

CHURCH MANUAL

CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH DAY)



The General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)
Denver, Colorado 80233 • (303) 452-7973 • www.cog7.org

Church Manual

for use by the

Churches of God (Seventh Day)

with General Offices in Denver, Colorado, USA



General Conference
Church of God (Seventh Day)

Post Office Box 33677
Denver Colorado 80233 USA
(303) 452-7973
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CHURCH MANUAL for the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

The contents of this manual are arranged in the order in which they are listed below. Each section has its own index, and the pages in each section or subsection are numbered separately.

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- Bylaws of the International Federation
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GENERAL CONFERENCE MINISTRIES

- Missions Ministries
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DOCTRINAL BELIEFS



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Articles of Incorporation General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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B2270



STATE of MISSOURI
 JAMES C. KIRKPATRICK, Secretary of State

CORPORATION DIVISION

Certificate of Corporate Records

I, JAMES C. KIRKPATRICK, Secretary of State of the State of Missouri and Keeper of the Great Seal thereof, do hereby certify that the annexed pages contain a full, true and complete copy of

AMENDED PRO FORMA DECREE

OF INCORPORATION

OF

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH DAY)

as the same appears on file and of record in this office.



In Testimony Whereof, I hereunto set my hand and affix the Great Seal of the State of Missouri. Done at the City of Jefferson, this

6th day of November A. D.,

Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-One.

James Kirkpatrick
 SECRETARY OF STATE

DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

FORM 237

Articles of Incorporation

As Amended July, 1993

ARTICLE I

The name of this Association shall be THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH DAY), and the object of the Association shall be for the purpose of promoting the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the foundation of our faith, diffusing religious knowledge and promoting principles of morality, benevolence and charity; the education of mankind in general, the coordination of the work of the Church in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom for the salvation of souls, and shall also hold and receive personal property or real property for the purpose of supporting, maintaining and sustaining this General Conference."

ARTICLE II

"The legal name of this organization shall be: The General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) and said organization shall maintain an office in Stanberry, County of Gentry and State of Missouri"

ARTICLE III

"The business of this Association shall be managed by a Board of Directors (or Board of Control) when Conference is not in session. The Board of Directors shall consist of twelve men. The term of office of board members, the manner of their election, the number of officers selected by the Board of Directors, and their terms of office shall be provided in the bylaws of the Association."

ARTICLE IV

"The Conference shall have the power to purchase, lease, exchange, sell or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the real and personal property and to encumber, sell or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the real and personal properties of the Conference which the Board of Directors (or Board of Control) deems desirable and necessary to accomplish the objectives of the Conference. The Conference shall further have the power to borrow money; to make or issue promissory notes, or raise money by issuance of bonds, deeds of trust, mortgages, and debentures; to act as Trustee; and to invest money in any manner beneficial to its purposes and objectives. The sale or encumbrance of all or any part of the real, personal or mixed properties of the Conference shall require a majority vote of the membership of the Board of Directors at a regular or special meeting duly called according to the bylaws of the Conference."

ARTICLE V

In the event of the dissolution of this Association, the net assets shall be applied and distributed as follows: All liabilities and obligations of the Association shall be satisfied and discharged or adequate provisions shall be made for them. Assets held by the Association upon conditions requiring return, transfer or conveyance, which condition occurs by reason of the dissolution of the Association, shall be returned, transferred or conveyed in accordance with the requirements. Upon the dissolution of the Association, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Association, dispose of all assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational and religious purposes as shall at the time qualify, as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas or of general jurisdiction of the county or district in which the principal office of the Association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

The Bylaws of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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The Bylaws of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

PREAMBLE

The General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day), herein called the Conference, consists of its members, ministers, and affiliated congregations; and its other ecclesiastical entities or structures described in these Bylaws along with the entities formed under the civil law to serve them.

The General Conference recognizes Christ as the head of the church, a spiritual body of all believers who hold the faith of Jesus and keep the commandments of God. The church exists both locally and universally for the purposes of worshiping God, preaching the gospel, nurturing believers, and serving humanity.

The Conference provides trained personnel, services, resources, and materials to its members, ministers, and congregations in the United States and Canada.

The Conference extends ministerial recognition, conducts biblical studies, establishes doctrine, and develops pastoral and evangelistic programs through its North American Ministerial Council, herein called the Council. It offers assistance internationally through its membership in the International Ministerial Congress and missionary activity.

These Bylaws set forth the basic articles for the governance of the Conference and its related ecclesiastical and civil entities and structures.

GENERAL NORMS

1. SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION

The first source of the Conference's law, as contained in these Bylaws, is the Old and New Testaments, including its doctrines derived from those Scriptures and expressed in its Statement of Faith established by the Council.

2. SUPREMACY

These Conference Bylaws state organizing principles and law. They abrogate, amend, or supplement all contrary law, organizing documents, bylaws, and customs of ecclesiastical and civil entities and structures affiliated with the Conference regardless of whether they were developed by them earlier or later than these Bylaws.

3. APPLICABILITY

These Bylaws bind the Conference, its officers, employees, members and all ecclesiastical entities and structures described in these Bylaws along with all entities formed under the civil law to serve them, without limitation.

4. CIVIL LAW

Civil law will be given effect so long as it is not inconsistent with the Scriptures, the Statement of Faith, or these bylaws.

ARTICLE I

Name

This body shall be known as the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day), herein called the Conference, with offices at 330 W 152 Avenue, Broomfield, Colorado 80023.

ARTICLE II

Object

The Object of the Conference shall be to:

- A. Promote the gospel of Jesus Christ; coordinate the work of preaching the gospel of the kingdom for the salvation of souls; and teach principles of biblical morality, benevolence, and charity;
- B. Receive as members those who believe the gospel and express faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and keep the commandments of God; and,
- C. Receive funds and hold real and personal property for the purpose of maintaining the Conference and supporting its objectives.

ARTICLE III

Members

SECTION 1. Qualification

All those who have expressed faith in Jesus Christ and have been baptized by immersion; acknowledge and respect the doctrinal beliefs of the Conference; and reside in the United States or Canada are qualified to become members of the Conference.

SECTION 2. Admission

Membership shall be issued by the Conference upon receipt of a completed General Conference Membership Application form.

SECTION 3. Congregational Membership

All members of the Conference who attend and participate in a local church or mission shall be members of that congregation. Membership, including voting privileges, in any Conference-affiliated congregation is limited to individuals who are members of the Conference.

SECTION 4. District Membership and Members-at-Large

- A. All members of the Conference shall be members of the district in which they reside.
- B. The district superintendent may admit as members-at-large those qualified persons who cannot participate in a congregation but support and participate in the Conference's programs.

- C. A member of a congregation, who continues to support and participate in the Conference's programs, may become a member-at-large, with the written permission of the local board and district superintendent.

SECTION 5. Discipline

- A. It shall be the responsibility of a congregation's board to discipline the members of its congregation, and district boards their members-at-large.
- B. Discipline may range from a reprimand, to suspension of membership privileges for a specific period of time, to termination of membership.
- C. Discipline shall be administered in accordance with the New Testament and the Conference's parliamentary authority, with restoration as the primary object.
- D. District boards shall appoint a standing appeals committee of three members. Members who are disciplined may appeal to that committee in writing for an acquittal or reduced penalty within fourteen days of their notification of discipline through their District Superintendent.

SECTION 6. Termination of Membership

Membership in the conference terminates upon:

- A. Receipt of a letter of resignation;
- B. Revocation;
- C. The member's death;
- D. Transfer of membership to a non-affiliated ecclesiastical entity;
- E. Voluntary cessation of attendance of Sabbath services and/or financial support of the Conference, district local church or mission for a period of one year, or by policy established by a local church or mission.

SECTION 7. Reinstatement of Membership

Those whose membership has been terminated may be reinstated by the Conference upon receipt of a completed General Conference membership application form.

ARTICLE IV

Board of Directors

SECTION 1. Membership and Qualifications

The Board of Directors of the Conference shall consist of twelve male-from-birth members of the Conference who possess the requisite qualifications for church leadership as cited in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9, are at least thirty years old, and who have been members the five years prior to their nomination. Employees of the Conference, including ministries directors and district superintendents, are ineligible to serve as members of the Board.

SECTION 2. Term

- A. The term of office shall be six years or until a successor has been elected.
- B. Four members shall be elected at each biennial convention and shall assume their duties immediately following their election.
- C. Board members may succeed themselves.

SECTION 3. Vacancies

The Board may fill vacancies until the next meeting of the Conference, at which time a member shall be elected for the unexpired term.

SECTION 4. Duties

- A. The Board shall exercise all the authority of the Conference when the Conference is not in session, except to amend these Bylaws.
- B. The Board shall carry out the stated objectives of the Conference by:
 - 1. Authoritatively interpreting these bylaws;
 - 2. Approving or disapproving of any purchase, transfer, or encumbrancing of the Conference's real property or assets;
 - 3. Electing its officers;
 - 4. Employing the President of the Conference and employing or approving the appointment of other administrative personnel it deems necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the Conference and its Ministries;
 - 5. Establishing intermediate administrative branches within geographic areas of the United States and Canada;
 - 6. Establishing Ministries to provide programs and services;
 - 7. Setting a time and place for each biennial convention;
 - 8. Appointing a program committee to plan each biennial convention;
 - 9. Adopting budgets for the Conference and its ministries; and
 - 10. Bonding treasury personnel to insure the security of monies and properties that come under their jurisdiction.

SECTION 5. Election

A. Nominations

- 1. A Nominating Committee of four members of the Conference, who are not employees of the Conference, shall be selected to deliver the slate of qualified nominees for the Board of Directors.
- 2. The committee shall be selected as follows: two members shall be elected by the Conference in session and the Board of Directors shall name two members.
- 3. Balloting for the two committee members to be elected by the Conference in session shall be in accordance with those procedures outlined in Article IV, Section 5B (3).
- 4. The committee shall serve from the conclusion of the session in which it is selected until it makes its report to the next biennial convention.
- 5. The nominations offered by the committee shall comprise the slate of nominees for serving on the Board.
- 6. The slate of nominees and their resume shall be reported to the membership at least thirty days prior to the biennial convention.
- 7. The committee shall:
 - a) Be responsible to recruit nominees to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors;
 - b) Present a slate of nominees containing a minimum of two names for each position to be filled;

- c) Function independently, without obligation to respond to any inquiry received by the committee from anyone;
- d) Be under no obligation to accept for nomination any name submitted to the committee;
- e) Keep all its deliberations confidential; any attempt to unduly influence the work of the committee is inappropriate;
- f) Discipline any member of the committee in accordance with the rules for disciplinary proceedings outlined in our Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised;

B. Balloting

- 1. Election shall be by approved paper ballots or certified electronic ballot.
- 2. Each ballot shall be cast for one nominee from the slate of nominees to fill the four six-year terms of membership on the board.
- 3. If no nominee is elected on any ballot, balloting shall continue as follows:
 - a. The number of candidates for the next ballot shall be reduced to those nominees whose aggregate vote constitutes a majority of ballots cast. This may continue until a nominee is elected.
 - b. Subsequent ballots shall be from the slate of the remaining nominees.
- 4. After filling all six-year terms, abbreviated terms, if any, shall be filled.
 - a. Each ballot shall be cast for a candidate required to fill a four or two-year term.
- 5. A majority vote shall elect, but in the event two or more candidates receive the same number of votes exceeding a majority, they shall be elected except if the number elected exceeds the available number of vacancies to be filled; in which case, all nominees receiving the same number of votes shall make up the slate for the next ballot.

SECTION 6. Meetings

- A. The Board shall choose the time and place for its annual meeting.
 - 1. The chairman may call special meetings with the approval of four Board members, or at the request of a majority of the Board.
 - 2. Business may be conducted by mail, e-mail, telephone conference calls, or video conference calls between Board meetings.
- B. The Board may meet while the Conference is in session to select its officers.
- C. Eight members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 7. Discipline

- A member of the Board may be reprimanded, suspended, or deposed from office provided the procedures for such action outlined in the parliamentary authority of the Conference and the New Testament are followed.

ARTICLE V Officers of the Conference

SECTION 1. Identification

The officers of the Conference shall be chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be combined.

SECTION 2. Selection

The Board shall elect the chairman and vice-chairman from its membership and may elect a secretary and treasurer from its membership, or from the membership of the Conference.

SECTION 3. Term

- A. The officers shall serve for the biennium following the convention at which they are elected or until their successors have been elected.
- B. The officers may succeed themselves.

SECTION 4. Duties

- A. The Chairman shall:
 - 1. Preside at the business meetings of the Conference and Board.
 - 2. Exercise the authority and perform the duties assigned to him by the Board.
- B. The Vice-Chairman shall exercise the authority and perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence or disqualification.
- C. The Secretary shall:
 - 1. Act as the recording secretary at the meetings of the Conference and Board.
 - 2. Ensure the records of the Conference are kept and updated.
 - 3. Ensure reports are compiled, made, and filed as required by the Conference, its Board, and its Ministries.
- D. The Treasurer shall:
 - 1. Ensure a faithful record of all funds and properties of the Conference and its Ministries is kept.
 - 2. Ensure funds are received and dispensed, and reports are made as required by the Conference, its Board, its Ministries and districts.
 - 3. Ensure the publication of annual financial reports of the Conference, and that biennial reports, including the auditor's report, be made available to the membership.

