Southwestern with a regular monthly offering using the following suggestion as a guide: Each church in the Arkansas district should attempt to contribute an average of fifty cents (\$0.50) per member monthly toward the support of the University.



### **Section 8. District campground**

The executive presbytery shall select a person or persons to coordinate and promote a fund-raising program in the interest of our district campgrounds, such person or persons to work in the following ways to promote the fund-raising program:

- A. Special projects which have been approved shall be promoted in as many of the district functions as possible.
- B. Oversee a perpetual fund-raising program in the interest of the campground under the supervision of the district superintendent and executive presbytery.

### **Section 9. Total giving credit for district ministry support**

All donations and contributions sent to the district office for the support of the various district ministries and approved district projects will receive credit from the General Council according to the General Council guidelines.

### **Section 10. Minutes**

The minutes shall be published annually as soon as possible following the District Council. Each accredited minister shall receive a copy free of charge. Assemblies and/or individual may purchase copies by paying for the cost of publication and distribution. Orders should be sent to the district office.

### **Section 11. *Pentecostal Gleaner*, Assemblies of God**

The official publication of the Arkansas District shall be published under the direction of the executive presbytery and mailed to each of our accredited ministers.

## **ARTICLE XVIII - PUBLICATIONS**

### **Section 1. *The Pentecostal Gleaner*, Assemblies of God**

The *Pentecostal Gleaner*, Assemblies of God, shall be edited and published by the superintendent and secretary of the District Council as an official publication of the Arkansas District Council under the supervision of the executive presbytery.

### **Section 2. Minutes**

- A. The minutes are to be edited by the executive committee. It shall be authorized to edit into the Bylaws the changes adopted by the General Council in session. Such changes shall be brought to the attention of the constituency by letter or other means of district publications.
- B. Each accredited minister shall receive a copy free of charge. Assemblies and/or individuals may purchase copies by paying the cost of publication and distribution. Orders should be sent to the district office.
- C. To avoid delay in advising our constituency of any change in policies, all such changes are to be placed in the hands of our ministers by being published in the first issue of the *Pentecostal Gleaner* following district council or by special mailing from the district office.

## **ARTICLE XIX - INSTITUTIONS**

### **Section 1. AG Family Services Agency (Compact - formerly Hillcrest/Highlands)**

- A. AG Family Services Agency (Compact) is a General Council of the Assemblies of God institution, and only as we are an integral part of the General Council with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri, becomes a part of our responsibility with the various districts.
- B. All our constituency should assume their part of the responsibility of carrying on the great work.
- C. Our people should continue to support the AG Family Services Agency (Compact).

### **Section 2. Southwestern Assemblies of God University**

- A. Authorization. The Arkansas district council shall participate in the regional operation of Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Waxahachie, Texas, in cooperation with other districts of the region.
- B. Representation. The Arkansas district council shall be represented on the Southwestern Assemblies of God University Board of Regents by the superintendent and the district youth director by virtue of office. A third representative and an auditor may be appointed at the discretion of the Arkansas district council executive committee and ratified by the executive presbytery.
- C. Finance
  - 1. Six thousand dollars (\$6,000) per quarter shall go to support Southwestern Assemblies of God University.
    - a. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the annual district contributions to Southwestern Assemblies of God University can be designated to the scholarship fund. The executive presbytery shall determine the manner in which needy student(s) shall be chosen for receiving assistance from the district scholarship fund.
    - b. The executive presbytery shall allocate a portion of the annual contribution to SAGU for the purpose of recognizing our students in an annual banquet in the spring and one or more of the district officials will be present to represent the district.
    - c. The executive presbytery shall allocate to its discretion a percentage of the district contributions to Southwestern to an annual project.
  - 2. The district council recommends that each church support Southwestern with a regular monthly offering using the following suggestion as a guide: Each church in the Arkansas district should attempt to contribute an average of fifty cents (\$0.50) per member monthly toward the support of the University.

## **ARTICLE XX - MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. District council**

- A. The District Council shall meet annually, time and place to be announced by the executive presbytery. Announcement shall be published not later than one month prior to the time of the meeting. Notice of special items of consideration shall be provided in conformity with the Arkansas non-profit corporation act.

- B. Special sessions may be called to meet any emergency that may arise within the district. Such call shall be issued by the secretary after the emergency has been fully considered and passed upon by a majority vote of the executive presbytery. A description of any matter or matters for which the meeting is called shall be provided to members prior to the meeting in the manner set forth hereinabove if practical given the exigencies of the situation.
- C. The right of initiative in the matter 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 (20%) of the ordained ministers of the district may be considered sufficient reason for such a call, said statement to be filed with the district presbytery, who shall issue the call, setting the time and place for the meeting. The district council shall give notice of the matter the minister intends to raise if the minister requests no later than ten days prior to the meeting that notice be given.
- D. In the event of an emergency in which large meetings are not allowed or discouraged, the District Superintendent with the approval of the Executive Presbytery can call for an electronic district council. The technology that is used must allow for interaction of any registered minister/delegate who may have a question or wishes to speak to an issue. Voting must be done in a manner that allows the voter to cast a secret ballot.
- E. If the annual or special meeting is adjourned to a different date, time or place, notice need not be given of the new date, time or place, if the new date, time or place is announced at the meeting before adjournment.
- F. A member may waive any notice required herein before or after the date and time stated in the notice, as long as the notice is signed by the member and delivered to the Arkansas District Council for inclusion in the minutes or filing with the corporate records.
- G. A member waives any objects to lack of notice or defective notice of the meeting and to the consideration of a particular matter by attending the meeting, unless the member at the beginning of the meeting objects to the meeting being held on one of these bases.
- H. A list of the members of the Arkansas District Council, along with their addresses, shall be maintained at the district headquarters and available for inspection by the membership upon showing good cause to inspect the list.