ARTICLE VI - Conference Conventions

SECTION 1. Conventions

The Conference's biennial conventions are open to all members and friends of the Conference to attend and shall include business meetings, worship services, biblical instructions and seminars, and evangelistic endeavors as deemed appropriate by the Program Committee.

SECTION 2. Time and Place of the Conventions

The board shall establish the time and place of the Conference's biennial conventions and announce the date and location to its membership no less than one year in advance.

SECTION 3. Special Meetings

- A. A special business meeting may be called by adoption of a resolution setting forth the purpose of the meeting by a two-thirds vote of:
 - 1. The Conference Board;
 - 2. The aggregate total membership of district boards; or,
 - 3. Those registered at the most recent previous meeting of the Council.
- B. The call for a special meeting shall be announced to the membership ninety days prior to the convention.
- C. The business to be transacted in a special meeting shall be limited to those items contained in the announcement of the convention.

SECTION 4. Conduct of Conference Business Meeting

The business meeting of the Conference shall be conducted by members of the Conference who are eighteen years or older and have registered with the registration committee to vote in the business session.

SECTION 5. Content of Conference Business Meeting

The Chairman shall submit for the convention's approval at its call to order a list of rules and orders for each day of business. These rules and orders shall provide for:

- A. Reports concerning the activities and the state of the Conference since the previous convention. These shall include reports by the:
 - 1. The Board of Directors;
 - 2. President;
 - 3. Ministries Directors;
 - 4. District Superintendents;
 - 5. Treasurer and Auditor;
 - 6. Resolutions and Amendments Committees;
 - 7. President of the Council.
- B. Elections of members to the Board of Directors and to the Nominations Committee;
- C. Consideration of motions reported by the Amendments or Resolutions Committees.

SECTION 6. Voting

- A. Each member shall be entitled to one vote.
- B. Proxy votes shall not be accepted.
- C. Voting on main motions may be by approved paper ballots or certified electronic ballot.
- D. Members who are registered for the business session of the convention but are otherwise occupied in convention program during the business meeting may vote absentee via approved paper or electronic ballot on the election of the Nominating Committee and Board of Directors only.

SECTION 7. Quorum

A quorum shall be a majority of the initial registration of members.

ARTICLE VII

Committees

SECTION 1. Program Committee

The Conference Board shall appoint a Program Committee to arrange for the biennial convention. This committee shall be appointed not less than ten months prior to the date of the convention. It shall be the responsibility of the Program Committee to plan the agenda for the convention, arrange publicity, appoint appropriate committees, submit rules, and notify principal participants.

SECTION 2. Amendments Committee

An Amendments Committee of three shall be appointed by the Chairman to review proposed amendments to these Bylaws and prepare them for presentation to the Conference business meeting. The committee appointed during each convention shall begin to serve at its conclusion and continue to serve until it has completed its report to the succeeding convention.

SECTION 3. Resolutions Committee

A Resolutions Committee of three shall be appointed by the Chairman to receive resolutions signed by at least two members. It shall report to the Conference business meeting all resolutions presented to it, except those considered out of order or in conflict with these Bylaws. Resolutions signed by ten members shall be reported to the business meeting.

SECTION 4. Voter Credentials Committee

- A. A voter credentials committee of three shall be appointed by the Chairman prior to the convention to credential all qualified members present for participation in the voting during the business sessions of the convention. It shall report the number of credentialed voters and determine the presence of a quorum when requested to do so.
- B. The committee shall determine the eligibility of each voter to participate in the business of the convention. If the committee is unable to determine the eligibility of a voter, the name may be submitted to the convention in business session for determination.

ARTICLE VIII

Local Church and Mission

SECTION 1. Local Churches

- A. **Definition.** A local church is a congregation of members who support the Statement of Faith, participate in the financial program of the Conference, and gather under the spiritual oversight of a minimum of two elders who serve on the board. Ideally, local churches should be served by an elder who is financially compensated, enabling him to devote full-time to the pastoral ministry of preaching, teaching, praying and equip-

ping of the saints. Each local church is an ecclesiastical entity and is responsible for its debts.

B. **Recognition.** The Conference recognizes a local church when the district superintendent notifies the Conference office that the congregation qualifies as a local church.

C. **Assignment.** Each local church is assigned to:

1. Preach the Gospel and make disciples of Jesus Christ who assemble on the Sabbath for prayer and worship services;
2. Foster community, train members to serve others and equip members for service;
3. Acquire, hold, and maintain real and personal property;
4. Cooperate with the Conference and its leaders;
5. Financially support the Conference, its districts, and its ministries.

D. **Administration**

1. **Pastor**

- a. **Requirements.** The pastor shall hold a Ministerial License or Ministerial Credentials with the Council.
- b. **Appointment.** After the leadership of a local church consults with the district superintendent, the appointment of the pastor shall be considered by the local church in accordance with local custom.
- c. **Duties.** The pastor shall serve, direct and care for the local church consistent with its purposes. The pastor shall have the freedom of the pulpit and be responsible to the church board of which he may be a member. He shall consult and cooperate with the district superintendent in support of Conference ministries and initiatives.
- d. **Local Pastor and Local Leader.** If a local church has no pastor, a local pastor or a local leader may serve in his place until a pastor is appointed. A local pastor is a man-from-birth who has obtained a Local Pastor Certificate to serve a particular congregation. A local leader is a member approved by the district superintendent and appointed by the local church members or the church board, or both (according to local custom) to serve on a transitional basis until a pastor or local pastor has been appointed. The local pastor or local leader shall function as the pastor and all references to the pastor in these Bylaws shall apply to the local pastor or local leader when a congregation has no pastor.

2. **Elders**

- a. **Qualifications.** An elder is a spiritually mature man-from-birth who meets the biblical qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9) and who is willing to fulfill the responsibilities of an elder. He must have been a member of the local church for the year prior to his selection.
- b. **Duties.** Elders shall be leaders of the local church as described in Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:1-3. They shall have the welfare of the local church at heart. They shall visit the sick, encourage the discouraged, give attention to prayer and the ministry of God's Word, and work to build up the local church and the Conference.

3. **Deacons**

- a. **Qualifications.** A deacon is a spiritually mature individual who meets the biblical qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and who is willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the office. A deacon must have been a member of the local church for the year prior to selection.

- b. **Duties.** Deacons shall assist the pastor and elders by providing services that free them to give attention to prayer and the ministry of God's Word. They shall work to build up the local church and the Conference.

4. Church Board

- a. **Election.** Church board members shall be elected to terms at the annual business meeting except when a vacancy is being filled.
- b. **Composition.** The board shall be comprised of no fewer than three members, including a minimum of two elders, with the total number of board members determined by the local church. It is the preferred practice that a majority of board members shall be neither employees of the local church nor family members of the pastor.
- c. **Term.** Terms may be staggered with no more than half the board members elected at each business meeting.
- d. **Duties.** Subject to other provisions in these Bylaws, the church board shall govern the local church. The church board shall:
 - (1) Determine policy;
 - (2) Approve budgets;
 - (3) Arrange for a financial audit;
 - (4) Evaluate the pastor; and,
 - (5) Elect officers and appoint other positions; the positions of treasurer and secretary may be combined.
- e. **Meetings.** The church board shall meet at regularly scheduled times, but not less than quarterly. Special meetings may be called provided the meeting and its agenda is announced to the church board members at least one Sabbath before the meeting.
- f. **Nominating Committee.** The church board shall appoint a nominating committee no less than thirty days before the annual meeting. The church board may serve as the nominating committee. Ideally, it should nominate at least two candidates for each position to be filled.
- g. **Vacancies.** The church board may fill vacancies by appointment for the unexpired term of the vacant board member providing a majority of the original board remains. All appointed church board members shall serve until the next annual meeting.
- h. **Officers**
 - (1) Chairman: The board shall elect a chairman from among the elders on the board. The chairman shall preside at church board and congregational business meetings. The pastor may serve as the chairman of the board.
 - (2) Vice-Chairman: The board shall elect a vice-chairman from among the elders on the board. The vice-chairman shall execute the duties of the chairman in his absence.
- i. **Other Positions**
 - (1) Treasurer: The local church shall have a treasurer appointed or elected annually. The treasurer shall keep a timely record of receipts and disbursements; provide donors with annual receipts, present financial reports to the church board on not less than a quarterly basis. The treasurer may be a member of the church board.
 - (2) Secretary: The local church shall have a secretary appointed or elected annually. The secretary shall prepare and keep a copy of the minutes of all

business meetings of the members of the congregation and of the meetings of the church board. The secretary shall maintain a local church membership registry and forward notices of new members, transferred members, and former members to the Conference office on a timely basis. The secretary may be a member of the church board.

(3) The offices of secretary and treasurer may be combined.

- E. **Local Church Legislation.** The local church may, according to its own procedures, enact bylaws or rules and define practices binding on the local church and its members provided:
1. The district superintendent approves them before their adoption;
 2. They are not inconsistent with the Scriptures or the doctrines of the Conference;
 3. They are not inconsistent with these Bylaws;
 4. They are in writing.
- F. **Annual Business Meeting.** Local churches shall hold an annual business meeting for the purpose of: receiving the pastor's state of the church report and the treasurer's financial report, electing church board members, and conducting other business as provided for by local church legislation. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given to the members at least four weeks in advance. Members who are eighteen years of age or older may participate in the meeting.

G. **Change in Local Church Status.**

1. The district board may, after consultation with the pastor and the church board, change the status of a local church.
2. The reasons for such change of local church status may include:
 - a. Circumstances when the local church is no longer viable;
 - b. The local church, for a period of twelve consecutive months, did not have the requisite number of board members;
 - c. The local church or its leaders is engaging in conduct contrary to the Conference's mission and Bylaws.
 - d. The local church or its leaders is engaging in conduct, teaching, or worship contrary to the Bible and doctrines;
3. Any change in local church status based on doctrinal concerns shall require the approval of the officers of the Council.
4. Any change in local church status not based on doctrinal concerns may be appealed to the Conference Board within thirty days.

SECTION 2. Mission

- A. **Definition.** A mission is a congregation of members who support the Statement of Faith, participate in the financial program of the Conference, and gather under the leadership of a mission leader, but is not qualified to organize as a local church. Each mission is an ecclesiastical entity and is responsible for its debts.
- B. **Recognition.** The Conference recognizes a mission when the district superintendent notifies the Conference office that the congregation qualifies as a mission.
- C. **Assignment.** Each mission is assigned to:
1. Preach the Gospel and make disciples of Jesus Christ who gather on the Sabbath for prayer and worship;

2. Foster community, train and inspire members to serve others;
3. Acquire, hold, and maintain real and personal property as their possessions;
4. Cooperate with the Conference and its leaders;
5. Support Conference ministries.

D. Administration

1. Mission Leader
 - a. **Appointment and Election.** Every mission shall have a mission leader. The district superintendent or licensed or credentialed minister of an affiliated local church shall appoint a member as the initial mission leader. The initial term of the mission leader shall be not less than six months or more than one year. Each subsequent mission leader shall be elected by a majority of the mission's adult members.
 - b. **Duties.** The mission leader shall direct the mission and preside over the weekly mission program in consultation and cooperation with the district superintendent or licensed or credentialed minister involved in the establishment of the mission.
- E. **Transition to Local Church Status.** Whenever a mission qualifies to become a local church, it may petition the district board for such status.
- F. **Dissolution and Merger.** The district board, in consultation with the mission leader, may dissolve a mission that has become nonviable, or merge it into another mission or a local church when, in their opinion, it is in the best interests of the members.

SECTION 3. Appeal

If a local church or mission is unable to resolve an internal dispute it may appeal to the district superintendent for arbitration.

ARTICLE IX

Districts

SECTION 1. Definition

- A. A district is an intermediate administrative branch in a designated geographic area of the Conference under the leadership of the Conference Board, the Conference President, and a district superintendent and district board.
- B. The Conference Board authorizes a district and defines its boundaries.

SECTION 2. Assignment

The district exists to implement the vision of the Conference, its programs and ministries by:

- A. Facilitating communication between the Conference office and membership;
- B. Assisting with the placement of congregational leaders;
- C. Encouraging and supervising congregational leaders;
- D. Facilitating inter-congregational activities;
- E. Assisting in the planting and nurturing of missions and local churches;
- F. Implementing a budget for the district;

G. Carrying out other activities as assigned by the President.

SECTION 3. District Superintendent

- A. **Selection.** The district superintendent shall be an appointee of the conference who may draw a salary from the district and be:
1. At least thirty years of age;
 2. A member of the Conference for the five years prior to his appointment;
 3. Known as being one who supports the work of the Conference by his deeds and faithful financial giving; and,
 4. One who demonstrates the character expressed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13.
- B. **Consultation.** The district superintendent shall be appointed only after the Conference President consults with the district board regarding possible candidates and reports this consultation to the Conference board prior to seeking and receiving the approval of the Conference board for the appointee.
- C. **Duties.** The district superintendent shall:
1. Preside at district board meetings and serve as its chairman;
 2. Lead the district consistent with its assignment, these Bylaws, and directions from the Conference President;
 3. Have authority to engage and terminate district employees and volunteers, including a secretary and treasurer.
 4. Have authority over all district affairs not explicitly assigned to the district board in these Bylaws.

SECTION 4. District Board

- A. The district board shall assist the superintendent in leading the district consistent with its assignment, these Bylaws, and directions from the Conference President.
- B. The district board shall be comprised of a minimum of three members in addition to the district superintendent.
- C. District board members shall demonstrate the characteristics expressed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9.
- D. The district board shall determine the number and manner of electing district board members.
- E. District board members shall serve three-year, staggered terms.
- F. The district board shall meet at least annually, and also when convened by the district superintendent or a majority of the board members.
- G. All district board policies are subject to review and approval by the Conference Board and President.

ARTICLE X

Ministerial Council

SECTION 1. Identification

The ministers of the Conference shall be organized as the North American Ministerial Council.

SECTION 2. Authorization

The Conference authorizes the Council to operate in accordance with its own bylaws.

SECTION 3. Assignment

The Council exists to:

- A. Set forth the doctrinal teachings of the Conference;
- B. Interpret doctrine;
- C. Establish standards and qualifications for ministers of the Conference;
- D. Issue ministerial documents;
- E. Refer doctrinal studies to the International Ministerial Congress;
- F. Select delegates to the International Ministerial Congress.
- G. Encourage, support and equip its members towards the fulfillment of the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

ARTICLE XI

Financial Policy

The financial policy of the Conference shall be based upon the giving of tithes and offerings by the Conference membership.

SECTION 1. Identification

- A. Tithe: a tenth of one's net earnings.
- B. Offerings: contributions in addition to one's tithes.

SECTION 2. Treasury Division

- A. Local churches and missions shall have treasurers who shall receive tithes and offerings from their membership for the support of their local work, and the Conference's ministries and districts.
- B. Districts shall have treasurers who shall receive funds from local churches and missions for the purpose of fulfilling their assignment.
- C. The Conference office shall receive a percentage of the total tithe from local churches and missions for the purpose of fulfilling its assignment. This percentage shall be established by the Board, but shall not exceed fifteen percent.

SECTION 3. Financial Partnership

- A. The plan for the support of the work of the Conference shall be to allow local churches and missions to manage their financial affairs provided they:
 - 1. Remit monthly the portion of tithe receipts equal to the percentage set by the Conference Board, and the portion of tithe receipts equal to the percentage agreed upon in writing with its district;
 - 2. Forward all offerings designated for Conference or district use to the appropriate treasurer within ten days after the end of the month in which they were received;
 - 3. Employ its pastor from ministers documented by the Council;
 - 4. Assume full responsibility for all other expenses, including the payment of salary, benefits, and expenses for its pastor and other employees;

5. Submit a copy of its annual financial report to the district treasurer.
- B. Pooling arrangements in place prior to July 1, 2017 may be continued upon agreement of the district board and the local church or mission involved.

ARTICLE XII

Parliamentary Authority

The parliamentary authority of the Conference and all affiliated entities shall be the most recent version of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

ARTICLE XIII

Amendment of Bylaws

SECTION 1. Qualification

One or more of the following may propose an amendment to these bylaws:

- A. Conference Board;
- B. Ministerial Council;
- C. Amendments Committee;
- D. District board; or,
- E. Fifty or more members of the Conference who have signed a typed petition bearing the full text of the proposed amendment and each member's name, mailing address, e-mail address, local church or mission, and district.

SECTION 2. Prior Notice

- A. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Amendments Committee no less than 120 days prior to the business session. The Committee may modify the form, but not the substance, of the amendment.
- B. The Amendments Committee shall distribute proposed amendments to the membership no less than sixty days prior to the business session.

SECTION 3. Adoption

Adoption of an amendment requires a two-thirds vote of the Conference in session.

SECTION 4. Amendments with Doctrinal Interpretations

These Bylaws shall not be amended in any way that creates or negates an established doctrine of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Bylaws of the North American Ministerial Council of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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Bylaws of the North American Ministerial Council

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be the North American Ministerial Council of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) (herein referred to as Council).

ARTICLE II

Object

The object of the Council shall be to:

- A. Set forth the doctrinal teachings of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) (herein referred to as Conference);
- B. Interpret doctrine;
- C. Establish standards and qualifications for ministers of the Conference;
- D. Issue ministerial documents;
- E. Refer doctrinal studies to the International Ministerial Congress (herein referred to as IMC);
- F. Select delegates to the IMC; and,
- G. Encourage, support and equip its members towards the fulfillment of the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

ARTICLE III

Doctrine

The Council shall subscribe to the Statement of Faith set forth by the International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day), as interpreted and published by this Council. The Council may by majority vote recommend a doctrinal study to the IMC as an amendment to the Statement of Faith, or for study by other councils.

ARTICLE IV

Members

SECTION 1. Membership

- A. Licensed and credentialed ministers of the Conference must reside in the United States and Canada. They are members of the North American Ministerial Council and have the privilege of deliberating, voting, holding all appointive positions and elective offices with the following exceptions which shall be reserved to those holding credentials:
 - 1. Delegates to the International Ministerial Congress.



2. Elected Officers of the Council, President, the Vice President and Secretary.
 3. Members of the License and Credentials Committee.
 4. Those assigned matters pertaining to the discipline of those holding license and credentials.
- B. Ministers who hold retirement documentation (Retirement License, Retirement Credentials) shall be members of the Council, and may deliberate and vote, hold appointive positions and elective offices to the extent that pre-retirement documents permitted.
- C. Laymen who hold Local Pastor Certificates shall be Provisional Members of the Council. They may deliberate, but shall not vote, hold appointive or elective positions, nor count toward a quorum of the Council.

SECTION 2. Ministerial Documentation

- A. The Council authorizes its President and Secretary to issue the following ministerial documents with an expiration date of five (5) years from the date of its issuance upon the recommendation of the License and Credentials Committee:
1. Ministerial Credentials
 2. Ministerial License
 3. Retirement Credentials
 4. Retirement License
- B. Standards and qualifications and procedures for receiving ministerial documentation, ministerial privileges and responsibilities, and guidelines for discipline shall be set forth in a Ministerial Documentation Manual.
- C. The effective date of membership classification with its privileges is the date on which the License and Credentials Committee approves the application for issuance of a ministerial document.

SECTION 3. Materials

A copy of these Bylaws, a directory of ministers and congregations, minutes of Council meetings and a subscription to Ministerial Forum shall be provided to each member of the Council.

ARTICLE V

Officers and Duties

Elected officers shall be president, vice-president and secretary.

SECTION 1. Duties of the President

- A. Preside at all meetings of the Council.
- B. Appoint committees.

SECTION 2. Duties of the Vice-President

- A. Perform the duties of the president in his absence or at his request.
- B. Be a member of the License and Credentials Committee.



SECTION 3. Duties of the Secretary

- A. Keep record of the meetings of the Council.
- B. Prepare and keep a roll of members.
- C. Conduct correspondence at the direction of the Council.
- D. Preserve the records, reports and documents of the Council.

ARTICLE VI

Nominations and Elections

SECTION 1. Nominations

Nominations for the elective offices of the Council shall be made by a Nominating Committee. Nominations may be made from the floor at the election meeting, provided the nominee is present or has given consent to serve if elected.

SECTION 2. Election

The officers of the Council shall be elected by a majority ballot vote to serve for a two-year (2) term or until their successors are elected. Their term of office shall begin at the close of the Council session in which they are elected.

SECTION 3. Succession of Office

An officer of the Council may succeed himself.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings

The Council shall meet biennially in even-numbered years.

SECTION 1. Regular Meetings

The Executive Committee shall name the time and place of each regular meeting of the Council, no less than six (6) months prior to the date of the meeting.

SECTION 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Council may be called on thirty (30) days' notice by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee, a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, or upon a written request of twenty (20) members of the Council.

SECTION 3. Quorum

A quorum of the Council shall be forty percent of its voting members.

ARTICLE VIII

Executive Committee

The elected officers of the Council shall constitute the Executive Committee. It shall act as an agenda committee for the Council. It shall also prepare the annual budget for the operating expenses of the Council and submit it to the Board of Directors for funding.

ARTICLE IX

Finances

The Council shall receive its financial support from the Conference. The treasurer of the Conference shall act as the treasurer of the Council.

ARTICLE X

Literature

The Council may compile and publish literature to coordinate its work and to promote its goals.

SECTION 1. Literature Committee

A Literature Committee, chaired by the Bible Advocate Editor, shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

SECTION 2. Ministerial Forum

The Ministerial Forum shall be published at a frequency established by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XI

Committees and Their Duties

Committees of the Council shall be: Agenda, Registration, Resolutions, Publications, License and Credentials, Nominating and Literature. The Registration and Resolutions Committees shall be appointed by the president in the opening exercises of the Council's session.

SECTION 1. Agenda Committee

The Executive Committee shall act as an Agenda Committee. This committee shall prepare the program for each session of the Council. Following the adoption of the program by the Council as the order of the day, this committee shall at the end of each meeting report the nature of business to be conducted at the next meeting.

SECTION 2. Registration Committee

The Registration Committee shall consist of three members who shall register all members present.

They shall report the initial registration at the request of the president of the Council. Members who register after the first report may begin their membership privileges provided the Registration Committee unanimously approves the registration.

Should one committee member dissent, the member shall be informed that upon approval of the Council at an appropriate break, he may then begin his privileges.

Should the presence of a quorum be questioned, this committee shall call the roll of members registered.

SECTION 3. Resolutions Committee

The Resolutions Committee shall examine each resolution presented for consideration and report it to the Council, together with its recommendation. Resolutions may originate with this committee.

SECTION 4. Publications Committee

The Publications Committee shall consist of three members appointed by the Executive Committee and its tenure shall be for two years. It shall be responsible for the preparation, publication and distribution of the Ministerial Forum and any other publications approved.

SECTION 5. License and Credentials Committee

The License and Credentials Committee shall be elected by a majority ballot vote.

- A. This committee shall consist of six credentialed ministers in addition to the Vice-President.
- B. The term of office for Committee members shall be for four years. Three members shall be elected at each biennial meeting of the Council. Their terms shall begin at the end of the session in which they are elected. In the event a vacancy occurs on the Committee, The Executive Committee may appoint a member to the Committee until the next meeting of the Council, at which time a member shall be elected for the unexpired term. The Committee shall meet at least annually. Five members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- C. The committee shall elect its chairman from among its membership.
- D. The assignment of this committee shall be to receive all applications for ministerial documentation with the Conference and to pass on the qualifications of each applicant so that those who qualify for ministerial service are issued an appropriate document by the President and Secretary of the Council in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Council's Ministerial Documentation Manual.
 1. The Committee shall regulate the status of the Council's members who may become inactive.
 2. The Committee shall act as a Committee on Discipline as outlined in the Ministerial Documentation Manual.
- E. The committee shall submit a written report to the Council in session giving the names of each applicant for documentation along with the action taken by the Committee on the application, a report of its regulation of the status of any member who has become inactive and disciplinary actions taken by the Committee. All reports regarding the discipline of an NAMC member shall include the name of the disciplined member, the nature of his offence, and the specific disciplinary action taken by the License and Credentials Committee. The report of the License and Credentials Committee may be made only in executive session.
- F. The chairman of the Committee shall send a list of all ministerial applicants to the Council's members who hold credentials at least 14 days before the Committee takes action on an application.

SECTION 6. Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee of three (3) members shall be elected by a majority ballot vote. The tenure of office shall be from the close of the Council session in which it is elected through the next regular session of the Council. It shall be the duty of this committee to submit a slate of nominees to the session of the Council through which

it serves. This slate shall contain at least two (2) nominees for each elective office. The committee shall have secured the consent of each nominee to serve if elected.

SECTION 7. Literature Committee

The Literature Committee shall approve all literature expressing or explaining the doctrinal position of the Council other than those issued by a committee of the Council or authorized by Council resolution.

ARTICLE XII

Vacancy

SECTION 1. Committee Membership

Should a vacancy occur in the membership of any of the Council's committees, except for the Executive or Nominating Committees, between meetings of the Council, the Executive Committee may fill the vacancy.

SECTION 2. Executive and Nominating Committees

Should a vacancy occur in the membership of the Executive or Nominating Committees between meetings of the Council, the Board of Directors may fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE XIII

Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for the Council.