## **Section 2. Executive and sectional presbytery**

- A. Executive presbytery. The executive presbytery shall meet on a regular basis with the time and place set by the district superintendent. The superintendent, with the approval of the executive committee, also can conduct some business of the executive presbytery electronically as long as the item to be considered is routine and does not require discussion. The policy and procedures for electronic meetings will be set by the executive presbytery. The district superintendent also has the option of calling for a phone conference meeting if the item to be considered needs explanation or discussion.
- B. District presbytery. The district presbytery shall meet as necessary with the time and place set by the district superintendent.

### **Section 3. Sectional councils**

Sectional councils shall be conducted annually. Time and place to be determined by the executive presbytery in consultation with the sectional presbyters. In the event of an emergency in which large meetings are not allowed or discouraged, the District Superintendent with the approval of the Executive Presbytery can call for an electronic sectional council. If any voting is required during the meeting the technology that is used must allow for interaction of any registered minister/delegate who may have a question or wishes to speak to an issue. Voting must be done in a manner that allows the voter to cast a secret ballot.

### **Section 4. Camps and other meetings**

Camps, retreats and other meetings shall be provided by the various departments of the district. Except during special evening services in keeping with the Christian principles of modesty, ladies' pant suits or slacks will be considered modest and proper attire at the district camps and other meetings where recreation is planned.

## **ARTICLE XXI - INDEMNIFICATION**

### **Section 1. Indemnification of the executive officers, executive presbytery, district presbytery and district departmental directors.**

- A. The Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the Arkansas District Council), shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceedings, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, whether formal or informal (other than an action by or in the right of the church corporation) by reason of the fact that he is or was an executive officer, a member of the executive, general or district presbytery, a district departmental director, a trustee, an employee or agent of the Arkansas District Council, or is or was serving at the request of the Arkansas District Council, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit or proceedings if he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Arkansas District Council, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceedings, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit or proceedings by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in manner which he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Arkansas District Council, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.
- B. The Arkansas District Council shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of the corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact he is or was an executive officer, a member of the general, executive, or district presbytery, a district

departmental director, and employee or agent of another church corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise expenses (including attorney's fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the defense or settlement of such action or suit if he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Arkansas District Council and except that no indemnification shall be made in respect of any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duty to the Arkansas District Council unless and only to the extent that the court of the state of Arkansas or the court in which such action or suit was brought shall determine upon application that, despite the adjudication of liability but in view of all the circumstances of the case, such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnify for such expenses which the court of the state of Arkansas or such other court shall deem proper.

- C. To the extent that any person referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Article has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceedings referred to therein or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, he shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorney's fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection therewith.
- D. Any indemnification under paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article (unless ordered by a court) shall be made by the Arkansas District Council only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of an executive officer, a member of the general, executive, district presbytery, a district departmental director, and employee or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has not met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article. Such determination shall be made (a) by the board of directors by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of directors who were not parties to such action, suit or proceedings, or (b) if such quorum is not obtainable, or, even if obtainable a quorum of disinterested directors so directs, by independent legal counsel in written opinion.
- E. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding may be paid by the Arkansas District Council in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding as authorized by the board of directors in the specific case upon receipt of a written undertaking by or on behalf of an executive officer, a member of the general, executive, district presbytery, a district departmental director, an employee or agent to repay such amount unless it shall ultimately be determined that he is entitled to be indemnified by the Arkansas District Council as provided in this article. The officer, presbyter, director, employee or agent must also furnish the Arkansas District Council with a written affirmation of his good faith belief that he has met the standard of conduct described herein, and a determination is made that the facts known at the time to those making the determination would not have precluded indemnification.
- F. The indemnification provided by this article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any statute, bylaw,

agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors or otherwise, both as to action in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be an executive officer, a member of the general, executive, or district presbytery, a district departmental director, an employee or agent and shall insure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.

- G. The Arkansas District Council shall have power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was an executive officer, a member of the general, executive, or district presbytery, a district departmental director, an employee or agent of the Arkansas District Council, or is or was serving at the request of the Arkansas District Council as a director, officer, member, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in any such capacity, or arising out of his status as such whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify him against such liability under the provisions of this article.

**Section 2. Indemnification of directors, officers, trustees and pastoral staff (for local church)**

- A. The church corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceedings, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, whether formal or informal (other than the action by or in the right of the church corporation) by reason of the fact that he is or was director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of the pastoral staff, employee or agent of the church corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the church corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit or proceedings if he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceedings, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit or proceedings by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.
- B. The church corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of the church corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact he is or was a director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of pastoral staff, employee or agent of another church corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against expenses (including attorney's fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the defense or settlement of such action or suit if he acted in good faith and in a

manner he reasonably believed to be in or to opposed to the best interests of the church corporation and except that no indemnification shall be made in respect of any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duty to the church corporation unless and only to the extent that the court of the state of Arkansas or the court in which such action or suit was brought shall determine upon application that, despite the adjudication of liability but in view of all the circumstances of the case, such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnify for such expenses which the court of the state of Arkansas or such other court shall deem proper.

- C. To the extent that any person referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Article has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceedings referred to therein or in defense of any claim, issue or manner therein, he shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorney's fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection therewith.
- D. Any indemnification under paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article (unless ordered by a court) shall be made by the church corporation only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of pastoral staff, employee or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article. Such determination shall be made (a) by the board of directors by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of directors who were not parties to such action, suit, or proceedings, or (b) if such quorum is not obtainable, or, even if obtainable a quorum of disinterested directors so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion.
- E. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding may be paid by the church corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding as authorized by the board of directors in the specific case upon receipt of a written undertaking by or on behalf of the director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member or the pastoral staff, employee or agent to repay such amount unless it shall ultimately be determined that he is entitled to be indemnified by the church corporation as provided in this article. The director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, staff member, employee or agent must also furnish the church corporation with a written affirmation of his good faith belief that he has met the standard of conduct described herein, and a determination is made that the facts known at the time to those making the determination would not have precluded indemnification.
- F. The indemnification provided by this article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any statute, bylaw, agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors or otherwise, both as to action in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of the pastoral staff, employee or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.

- G. The church corporation shall have power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of the pastoral staff, employee or agent of the church corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the church corporation as a director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of the pastoral staff, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in any such capacity, or arising out of his status as such, whether or not the church corporation would have the power to indemnify him against such liability under the provisions of this article.
- H. For the purpose of this section, references to “the church corporation” include all constituent corporations absorbed in consolidation or merger as well as the resulting or surviving corporation so that any person who is or was a director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of the pastoral staff, employee or agent of such a constituent corporation or is or was serving at the request of such constituent corporation as a director, officer, pastor, deacon, trustee, member of the pastoral staff, employee or agent in another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise shall stand in the same position under the provisions of this section with respect to the resulting or surviving church corporation as he would if he had served the resulting or surviving church corporation in the same capacity.

### **Article XXII Emergency Bylaws**

- A. Unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, the District Presbytery may adopt bylaws to be effective only in an emergency defined in subsection E of this section.
- B. The emergency bylaws may make all provisions necessary for managing the District during the emergency, including but not limited to the following:
  - 1) Procedures for calling a meeting of the District Council and District Presbytery.
  - 2) Designation of substitute directors.
  - 3) Modification of lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity of any director, officer, employee, or agent resulting from the emergency.
  - 4) Relocation of the principal office.During an emergency, the District Presbytery shall have the maximum authority possible to run the District's interim affairs in the manner they deem best.
- C. All provisions of the regular bylaws consistent with the emergency bylaws remain effective during the emergency. The emergency bylaws are not effective after the emergency ends.
- D. Corporate action taken in good faith in accordance with the emergency bylaws both binds the District and may not be used to impose liability on a corporate director, officer, employee, or agent.
- E. An emergency exists for purposes of this section if a quorum of the District's members or directors cannot readily be assembled because of any of the following events:



- 1) A natural catastrophe, including, but not limited to, a hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought, or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion.
- 2) An attack on this state or nation by an enemy of the United States of America, or upon receipt by this state of a warning from the federal government indicating that an enemy attack is probable or imminent.
- 3) An act of terrorism or other manmade disaster that results in extraordinary levels of casualties or damage or disruption severely affecting the infrastructure, environment, economy, government functions, or population, including, but not limited to, mass evacuations.
- 4) A pandemic.
- 5) A state of emergency proclaimed by a governor or by the President.
- 6) Any other condition as a result of which a quorum cannot readily be assembled.

### **Electronic Meetings and Action by Unanimous Consent**

In the event of an emergency or other sufficient cause as determined by the District Presbytery, the members of the District Presbytery or District Council may participate and act at any meeting through the use of electronic means. The technology that is used must allow for interaction of any registered minister/delegate who may have a question or wishes to speak to an issue. Voting must be done in a manner that allows the voter to cast a secret ballot. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the District Presbytery may be taken without a meeting if all members consent thereto in writing, and the writings are filed with the minutes of proceedings of the District Presbytery.

### **ARTICLE XXIII - AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the bylaws may be made at any regular or duly called District Council. Amendments to be adopted shall require a two-thirds majority of all votes cast.

The executive committee of the district shall serve as an editing committee to incorporate into the bylaws the changes that have been adopted by the General Council and the District Council in their regular sessions. The ministers and churches shall be notified of these changes by letter from the district secretary.