ARTICLE XIV

Amendment

SECTION 1. Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing to the Executive Committee for distribution to the members of the Council at least sixty (60) days before the Council meets.

SECTION 2. Standing Rules

The Council may amend its Standing Rules, including the Documentation Manual, by the rule to "amend something previously adopted" as stated in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

SECTION 3. Doctrinal Beliefs

The Council may amend the doctrinal beliefs (Statement of Faith) of the Conference by a 2/3 vote, provided the amendment has been distributed to the members of the Council at least sixty (60) days before the Council meets.

Standing Rules of the North American Ministerial Council of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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Standing Rules of the North American Ministerial Council of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

RE: Article VII—Meetings

- A. Call to Order
- B. Determine Quorum
- C. Officers' Reports
- D. Report of Committees
- E. Unfinished Business
- F. New Business
- G. Doctrinal Discussion
- H. Ministerial Workshops and Instructions
- I. Adjournment

II. POLICY FOR SEATING OBSERVERS

RE: Article VII—Meetings

Ministers of the Church of God (Seventh Day) from other countries or councils, and their translators, shall be seated as Council observers. All other observers must register with the Registration Committee and be seated by action of the Council.

III. NEW BUSINESS

RE: Article VII—Meetings

Resolutions which introduce new business to the Council must be presented in writing to the Resolutions Committee no later than the end of the third full day of the session. Each resolution must be signed by two members of the Council.

IV. PRELIMINARY STUDY OF DOCTRINE

RE: Article III—Doctrine

- A. Any member who wishes to present a preliminary doctrinal study for recommendation to the International Ministerial Congress must:
 - 1. Submit the study in writing to the Executive Committee no later than ninety (90) days before the Council convenes in which it is to be presented.
 - 2. A resolution must accompany the study to indicate how it proposes to change, delete, add to, or interpret the Doctrinal Beliefs of the Church of God (Seventh Day).
- B. The secretary of the Council shall send a copy of such studies and resolutions, in the

language of their choice, to the membership of the Council no later than sixty (60) days before it convenes.

- C. A majority vote of the Council shall bring a subject before it for consideration. Each speech to this motion shall be limited to five (5) minutes.
- D. Following the initial presentation of a doctrinal study and its resolution, a comprehensive rebuttal may be offered without time limit if such arrangement has been made with the Executive Committee previous to the initial presentation of a doctrinal study; thereafter, each speech shall be limited to ten (10) minutes, and no member may speak more than three times.
- E. When a preliminary doctrinal study receives a majority vote, it shall be properly prepared and forwarded to the International Ministerial Congress for presentation.

V. SELECTION OF DELEGATES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

- A. The Executive Committee shall appoint one representative delegate and one alternative delegate to represent the Conference in the quadrennial meetings of the International Ministerial Congress.
- B. A member of the Council who is an officer of the Congress shall be ineligible to serve as the Council's delegate.
- C. The Executive Committee shall appoint delegates from among the credentialed ministers of the Council who consent to serve as a delegate and are available to attend the next scheduled meeting of the Congress.

VI. VOTING

Voting may be conducted using approved hand ballot or certified electronic ballot vote.

Ministerial Documentation Manual of the North American Ministerial Council of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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Ministerial Documentation Manual

North American Ministerial Council of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

(as revised September, 2018)

1. PREAMBLE

The General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) (herein referred to as Conference) has created the North American Ministerial Council (herein referred to as Council) as the organization of its ministers. A part of the assignment given to the Council is to establish standards and qualifications for the ministry of the Conference, and to issue and regulate ministerial documents.

The Conference holds that everyone who has accepted God's plan of salvation, provided through His Son, Jesus Christ, which includes accepting His shed blood for the remission of sins and being baptized, has the responsibility to share this plan with unconverted non-believers.

We also hold that Christ, who is the head of the Church, calls some church members to perform a greater public ministry.

We further believe that when a man is assured that he has been called of God to be a ministering servant, and positive evidence of this can be seen by others in the Church, that it behooves the membership to encourage him to pursue his calling.

The future of the Conference largely depends upon the spiritual quality and character of its ministers. Therefore, the Council strives constantly to encourage spiritual growth on the part of its membership. It also reviews its standards and qualifications for the ministry from time to time in an effort to improve the ministry's ability to represent the Word of God and the plan of salvation to a needy world and to edify the church.

The ministry of the Conference is to be in all things an example to the church — in spirituality, diligence, earnestness, discretion, punctuality, and in prayer. The Apostle Paul wrote, "As servants of God, we commend ourselves in every way . . . in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left" (II Corinthians 6:4, 6, 7, NIV).

A minister of the Conference must know the peace and salvation of God that comes through the grace of God, received by faith in Jesus Christ. He should have a sense of mission in proclaiming the gospel of salvation to those who are perishing without Christ. Likewise, the minister must have a desire to see believers edified by the preaching of the Word and encouraged to strive toward perfection.

The minister of the Conference must have abilities that qualify him for the ministry of the Church. He must be able to preach and lead out in public worship. He must have a thirst for knowledge from the Word of God. He must have clear views regarding the plan of salvation as revealed in Scripture. He must be able to conduct a ministry that will lead sinners to repentance and promote spiritual growth in believers.



A minister of the Conference must not only display a keen interest in the gospel ministry of the Church, but he must also be a church man. A candidate to the ministry of the Church must be supportive of and willing to work within the organizational structures of the Conference.

Membership in secret orders or lodges (such as a Masonic Lodge) is considered inconsistent with the calling to the ministry. Therefore, a candidate for ministerial documentation must not be a member of such organizations.

2. LOCAL PASTOR CERTIFICATE

The Local Pastor Certificate (LPC) is a temporary document, in that it expires every two years, issued to qualified laymen authorizing the bearer to provide ministerial leadership while completing the educational requirements that would qualify him to obtain a Ministerial License, as an entry level to the church's professional ministry.

The LPC is issued by the License and Credentials Committee (L&CC) of the Council, upon recommendation of the district in which the layman is to serve a specific assignment. It expires every two years and may be renewed five times from the date of issue, subject to continuing education provided in the Documentation Manual of the Council. If, after the LPC has been renewed five times, the applicant chooses not to pursue a Ministerial License, his LPC may be renewed subject to special provisions for continuing education.

Applicants for LPC must have completed the Local Pastor Orientation program provided by Artios Christian College to be eligible to receive a Certificate. Applicants may demonstrate competency in a majority of the required credits for the Local Pastor Orientation program by passing examinations proctored by Artios Christian College.

2.1 QUALIFICATIONS

The applicant must:

- A. Be a member of the Conference who is at least 20 years of age.
- B. Possess and demonstrate the qualities for Christian leadership listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- C. Be in the habit of conducting personal daily devotions.
- D. Believe, practice and possess the ability to articulate the doctrines of the Conference as set forth in its Statement of Faith.
- E. Provide evidence that he supports the church with his tithes and offerings.
- F. Be able to preach and teach the doctrines and polity of the church.
- G. Have completed the Local Pastor Orientation from Artios Christian College.
- H. Have the endorsement of the District Superintendent, and an assignment from a congregation.

2.2 ISSUANCE:

- A. An applicant for the LPC shall send his application along with a transcript from Artios Christian College verifying that he has completed the requirements to the custodian of records.
- B. Upon satisfying itself that the candidate is qualified to act as a local pastor, the custodian of records shall forward his application and transcript along with the recommendation of his district superintendent to the License and Credentials Committee of the Council for its review of his application. The superintendent's recommendation shall list the services the district wishes to extend to the local pastor, taken from

the list under Assignment.

- C. The L&CC shall issue the Local Pastor Certificate to those applicants who it deems have met the requirements of the program. It shall act upon applications within 60 days after receiving them.

2.3 EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL OF LOCAL PASTOR CERTIFICATE:

The LPC shall expire two years from the date of its issue. The L&CC may renew the document provided the Local Pastor continues his support of the Conference's doctrines and polity, faithfully supports the Conference with his tithe and offerings, participates in district activities, and submits an application for renewal complete with:

- A. A written recommendation from his district superintendent, certifying that he is rendering acceptable service to the congregation assigned to him,
- B. A written recommendation from Artios Christian College indicating he has completed 24 credits of continuing education in the Diploma of Christian Ministry or Associate of Christian Leadership program.

2.4 EXEMPTIONS:

Applicants for the LPC or individuals currently holding an LPC may apply to the L&CC for exemptions from the initial and/or continuing education requirements based upon demonstrated competency through life experience and/or training received through institutions other than Artios Christian College. In such cases the L&CC will work in connection with the District Superintendent and Artios Christian College to grant exemptions on a case-by-case basis.

2.5 REVOCATION:

The LPC shall be revoked by the L&CC at any time upon the notification of the sponsoring district superintendent that it is withdrawing sponsorship. Reasons for revocation may range from leaving his assignment, neglect of duties, moral or character failure, failure to engage in the continuing education as required, or other reasons of concern to his district. The local pastor must be given adequate opportunity to appeal to the District Board to defend himself.

2.6 ASSIGNMENT:

The LPC shall designate the location of the assignment the local pastor is to serve, and authorizes the following services:

- A. Conduct public worship services.
- B. Preach and evangelize.
- C. Make pastoral and hospital calls.
- D. Preside over baptisms, and communion services.
- E. Preside over special dedication services.
- F. Officiate at funerals.
- G. Officiate at weddings where state statute permits.

2.7 SUPERVISION:

A local pastor shall work under the supervision of his congregational board, if one exists, or district superintendent where no church board exists. He should submit a quarterly report to his superintendent for evaluation and counsel.

3. THE MINISTERIAL LICENSE

A member of the Conference who aspires to serve the Church with full ministerial privileges should seek a Ministerial License. A license is considered to be appropriate for men who wish to enter a bi-vocational or full-time ministry of the Conference. A licensee may participate in the Council as an associate member. He is eligible to provide pastoral and/or evangelistic services to any church which calls on him to do so. A candidate for Ministerial License must have completed an Associate in Christian Leadership (Pastoral Emphasis) from Artios School of Ministry.

3.1 GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants seeking a Ministerial License shall meet the following requirements:

- A. Possess and demonstrate the personal standards and qualifications described by the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 for an elder.
- B. Be in the habit of spending time in prayer and devotions daily.
- C. Be a member of the Conference with principal offices in Denver, Colorado.
- D. Be committed to uphold the doctrinal positions and practices of the Conference.
- E. Support the polity of the church.
- F. Demonstrate an ability to preach and teach the Word of God.
- G. Have completed the Associate in Christian Leadership (Pastoral Emphasis)—or its equivalent—as prescribed by Artios Christian College.

3.2 APPLICATION

Application for a license shall be made in the following manner:

- A. Apply on a form provided by the L&CC and submit to the chairman of the Committee no less than 90 days prior to the next announced meeting of the Committee.
- B. Provide character references, at least two of whom must be ministers of the Conference and who can attest to his worthiness to receive a license.
- C. Provide a resolution of sponsorship from his district and congregational boards.
- D. Provide verification that he has satisfactorily completed the requirements of the Associate of Christian Leadership (Pastoral Emphasis)—or its equivalent—as prescribed by Artios Christian College.

3.3 ISSUANCE

- A. The chairman of the L&CC, or a committee member he designates, shall review the application and its supporting documentation.
 - 1. In the event an application lacks some element in its content or form, the applicant shall be informed in time for him to provide all necessary material(s) to the L&CC prior to the meeting in which his application is to be considered.
 - 2. When an application and its accompanying documentation are complete, they will be submitted to the entire Committee for action.
- B. Upon the affirmative action of the L&CC, a Ministerial License may be issued to the applicant effective on the date of its approval.
- C. If the L&CC declines to issue a Ministerial License, the L&CC shall assist the applicant to qualify in the following manner:

1. Inform him within 30 days of the reason(s) for declining to grant a license.
2. Provide specific steps that he can take to come into compliance with the requirements for a license.
3. Hold an application open and on file for up to 24 months while an applicant seeks to come into compliance for the issuance of a license.

3.4 PRIVILEGES

Licensed ministers shall be vested with the authority to preach the Word, to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, serve as a chaplain, and to solemnize marriages. They are to lead out in the work of the Conference in general by organizing local churches under the auspices of their District. A licensed minister is an associate member of the Council.

3.5 ELEVATION OF MINISTERIAL LICENSE TO MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS

A licensed minister may apply to the License and Credentials Committee for elevation to Ministerial Credentials when he has completed the Bachelor of Christian Leadership (Pastoral Major) from Artios Christian College. If the applicant completes a comparable Bachelor's degree (e.g. Theology, Bible, Ministry) at an institution other than Artios Christian College then the applicant's transcripts must be approved by Artios.

In lieu of the Educational requirements above, Licensed Ministers, age 50 and above and having completed 15 years of continuous, successful pastoral services, counted from the date of receiving a NAMC ministerial document, may apply for and receive elevation to Credentials with approval of the License and Credentials Committee.

4. MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS

Ministerial Credentials represent the highest form of recognition and endorsement the Conference may bestow upon a minister of the gospel. This document is reserved for those who have fulfilled the full course of study prescribed within this manual including an internship or practicum.

4.1 APPLICATION AND ISSUANCE OF MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS

- A. Each candidate for Ministerial Credentials shall apply on the appropriate form to the chairman of the L&CC.
- B. Be certified by Artios Christian College as having earned the Bachelor of Christian Leadership (Pastoral Major) or its equivalent.

4.2 PRIVILEGES

The credentialed minister is to rule well in the Church, to preach the Word, to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, serve as a chaplain, and solemnize marriages. He is authorized to organize churches under the auspices of his district superintendent. He has full membership privileges in the Council and is eligible to serve as a delegate to the International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

4.3 QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Be a member of the Conference.
- B. Be certified by Artios Christian College as having met all the requisites for a Bachelor's degree in an appropriate field (e.g., Theology, Bible, Ministry).
- C. Receive the recommendation of Artios Christian College attesting to his spiritual maturity, ministerial ability and commitment to the gospel ministry of the Conference.
- D. Provide character references, at least two of whom must be credentialed ministers of the Conference and who can attest to applicant's worthiness to receive credentials.
- E. Possess and demonstrate the spiritual and practical qualities of an elder listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- F. Be committed to devotions and prayer daily.
- G. Be committed to uphold the doctrinal positions and practices of the Conference.

4.4 A REDUCTION IN CLASSIFICATION FROM CREDENTIALS TO LICENSE

A reduction in ministerial status from credentials to license may occur under the following circumstances:

- A. The minister requests a Ministerial License in writing from the L&CC;
- B. A license is issued by the L&CC following an action of discipline.

5. RETIREMENT CERTIFICATE

A Retirement Certificate may be issued to any licensed or credentialed minister of the Conference who is of retirement age or who has served the Church faithfully for no less than 20 years. Retired ministers shall enjoy the privileges of their previously held document subject to any provisions of the Council Bylaws or Conference Bylaws.

It may be issued by the L&CC with the written consent of the minister who is retired, or without the retired minister's consent in the event he misses three consecutive sessions of the Council.

6. TRANSFER OF MINISTERIAL DOCUMENTATION

A minister from another denomination or a minister of a member church of the International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day) may transfer his ministerial documentation to the North American Ministerial Council provided:

- A. He has received membership in the Conference, with principal offices in Denver, Colorado.
- B. He is willing to represent the Conference exclusively by surrendering his former documentation to the L&CC.
- C. He has successfully completed the Transfer Orientation Program prescribed by Artios Christian College, covering the doctrines, history and polity of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day).
- D. He provides the L&CC with:
 - 1. A photo of the applicant.

2. A detailed autobiography, including specific details of his educational history and classes taken to prepare for the ministry.
3. Proof of current membership with the Conference in Denver, Colorado.
4. A letter of recommendation from the pastor, or leadership in his congregation.
5. A letter of recommendation from his District's Superintendent.
6. Reference forms, provided by the Custodian of Records, from at least two ministers of the Conference.
7. A letter from Artios showing he has successfully completed the Transfer Orientation Program.
8. A copy of his former document and/or a letter declaring his surrender of that document.

The L&CC may issue a ministerial document to the applicant which is appropriate for his qualification and ministerial experience.

7. MINISTERIAL DEPARTURE FROM THE CONFERENCE

In the case a licensed or credentialed minister of the Conference unites with the church membership of another denomination or a congregation not recognized as an affiliate of the Conference his ministerial documentation with the Council shall immediately be cancelled; and his membership in the Council ceases. The L&CC may initiate this process providing it contacts the minister at his last known address and inform him of the date of its meeting to take such action.

8. MINISTERIAL ACTIVITY OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE

No licensed or credentialed minister of the Church of God (Seventh Day) shall regularly conduct independent church activities which are not under the direction of the Conference or one of its agencies or districts, or carry on independent missions or church activities, or be connected with an independent church or other religious group without written approval of the L&CC.

Should a minister fail to comply with these requirements, he may, on recommendation of the Conference Board of Directors or a district board, have his ministerial document revoked.

9. THE RESTORATION OF MINISTERIAL DOCUMENTS

When a licensed or credentialed minister has been deprived of his document and expelled as a member of Council, or has surrendered his document for any reason, such document shall be sent to the Custodian of Record to be filed and preserved as a part of the minister's record.

Application for reinstatement by a minister who has resigned or whose document has expired because of inactivity or whose credentials were reduced to license or whose document was revoked in disciplinary action, shall be made in the same manner as a new applicant. However, in the case of a question of adultery or other sexual immorality, his document shall not be restored in less than three years from the date it was revoked, and then only with the written consent of the boards of the congregation and district in which the offense took place.

Pastors and local churches are advised not to engage a person who has lost his ministerial document in disciplinary action in any official capacity, such as a supply minister, song director, Sabbath School superintendent or teacher, etc., until his document is restored, except on written approval of the L&CC.

In the case where a license or credentials is misplaced, mutilated or destroyed, a duplicate certificate may be issued.

9.1 EXPIRATION OF MINISTERIAL DOCUMENTATION:

With the exception of the Local Pastor Certificate, all ministerial documentation issued shall carry an expiration date of five years, and renewal of ministerial documentation shall be by application provided by the L&CC on the following basis:

- A. A minister shall apply for renewal of his document to the L&CC 30 days prior to the expiration of his document.
- B. Each candidate for renewal, except those holding retirement documents, shall certify that he has completed 75 hours of continuing education by the following guidelines:
 - 1. The Ministerial Documentation Manual of the Council stipulates that all ministerial documents issued by the Council shall expire five years from the date of their issuance. Renewal of ministerial documentation is by application for its renewal no less than 30 days prior to its expiration date. Each candidate for renewal, except retirees, must provide a list of the educational courses or activities he has participated in to the L&CC over the previous years. He must sign the renewal form as verification that he is certifying that he has completed 75 hours of continuing education listed on his form in the past five years.

9.2 CERTIFICATION OF HOURS:

The 75 hours of continuing education operates for the benefit of the ministry of the Conference to encourage self-improvement. It is an honor system and one's claim of hours for credit should reflect integrity becoming of a minister.

It is incumbent upon a minister to retain acceptable evidence of his attendance or participation in the activities he claims for credit. It is not necessary to submit evidence of claimed activities, but one must keep it and make it available to the L&CC, at its request.

The L&CC accepts the following items as supporting evidence of one's claim for credit hours:

- A. Copies of room and meal receipts when one attends a General Conference convention, or Council meeting, provided he attends one or both of these meetings for no less than five consecutive days.
- B. A letter or diploma verifying that he was in attendance of, and participated in an educational seminar or leadership conference. Receipt of diploma for a course taken online.
- C. A letter from the editor of Sabbath School quarterlies, or the Director of Artios, verifying the completion of research and completion of acceptable manuscript or classes taught.

9.3 CONTINUING EDUCATION ACCEPTABLE TO THE L&CC:

The L&CC offers the following instruction on what is acceptable as continuing education for credit toward the renewal of ministerial documentation.

- A. A minister may obtain 15 credit hours of continuing education by attending at least four days of a meeting of the Conference for five hours of credit, and one session of a Council meeting for 10 hours of credit, for an attendance of at least five days within the five-year renewal period. Attendance of more than one meeting of the Council or Conference Convention for the prescribed days will earn five additional hours of credit, each.
- B. One may accrue 10 credit hours for researching and preparing a Sabbath School Quarterly manuscript (13 lessons) acceptable for publication.
- C. One may accrue one quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) hour of credit for each hour spent in the research and preparation of study material for teaching Artios classes.
- D. One may accrue hour for hour for attendance of any Church sponsored educational activity; such as, Artios Christian College's Seminar Series, leadership conferences, seminars, classes on evangelism, church planting, etc.
- E. One may accrue hour for hour for attendance of educational activities outside the Conference, such as Billy Graham evangelism seminars, church growth or stewardship seminars, Bible or English language courses, conferences held by evangelical churches where "how-to instructions" are offered.
- F. One may accrue hour for hour for courses taken online such as Artios online or via video, Bible-related courses from other institutions, self-improvement courses, etc.
- G. Retired ministers shall apply for renewal of their documents by certifying that they continue to attend congregational services of an affiliated congregation of the Conference as their health and circumstances permit, and that they support the church with their finances.

10. MINISTERIAL INACTIVITY

10.1 INACTIVITY IN A MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENT

Documentation held by any licensed or credentialed minister not under a regular ministerial assignment by any local church, or district board, or agency of the Conference for a period of two consecutive years shall be declared inactive by the L&CC, who shall so notify the minister of his inactive status. The minister's inactive status shall be lifted immediately upon the resumption of a regular ministerial assignment.

Once declared inactive, any documentation which remains inactive for an additional two consecutive years shall at the end of that period automatically expire. The L&CC shall so notify the minister of the expiration of his document and shall so delete his name from the membership of the Council.

The following shall be exempt from inactive status:

- A. A minister holding a Certificate of Retirement;
- B. A minister who requests and receives from the L&CC an extended leave of absence from an assignment with the Conference in order to serve another national conference or council of the Church of God (Seventh Day), or who receives an extended leave of absence for legitimate personal reasons;
- C. A minister of the Council who is employed by an independent congregation or para-church organization not affiliated with the Conference, provided he requests and receives the written approval of the L&CC.

- D. A minister working as a church planter, self-supporting pastor, or evangelist, provided he re-requests and receives the written approval of the L&CC.

10.2 ATTENDANCE OF THE MEETINGS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

- A. Any licensed or credentialed minister who misses two consecutive Council sessions shall be informed by the L&CC that if he misses the next Council in session his document shall automatically expire. Ministers holding a Certificate of Retirement shall be exempt from this rule.
- B. The document of any licensed or credentialed minister who misses three consecutive Council sessions shall automatically expire, or he shall be issued a Certificate of Retirement if he is of retirement age or has 20 or more years of service. The L&CC shall so notify the minister of this action.
- C. Exceptions to these rules of Council inactivity may be granted, provided the minister requests and receives such waiver of the rules from the L&CC.

11. DISCIPLINE OF A MINISTER

The object of church discipline is not the punishment of offenders, but the defense of truth, the purity of the church, the warning of the careless, and the restoration and salvation of the guilty. The New Testament standard for Christ's church is holiness of heart and life. Therefore, the Conference insists upon a clean ministry, requiring those who carry its ministerial license and credentials to be orthodox in doctrine and holy in life. For this reason, the discipline of a minister is not punitive or retributive, but to determine the standing and relationship a minister is to have with the Conference when accused of misconduct.

11.1 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The L&CC shall act as a Committee on Discipline. In the event of a disciplinary problem involving misconduct, breach of ethics, heresy, sexual immorality, or dereliction of duty, this committee shall conduct all necessary procedures which may lead to the suspension, reduction, or revocation of ministerial documentation.

An investigation of allegations of misbehavior of a minister shall be conducted by the Committee on Discipline, or its appointees, once allegations are submitted to the Committee in writing, and they are presented by any of the following:

- A. A local church board;
- B. A district board;
- C. The Board of Directors of the Conference;
- D. Two licensed or credentialed ministers of the Council.
- E. In the event of sexual or physical abuse, two persons.

In the event the L&CC becomes aware of a criminal conviction against a member of the Council, they shall initiate an investigation into misconduct.

11.2 INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

- A. An Investigating Committee of no less than three credentialed ministers of the Council shall be appointed by the Committee on Discipline. Any member of the Committee on Discipline appointed to the Investigating Committee is disqualified from serving on the Trial Committee.

B. The Investigating Committee shall:

1. Confidentially gather all relevant facts.
2. Interview witnesses or persons knowledgeable about the circumstances of the allegations.
3. Provide written notification to the accused that an investigation into allegations is being conducted and invite the accused to be interviewed by the Investigating Committee.
4. Hold confidentially all information obtained, whether in fact charges are or are not filed as a result of its investigation.

11.3 INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE REPORT

- A. The Investigating Committee shall prepare a written report, including a resolution exonerating the accused or preferring charges to be adopted by the Committee on Discipline. The chairman of the Committee on Discipline shall notify the accused in writing of the resolution adopted by the Committee on Discipline within five calendar days.
1. If charges are preferred, the report of the Investigating Committee shall state the charges, the type of offense(s) of which the accused is alleged to be guilty, and the specifications of what the accused is alleged to have done.
 2. The report shall also contain at least two names of the Investigating Committee whom the said committee has selected to present evidence to the Committee on Discipline during trial. These committee members shall not act as prosecutors, but shall serve to present the evidence gathered, and are henceforth called presenters in this document.
- B. The report of the Investigating Committee shall outline the course of the investigation and become a part of the Committee on Discipline confidential files.

11.4 NOTIFICATION OF THE COMPLAINANT AND THE ACCUSED OF CHARGES AND TRIAL

- A. The chairman of the Committee on Discipline shall, within five calendar days of the adoption of charges, notify, in writing, the complainant and the accused of:
1. The exact charges and specifications.
 2. The date, time, and place of trial with a directive for the accused to appear. The date for trial shall be no sooner than 30 days and no later than 120 days from notification to the accused.
 3. The date, time, and place of trial with an invitation to the complainant to appear at the trial to give his/her testimony.
 4. The suspension of the accused's document and its privileges pending the outcome of his trial on the charges preferred. The minister shall thereupon immediately suspend all ministerial activity and if he refuses to do so, his right to appeal shall be forfeited and may lead to the revocation of his ministerial document.
 5. The right of the complainant and the accused to choose a credentialed minister of the Council to act as counsel in their behalf during the trial, and that no counsel who is not a member of the Council will be permitted.
 6. The provision that at the request of the accused, a parliamentarian will be provided to attend the trial proceedings.
 7. That no communication or contact between the accused, the complainant and any witnesses is to take place until the proceedings are concluded.

- B. The chairman shall keep a copy of all notifications along with written confirmations of receipt.
- C. On the trial date, the trial shall proceed with or without the complainant or the accused, unless the accused has previously requested a postponement in writing for cause acceptable to the Committee on Discipline. In such case, the Committee on Discipline shall choose a new trial date at its convenience within 30 days.
- D. The Committee on Discipline may suspend the trial upon the surrender of his ministerial document by the accused or the withdrawal of the charges by the complainant, unless the seriousness of the alleged offense(s) demands resolution by trial.

11.5 TRIAL PROCEDURES

- A. The chairman of the Committee on Discipline shall identify all parties present, including any parliamentarian requested by the accused or the Committee on Discipline; the recording secretary for the proceedings; any credentialed minister the accused may have chosen as counsel for his defense; members of the Investigating Committee; the members of the Committee on Discipline (who serve as the Trial Committee), and the accused.
- B. All parties present other than the above shall be excused from the proceedings, and the meeting declared to be an executive session and the proceedings confidential.
- C. The chairman shall notify all parties present that no recording of the proceedings is allowed, and that only the approved minutes of the proceedings taken by the recording secretary will be allowed.
 - 1. Notes may be taken by the Trial Committee but must be destroyed at the close of the trial after deliberations to determine guilt or innocence.
 - 2. The minutes of the trial shall be read and approved at the close of the trial in the presence of the accused, prior to the deliberation by the Trial Committee of the evidence to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused.
 - 3. The accused shall be excused during committee deliberations deciding guilt or innocence.
- D. The chairman shall notify the members of the Trial Committee that they may not make comments nor ask questions during the proceedings. Questions by Trial Committee members shall be submitted in writing to the chairman.
- E. The chairman shall notify the presenters, the accused, and the counsel of the accused, of their right to appeal any ruling of the chair to the full Trial Committee.
- F. The chairman shall again announce the names of and identify the presenters of the charges and specifications.
- G. The chairman shall enquire of the accused whether he has counsel to assist him, and if so, to name and introduce his counsel.
- H. The chairman shall instruct the accused that he may plead either “guilty” or “not guilty,” and that a plea of “no contest” is not admissible.
- I. The chairman shall inquire of the accused how he pleads—guilty, or not guilty—reading the charge(s) and specification(s), one charge and one specification at a time, and enquire after each reading whether the accused pleads guilty or not guilty of that charge or specification.
- J. Having heard the pleas of the accused to each charge and specification, the chairman shall direct the secretary to read the charges and specifications with the plea

entered for each, and inquire of the accused whether the pleas are accurately recorded, changing the record if necessary.

K. The trial shall proceed hearing only the portions to which a “not guilty” plea has been entered.

1. If a “guilty” plea has been entered on all counts, the chairman shall ask the accused whether he has a closing statement he wishes to make, after which the accused and his counsel shall be excused.
2. A guilty plea on all counts signals the trial to move directly to the determination of penalty.

L. If a “not guilty” plea has been entered on any count, instructions for trial on that count shall be given by the chairman as follows:

1. An opening statement is to be made by the presenters pertaining to the charge(s) and specification(s) to which a “not guilty” plea has been entered.
2. An opening statement is to be made by the accused (or by his counsel) if the accused so chooses.
3. Testimony shall be given by the presenters of the evidence gathered by the Investigating Committee, as well as testimony by any witnesses called by the presenters.
4. Testimony shall be given by the accused and/or his counsel, as well as testimony by any witnesses called by the accused or his counsel.
5. Rebuttal testimony, and recall of witnesses for further testimony if needed, shall be permitted.
6. Closing arguments by the presenters shall be heard.
7. Closing arguments by the defense shall be heard.
8. Witnesses may be either members or non-members of the Conference.
9. Neither members nor non-members can be compelled to testify for either the presenters or the defense.
10. The accused and witnesses shall be requested to remain available on immediate call should the trial committee need to ask them to reappear for clarifications.
11. The accused, his counsel, any witnesses, and persons other than the Trial Committee and recording secretary shall be excused from the hearings as the Trial Committee deliberates the guilt or innocence of the accused on each count.

M. Having read the above procedures, the chairman shall ask if clarifications need to be made. Thereupon, he shall proceed to follow those steps for the trial.

N. The trial having been completed, the chairman shall dismiss all but the recording secretary and the Trial Committee.

1. The chairman shall state the question on the finding as to guilt or innocence on each count.
2. Having read the charges singly, the chairman shall, after each charge, read the specifications relating to that charge and have recorded a vote on each specification; and after voting on all specifications of that charge, if guilty on any specification, then a vote on the charge shall be recorded.

O. As to specifications, a majority vote shall find the accused guilty of that specification.

P. As to charges, a 2/3 vote shall find the accused guilty.

1. A specification or charge can be amended in light of facts brought out in the trial, but not in such a way as to find the accused guilty of a charge for which he was not on trial.
 2. Anything brought to light during the trial which would justify a charge not contained in the charges included as part of the trial, if acted on, must be done so by initiating such a charge in a completely separate action as outlined in these provisions.
- Q. Upon the completion of the trial and decision by the trial committee on each count, all but the trial committee and the recording secretary having been excused, the committee shall proceed to the determination of penalty.
1. If the accused is found guilty, a member of the trial committee may move an appropriate penalty.
 2. The motion is debatable and amendable.
 3. Voting shall be by ballot.
- R. The accused and his counsel shall be asked to return to the trial room and shall be informed of the decisions of the trial committee.

11.6 PENALTIES WHICH MAY BE ADMINISTERED BY THE TRIAL COMMITTEE

- A. The committee may suspend any document held by the accused if found guilty. The suspension must be for a specified time, upon completion of which the rights of the accused are fully restored.
1. A suspension may include certain requirements prior to reinstatement, such as counseling, further education, or restitution.
 - a. Having completed the requirements, the accused shall submit evidence of his compliance to the chairman of the Committee on Discipline, who shall circulate a motion to the Committee to lift the suspension at the end of the suspension period.
 - b. Failure to complete the said requirements within the specified time of suspension automatically extends the period of suspension until the requirements have been met.
 2. A majority vote is required for suspension and the imposition of requirements for reinstatement.
- B. The committee may reduce a credential to a license by a 2/3 vote.
- C. The committee may revoke a license or credential by a 2/3 vote.

11.7 APPEALS

The suspension, reduction, or revocation of documentation by the Committee on Discipline may be appealed to an Appeals Committee appointed by the Council President and consisting of three Credentialed members of the Council who are not members of the License & Credentials Committee or of the Investigating Committee.

- A. The appeal may be initiated only by the accused.
- B. The appeal must be written and submitted to the Council president no more than 30 days after the trial decision.
- C. The appeal shall state the action being appealed and what redress is being sought, whether reinstatement or lifting of suspension and/or attendant requirements.

- D. The appeal shall be worded as a resolution with a preface setting forth the reasons why the decisions of the Committee on Discipline should be set aside or amended.
- E. The chairman of the Committee on Discipline shall be notified of the appeal immediately upon its receipt by the Council president.
 - 1. The chairman of the Committee on Discipline shall appoint three members of the trial committee to respond to questions by members of the Appeals Committee during hearing of the appeal.
 - 2. An appeal shall automatically open the confidential minutes of the trial for consideration by the Appeals Committee, which may hear the appeal and discussions of the appeal only in executive session.
 - 3. The confidential minutes of the trial shall be brought to the Appeals Committee hearing for consideration during the appeal.
 - 4. By making or allowing the appeal, the accused agrees to the provisions for opening the confidential files of the trial for discussion during the hearing of the appeal.
- F. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and must be reported to the accused, to the chairman of the Committee on Discipline, and to the President of the council within seven days following the appeals hearing.
 - 1. By a 2/3 vote, the Appeals Committee may amend or revoke the decisions of the Committee on Discipline, including expunging from all records the proceedings of the Committee on Discipline, as pertaining to the trial in question.
 - 2. By a majority vote, the Appeals Committee may reduce the penalty prescribed by the Committee on Discipline.

12. MINISTERIAL ETHICS

Exhibit "A"

REASONS FOR ETHICS:

One of the purposes of the Ministerial Council is to uphold Bible truth as it is contained in Scripture and in our Statement of Faith; and by this process, maintain doctrinal unity within the fellowship of the Church. The ethics of the ministry pertaining to doctrinal issues is only maintained by refraining from the dissemination of teachings, including preaching beliefs which are in conflict, with the established doctrines set forth by the Council.

A spirit of fair dealing, brotherly love, cooperation, and courtesy should govern relations among members of the Council. Therefore, it is the duty of each minister to:

- A. Uphold and practice the ethics, policies, and ministerial standards of the North American Ministerial Council.
- B. Protect the General Conference and its Ministerial Council against fraud and misrepresentation or any unethical practice.
- C. Sign the pledge offered by the L&CC to maintain these ethics.
- D. Conduct himself according to the following personal ministerial ethics.

MY MINISTERIAL CODE OF ETHICS

I am a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, called of God to proclaim the unsearchable riches of His love. Therefore, I voluntarily adopt the following ethical and Biblical



principles in order that through dedication and self-discipline I may set a more worthy example for those whom I seek to lead and serve.

12.1. MY PERSONAL CONDUCT

- A. I will cultivate my devotional life and spiritual life by my commitment to reading the Bible, meditation, and prayer.
- B. I will endeavor to keep physically and emotionally fit for my work.
- C. I will be fair to my family and will endeavor to give them the time and consideration to which they are entitled.
- D. I will endeavor to live within my income and will not carelessly leave unpaid debts behind me. I will be honest in my stewardship of money.
- E. I will strive to grow in my ministry through comprehensive reading and careful study and by attending our councils and conventions.
- F. I will not plagiarize (using another person's material without their permission). When I get permission to use it, I will give them written credit.
- G. I will seek to be Christlike in my personal attitudes and conduct toward all people regardless of race, class, creed, or politics.
- H. While having the personal right and freedom to choose my political party, or choose none, I should be willing to speak out against immoral, ungodly and unbiblical practices. I will refrain from the promotion of and/or degrading of any political party platforms, to those I serve from the pulpit. This includes any "political jokes" shared in the church.
- I. In counseling with others, I am committed to not counsel alone with a member of the opposite sex. Knowing those inherent dangers in this area of my counseling, I will arrange to have another person present with me, or nearby within observational distance.

12.2 MY RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH WHICH I SERVE

- A. I will dedicate my time and energy to my Christian ministry and will maintain strict standards of discipline in the use of my time and in my work.
- B. In my preaching, I will exalt the Bible and will be true to my convictions by proclaiming the same in love.
- C. I will maintain a Christian attitude toward other members of the church staff and will not expect of them, things which are unreasonable.
- D. I will not seek special gratuities.
- E. In my pastoral calling, I will have respect for every home I enter for I am a representative of Christ and the Church.
- F. In my administrative and pastoral duties, I will be impartial so no one can truthfully say that I am a pastor of only one group or family in the church.
- G. I will strive with evangelistic zeal to build up my church. But I will maintain a Christian attitude, at all times, toward members and ministers of other religious bodies.
- H. I will not violate confidences that come to me as a minister, except where mandated by law. Pastors are regularly entrusted with personal and private matters from members and or non-members and violation of that trust will weaken the quality of pastoral care. This pastoral confidentiality must also extend to a confidential matter shared with us by another minister. The key word here is TRUST.
- I. I will strive to strengthen the congregation when leaving a pastorate regardless of the circumstances.

12.3 MY RELATIONSHIP TO FELLOW MINISTERS

- A. I will refuse to participate in unfair competition with other ministers in order to secure a pulpit or place of honor.
- B. I will refrain from speaking disparagingly about the work of either my predecessor or my successor.
- C. I will refrain from frequent visits to a former field and if, in exceptional cases, I am called back for a funeral or wedding, I will accept such invitations only after receiving the present pastor's approval, and will accept such invitations only with the understanding that I will request that the resident minister be invited to participate in the service.
- D. I will never embarrass my successor by meddling in the affairs of the church I formerly served.
- E. AND, in this regard, I will not enter any local pastor's area to do any type of counseling, ministerial and or pastoral service without first seeking that local pastor's approval. This includes preaching, baptisms, counseling and or weddings. I will also not enter another District to perform these services without the approval of that District's Superintendent.
- F. I will be courteous to any predecessor of mine when he returns to the field and will be thoughtful of any retired minister.
- G. I will, upon my retirement from the active ministry, give my pastor loyal support.
- H. I will not gossip about other ministers, to another of our ministers. Further, I will refrain from gossiping about one of our ministers to anybody, including my local church and my own family.
- I. I will hold in sincere respect any minister whose work is well done, regardless of the size or the nature of the field he serves.
- J. I will consider all ministers my co-laborers in the work of Christ and even though I may differ with them, I shall respect their Christian earnestness and sincerity.

12.4 MY RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY

- A. I will strive to be respectful in all my relationships to the community but will never lower my ideals so-as-to appear "a good fellow."
- B. I will not be a party to funeral or marriage rackets.
- C. I will be considerate of the working hours of business for professional men and women and will not consume their time with unimportant matters.
- D. I consider that my first duty to my community is to be a conscientious pastor and leader of my own congregation, but I will not use this fact as an easy excuse to escape reasonable responsibilities that the community calls upon me to assume.

12.5. MY RELATIONSHIP TO MY COMMUNION

- A. I will at-all-times recognize that I am a party of a fellowship that has made large contributions to my church, my education, and my ministry. In view of this fact, I acknowledge a debt of loyalty to my communion (The General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)) and will strive to fulfill my obligations by cooperating in its efforts to extend the Kingdom of God.

Source: *Called—In Honor*, by Charles B. Tupper,
[St. Louis, Missouri, Bethany Press, 1949]

12.6 VIOLATION OF THESE, OUR NAMC ETHICS

Violation of these ethics may be referred to our License and Credentials Committee for their attention and possible processing of counseling and or discipline.

12.7 LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE CONFERENCE

- A. Entering into legal action against the Conference, or any of its agencies, districts, another minister or a congregation is considered unethical. Evidence that a minister has taken such action may result in his immediate suspension.

EXHIBIT "B"

MY MINISTERIAL PLEDGE

I acknowledge that I have studied the doctrines of the church, as presented in the Statement of Faith of the Church of God (Seventh Day). I pledge to uphold the doctrines of the Church of God (Seventh Day). I will faithfully represent the doctrines of the church throughout my ministry.

I pledge to faithfully support the priorities and programs of the Church of God (Seventh Day) with my prayers, tithe and offerings as taught in its doctrine and prescribed in its bylaws. And as a minister of the church, I will promote financial stewardship to the membership I serve in conformity with the church's polity.

I pledge to attend and participate in the meetings of the General Conference and the North American Ministerial Council as my resources permit, and be personally involved in the programs of the church, as is appropriate.

I pledge that in the event my belief should change and I can no longer live up to my ministerial pledge to represent the theology, ethics and polity of the Church of God (Seventh Day), I will surrender my Ministerial License voluntarily, without creating strife or division within the membership that I serve, or among my ministerial colleagues.

I understand that to fail to do so shall result in the immediate revocation of my license.

I understand that my Ministerial License will expire in five years from the date of its issuance, and as a condition for its renewal I must obtain 75 hours of continuing education, as prescribed by the NAMC. Therefore, I pledge to diligently obtain such continuing education for the renewal of my license.

Of my own free will, without coercion or reservation, I sign this application for a Ministerial License with the Church of God (Seventh Day), and its pledges. I attest that all statements contained in it are true to the best of my knowledge.

In signing this application and in supplying all the documentation required by it, I hereby apply for a Ministerial License with the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Bylaws of the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation

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Bylaws of the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation

Preamble

The Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation statements of Vision, Purpose, Mission, and Authority.

Vision

The Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation is a fellowship of churches and conferences, connected across this world, yet united in its diverse gifts, talents, cultures, and callings. Its corporate identity in its commitment to the centrality of Christ and the observance of the Ten Commandments including the seventh day Sabbath (Rev 14:12) as it increasingly reflects the image of Christ's Body (1 Cor 12:12) and thereby achieving a greater vision than the sum of its individual parts.

Purpose

The purpose of the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation is to facilitate the development, unity and growth of its churches and conferences around the world, forming them into a cohesive and vibrant Christ-community. The Federation joyfully fulfills its unique role in the greater Body of Christ, and in the world, through the transformative power of the gospel, teaching biblical truth and its application, until Jesus returns.

Mission

The mission of the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation is to achieve, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, its stated vision and purpose through an administrative structure that is defined by Godly leadership, measurable goals and objectives, clear communication, a sustainable financial model, with innovation and creativity. In an environment of trust, mutual accountability, and a commitment to assist, encourage, and understand one another, the Federation prayerfully embraces Jesus' heart for the church He is building—in reconciling lost humanity to God, through Jesus' blood for the glory of the Father to the ends of the earth.

Statement of Authority

With Christ as its head (Colossians 1:18), with the Bible as its sole authority for doctrine and Christian conduct (2 Timothy 3:16), with its commitment to walking a healthy balance between autonomy and interdependence (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:2-5), and with its bylaws and organizing documents, the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation retains the right to function as a global ecclesiastical entity, to seek and protect the spiritual wellbeing of its members, to conduct the business of the Church, including the faithful stewardship of finances, to protect itself against liability and civil interference, and to protect its membership and material interests.



Charter Members

National churches, conferences or councils which were affiliated with the Church of God (Seventh Day) with principal offices in Denver, Colorado, USA, and participated in the organization of the International Federation, herein to referred to as the Federation, in October 1978, and who have actively participated in the Federation sessions since its inception through November 2023. They are: United States and Canada, Mexico, Jamaica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Trinidad and Tobago, England, Philippines, and Australia.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation, hereinafter referred to as the Federation.

The Federation is an association of conferences and councils united to achieve the Object stated in Article II.

ARTICLE II

Object

The object of the Federation shall be to coordinate the evangelistic effort of the Church at the international level and to promote doctrinal unity among its membership.

ARTICLE III

General Assembly

The highest authority within the Federation's organizational structure is its membership in session, which shall be called the General Assembly.

Each conference or council shall maintain independence and control over its own internal affairs.

ARTICLE IV

Membership

SECTION 1.

Membership Qualification:

Membership in the Federation shall be open to any church, association of churches, national conference or council who agrees with the object, theology, and polity of the Federation as stated in these Bylaws.

SECTION 2

Members:

Those conferences or councils who were charter members in 1978 and those granted membership in the Federation by majority vote of the Federation in session after 1978 and have remained active, and those granted membership in the Federation by a majority vote of the General Assembly in session starting in November 2023.

SECTION 3

Issuance of Membership:

Application for membership in the Federation shall be made to the Board of the Federation at least six months prior to the next session of the General Assembly. Upon determining that the applicant (1) understands the polity of the Federation, (2) will provide financial support for the Federation, and (3) understands and supports the theology of the Federation, the Board shall issue a Provisional Membership to the applicant entitling it to attend the next session of the General Assembly without the privilege of deliberation or voting. The Board shall present the Provisional Membership to the General Assembly with its recommendation that the Federation issue Full Membership to the Provisional Member by a majority vote.

Provisional Membership expires in five years.

SECTION 4.

Membership Review and Status:

- A. Membership Review - The Board of the Federation shall make a quadrennial review of the membership status of each member of the Federation to determine who is active or inactive. A report of their findings shall be presented to the next General Assembly in session for its consideration.
- B. Active Member – Any church, association of churches, national conference or council that:
 - 1. Subscribes to, and advocates the theology contained in the Statement of Faith, Article XI, of these Bylaws and their interpretation as adopted by the Federation thus promoting the doctrinal unity of the Federation.
 - 2. Cooperates with the polity of the Federation by their attendance, regular international and national communication and annual financial support of the programs and missions of the Federation.
- C. Inactive Member - any church, association of churches, national conference or council whose membership status has been reduced by a majority vote of the General Assembly to that of a Provisional Member because of their failure to be:
 - 1. Diligent in attendance of General Assembly sessions.
 - 2. Active in communication with the international structure of the Federation.
 - 3. Willing to press toward doctrinal unity through the consideration of the Federation's Statement of Faith or its interpretation of the same.
 - 4. Supportive of the finances and the evangelistic mission of the Federation.
- D. At any time that a member is considered to have become inactive, it shall be the responsibility of the Board of the Federation to notify the member in question, in writing, that it is being considered as inactive for reasons set forth in paragraph C above. The member who has been so notified by the Board of the Federation of their apparent inactivity must be diligent to work with the Board of the Federation to correct their deficiencies. In the event that a member fails to correct its deficiencies, the Board, by a majority vote, shall recommend to the General Assembly that the membership in question be reduced to that of a Provisional Member.
- E. Reinstatement - An Inactive Member status, determined by the General Assembly in session, may be reinstated to Active Membership by a majority vote of the General Assembly in session.
- F. Removal – An Inactive Member may be removed by a majority vote of the General Assembly in session, by recommendation of the Board.

SECTION 5.

Membership Zones:

Membership of the Federation shall be organized into world zones as set forth in the Standing Rules.

SECTION 6.

Deliberation and Voting:

Each member of the Federation shall be entitled to one Representative Delegate who shall deliberate and vote in the quadrennial sessions of the General Assembly on behalf of their national churches(es). Board members of the Federation are ineligible to be selected as Representative Delegates. Qualifications for additional non-voting delegates shall be set forth by the Federation in its Standing Rules.

ARTICLE V

Federation Leadership and Their Duties

SECTION 1.

Federation Officers and Board:

- A. The President shall preside over sessions of the General Assembly, its Board, and of the Executive Team; hold Board members and Executive Team responsible to carry out their assignments; and supervise Federation Representatives at the Zone level.
- B. The Secretary shall record the minutes for meetings of the General Assembly, its Board, and Executive Team; duplicate and distribute minutes to their respective memberships in a timely manner; make an annual report of the work of the Federation to the leadership of member conferences; notify members of the time, place, and agenda of the next General Assembly session, and distribute all necessary materials.
- C. The Treasurer shall keep a faithful record of all funds and properties of the Federation, receive and disburse funds at the direction of the Federation and/or its Board, and make reports of the same in a timely manner to the members of the Federation.
- D. There shall be four additional board members.
- E. They shall serve as a policy board and exercise all the authority of the Federation when the General Assembly is not in session, except to amend these bylaws.
- F. Deliberate and vote in the General Assembly.

SECTION 2.

Executive Team:

The Executive Team shall ensure implementation of the policies approved by the Federation Board and shall consist of the President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Executive Director (non-voting).



SECTION 3.

Executive Director:

- A. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Executive Team and the approval of the Federation Board. He shall direct the daily operations of the Federation under the direction of the President.
- B. In consultation with the President and with the approval of the Executive Team, the Executive Director shall appoint and direct operations team members to support daily operations.

SECTION 4.

Federation Representatives at the Zone Level

- A. The Federation Representatives shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Executive Team and with the approval of the Federation Board and the recommendation of the national conference to which he belongs. Under the President's direction, they shall represent and provide oversight for the Federation at the Zone level, liaising with the Presidents of each Conference within the Zone.
- B. This position is for 4 four years, and candidates may be reappointed. Appointments shall be made no later than 60 days from the end of the current General Assembly in session, and continue through to the end of the next General Assembly in session.
- C. Support assistants may be utilized within each zone to help implement the objectives of the Federation in collaboration with each Conference within the Zone.
- D. Zone support assistants shall be identified by the Representative to the Zone. The Representative shall submit candidates for each position to the Executive Director who shall appoint one of the two candidates in consultation with the President and approval of the Executive Team.
- E. Zone support assistants shall implement approved directives under the supervision of the Federation Representative at the Zone level.

SECTION 5.

Federation Representatives at the Conference Level

- A. The President of each conference shall serve as the "Federation Representative" in their respective conferences. Should the President of the conference be an officer of the Federation, the conference shall appoint an alternate delegate to represent the conference to the General Assembly.
- B. The Representative shall utilize support assistants within their conference at each administrative level, ensuring that the objectives of the Federation are achieved, and is responsible for implementing a communication network between the Conference and its local churches.

ARTICLE VI

Nominating Committee

SECTION 1.

Selection:

A Nominating Committee of four delegates shall be selected as follows:

- A. Two shall be elected by the General Assembly in session.



B. Two shall be named by the Board of the Federation after they take office.

C. Vacancies shall be by the appointment of the Board of the Federation.

SECTION 2.

Term of Office:

The Nominating Committee shall serve from the time of its selection until it reports to the next General Assembly in session and the election of the Board is held.

SECTION 3.

The Nominating Committee shall interview each nominee to:

A. Acquaint the candidate with the duties of the office for which he is being nominated.

B. Determine the candidate's interest and ability to serve the respective office and obtain his consent to serve if elected.

SECTION 4.

The Board shall communicate with the Nominating Committee at least six months before the meeting of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE VII

Election of the Board

SECTION 1.

Election Procedure:

The Board of the Federation shall be elected in the following manner:

A. Candidates shall be limited to those offered by the Nominating Committee.

B. The Nominating Committee shall offer a minimum of two candidates for each position.

C. The Nominating Committee shall announce its initial slate of candidates to the Federation or General Assembly at least 24 hours prior to the election.

D. The election shall be by ballot vote and shall take place only after the nominees have briefly expressed their vision and plans for the office to which they have been nominated.

E. It is preferred that the Board represents different zones.

F. A majority vote shall be required to elect each member of the Board.

SECTION 2.

Term of Office:

The term of office shall be four years. Terms shall begin at the close of the General Assembly session in which Board members are elected, and shall continue through the next session of the General Assembly or until their successors are elected. Board members may succeed themselves.

SECTION 3.

Filling a Vacancy:

The Board may fill any vacancy that may occur on the Federation Board. The interim

replacement of the President, Secretary or Treasurer may be appointed by the Board from among its members by a majority vote to serve until the next General Assembly. Vacancies that occur among remaining Board members may be filled by majority vote of the current Board from among the Federation membership.

ARTICLE VIII

Meetings

SECTION 1.

Regular meetings of the General Assembly shall be held every four years on even-numbered years. The time and place of the session shall be established by the Board of the Federation and announced one year in advance.

SECTION 2.

Special meetings of the General Assembly may be called by the Board of the Federation or by petition of member conferences or councils whose combined delegations constitute a quorum of two-thirds of the members. The time and place of a special meeting must be announced six months in advance of the meeting. Business conducted in special meetings shall be confined to that which is stated in the call. Business of an emergency nature not stated in the call may be considered by a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly in session.

SECTION 3.

A majority of the delegates to the General Assembly shall constitute a quorum in all matters of business, except for amendments to Article XI which shall require a quorum of two-thirds of the delegates.

ARTICLE IX

Finances

SECTION 1.

- A. There is an expectation that each conference shall financially support the Federation. Each conference shall make a semi-annual contribution to the Federation. The Board of the Federation and each individual conference shall work together with the goal that each conference contribute at least 1.5% of the total contributions (tithes and undesignated offerings) it receives from its local churches and membership, taking into consideration the financial capacity of each national conference.
- B. Each conference shall collect a special offering at least one time each year for the international work of the church and send it to the Federation prior to the end of the calendar year.

SECTION 2.

The Executive Team of the Federation may request additional assistance from each conference to support victims of natural disasters or any other emergency.

SECTION 3.

The Executive Team shall prepare an annual budget and submit it to the Board for approval.

ARTICLE X

Communication

There shall be an effective communication network maintained within the Federation between its international, conference, and local church levels as set forth in the Standing Rules.

ARTICLE XI

Statement of Faith

SECTION 1. The Scriptures

We believe the Scriptures, contained within the Old and New Testaments, are inspired by God, inerrant in the original writing, and the only infallible rule by which human conduct and religious beliefs and practices should be determined.

SECTION 2. God, the Father

We believe in one God, the Eternal Spirit, and Creator, Preserver and Ruler of the universe, who is infinite in wisdom, holiness and love. By His own initiative God offers salvation to everyone and is worthy of our love, reverence, and obedience.

SECTION 3. Jesus, the Son

We believe in Jesus, the Messiah and Savior, only begotten Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin. We affirm His pre-existence, incarnation, sinless life, death as a substitutionary atonement, entombment for three full days and nights, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, present work as Mediator and High Priest and His personal, visible, imminent, premillennial return to rule on earth as Judge and King.

SECTION 4. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the manifestation and power which proceeds from the Father and the Son to regenerate, sanctify, teach, guide and preserve all believers. Obedience to God and "fruit of the Spirit" are evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

SECTION 5. Man and Sin

We believe that man was created sinless in the image of God. Through Adam's disobedience, man became a sinner by nature and by choice and thereby incurred sin's penalty, physical death and ultimately, if in an unsaved condition, eternal death (annihilation).

SECTION 6. Man and Death

We believe that physical death is a state of unconsciousness for all persons, righteous and wicked, a state which will remain unchanged until their resurrections. The righteous will receive eternal life and the wicked will suffer annihilation.

SECTION 7. Man and Salvation

We believe that man is saved from eternal death (annihilation) solely by the grace of God through faith, apart from human merit, works or ceremonies. Christ's death is given as payment for sins, and is offered to all who will accept it.

SECTION 8. The Church

We believe the Church of God, consisting of baptized believers who keep the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God, is of divine origin under the Lordship of Christ and exists universally and locally for the preaching of the gospel, for the nurture and fellowship of the believers and for service to the human race.

SECTION 9. Church Ordinances

We believe Christ prescribed two ordinances for the church which confirm faith in Him. 1) Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's death to sin and new birth in Christ. 2) Lord's Supper as an annual memorial of Christ's death symbolizes the believer's continued union with the Savior. Footwashing as an act of humility accompanies the Lord's Supper.

SECTION 10. The Ten Commandments

We believe the Ten Commandments, including the true seventh-day Sabbath, existing from creation and included in both the old and new covenant, constitute the basic code of conduct for all mankind. They are to be observed today, as an expression of one's love to God and fellowman.

SECTION 11. Christian Living

We believe the Christian, in keeping with his confession of faith in Christ, is called to a holy and godly life in thought, word and deed. This is exemplified in one's interaction with others, beginning in the home, which God established with the institution of marriage, and extending to the church and community. It is because a Christian has been redeemed, not in order to be redeemed, that he should: 1) reflect that his body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit" by his choice of entertainment, dress, conduct, personal habits and diet which includes eating only those meats designated by the Bible as "clean" for food. 2) respond to the physical and spiritual needs of humanity by relieving suffering, hunger, ignorance, loneliness and by witnessing for the gospel. Accordingly, a Christian's participation in warfare is contrary to his humanitarian calling. 3) serve God "in spirit and truth" by refraining from religious practices and celebrations which intermix Christianity with paganism. 4) support the church's mission by active involvement and financial stewardship of tithes and offerings. 5) maintain his relationship with God through prayer, fasting, Bible study, worship and obedience.

SECTION 12. Prophecy and Second Coming of Christ

We believe that Bible prophecy identifies certain religious, social, and political events and trends, including the rebirth of Israel, which precede and point to the imminent return of Christ, to establish His kingdom on earth, culminating in the eternal Kingdom of God. The fulfilment of Bible prophecy serves to strengthen the faith of the people of God.

ARTICLE XII

Publication of doctrines, practices, and policies

Each national conference or council may amplify and/or supplement Article XI by publishing and distributing its own listing of such doctrines, practices and policies as are needed to translate and facilitate the spirit and intent of Article XI into the particular culture and life-setting of its people.

ARTICLE XIII

Ministerial Guidelines

The Federation Board shall establish basic ministerial guidelines to be set forth in the Standing Rules.

ARTICLE XIV

Constitutional Guidelines

The Federation Board shall establish basic constitutional guidelines to assist member conferences to align with the Federation Bylaws. The guidelines shall be set forth in the Standing Rules.

ARTICLE XV

Mediation

The Federation shall provide conflict mediation for member conferences as set forth in the Standing Rules.

ARTICLE XVI

Committees

SECTION 1.

The Board of the Federation shall appoint an agenda committee. An outline of the program along with the subjects to be discussed during the session of the General Assembly shall be sent to the membership of the Federation at least six months prior to the session.

SECTION 2.

A Registration Committee of three shall be appointed by the Board of the Federation. The Registration Committee shall register and certify all delegates present and report on matters of a quorum to the General Assembly in session.

SECTION 3.

A Resolution Committee of five shall be appointed by the president and confirmed by the General Assembly. All business to be introduced to the General Assembly, including biblical studies, shall be submitted through this committee. Resolutions may originate with this committee.

ARTICLE XVII

Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for the Federation.

ARTICLE XVIII

Amendments

SECTION 1.

Amendments to the Bylaws:

These Bylaws, except Article XI, may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the General Assembly provided;

- A. The proposed amendment has been recommended to the Federation by a majority vote of the ministerial body of a member church, association of churches, national conference or council, or by the Board of the Federation.
- B. The wording of the proposed amendment had been distributed to the member churches of the Federation no less than two years prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.
- C. It is adopted by a two-thirds vote.

SECTION 2.

Amendment to the Statement of Faith:

Amendments may be made to Article XI, Statement of Faith in a regular or special meeting of the General Assembly provided:

- A. The proposed amendment to the Statement of Faith is recommended to the Federation by a majority vote of the ministerial body of the member conferences or councils, association of churches, national conference or council or by the Board of the Federation.
- B. The wording of the proposed amendment accompanied by a Bible study in support of the amendment has been distributed to the member conferences or councils of the Federation two years prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.

SECTION 3.

Interpretation of the Statement of Faith:

An interpretation of any of the Statements of Faith contained in Article XI, may be considered in a regular or special meeting of the General Assembly provided:

- A. It has been recommended to the Federation by a majority vote of the ministerial body of a member church or by the Board of the Federation.
- B. The wording of the proposed interpretation accompanied by a Bible study in support of the interpretation has been distributed to member churches of the Federation two years prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.
- C. It is adopted by a two-thirds vote.
- D. Statements of Faith that have been interpreted by the General Assembly in the future shall be marked with an asterisk and the interpretation shall be published as a Standing Rule in an Appendix to the Federation Bylaws.

SECTION 4.

Amendments to the Standing Rules:

The Standing Rules may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the General Assembly provided;

- A. The proposed amendment has been recommended to the Federation by a majority vote of the ministerial body of a member church, association of churches, national conference or council, or by the Board of the Federation.
- B. The wording of the proposed amendment has been distributed to the member churches of the Federation no less than three months prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.
- C. It is adopted by a majority vote.

Standing Rules of the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation

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Standing Rules of the Church of God (Seventh Day) International Federation

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Call to Order
- B. Registration Committee Report
- C. Officers' Reports
- D. Committee Reports
- E. Program
 - 1. New Business
 - 2. Biblical Discussion
 - 3. Workshops and Instructions
- F. Adjournment

II. WORLD ZONES

The membership of the Federation shall be organized into seven zones as follows:

Zone One: United States and Canada.

Zone Two: Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Zone Three: South America.

Zone Four: Asia.

Zone Five: Africa.

Zone Six: Australia and the Pacific Rim.

Zone Seven: Europe, Russia, the Baltic States, and the Middle East

III. REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES

Members of the Federation shall be entitled to one Representative Delegate who shall deliberate and vote on its behalf. Additional delegates may be sent as alternates at the discretion of a member church but will not have voting privileges in the business of the Federation. A Representative Delegate may yield his time in discussion of business to any alternate delegate representing his national church(es).

IV. SEATING OBSERVERS

Ministers of the Church of God who are not members of the Federation may be admitted as observers by registering with the registration committee and paying the registration fee.



The G. C. Ministries of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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General Conference Ministries

The departmental work and programs of the Church are known collectively as the General Conference Ministries of the Church of God (Seventh Day). The Conference President is responsible for the supervision and development of the work of these ministries.

The General Conference President appoints Directors to serve the agencies of the G.C. Ministries work. The G.C. Ministries promote the objectives of the Church of God through the development and implementation of evangelistic, pastoral, educational, and benevolent programs. Most of these programs are divided among agencies established for the purpose of carrying out specific assignments of the Board.

G.C. Ministries includes: Missions Ministries, Publications Ministries, Artios Christian College.

Missions Ministries

The decision has been made by the board of directors, and implemented by the General Conference administration, to expand our efforts pursuant to our articles of incorporation in “promoting the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the foundation of our faith.” Historically, only Missions Abroad, with its foreign missions focus, was seen as a specific mission ministry toward this end. We recognize that our mission to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ is not merely a foreign endeavor but an all-pervasive outreach. Missions Ministries is now a multifaceted ministry with these areas of focus.

Missions Abroad provides an avenue through which churches and individuals can do ministry in foreign countries by:

1. Establishing and maintaining missions and sister churches outside North America.
2. Providing literature, training, and salaries for workers in foreign fields.
3. Distributing Bibles, constructing churches and medical clinics, etc.

Church Planting assists districts and local churches in membership growth by:

1. Planting new Churches of God (Seventh Day) within the United States and Canada.
2. Encouraging and developing existing fellowships, specifically focusing on G.C. congregations seeking growth.
3. Assisting in development of healthy congregations prepared to plant missions of their own.

Home Missions assists local churches and missions in consultation and coordination with the districts:

1. In bringing the lost into a relationship with Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord of their lives through evangelism training and practice.
2. In bringing new believers into a vibrant relationship with other believers as disciples of Jesus Christ within the missions and churches of the General Conference.
3. In bringing our churches and missions into a higher level of cooperation within the General Conference, continually moving toward the goal of reaching out to the lost and repeating this reproductive process until our Lord's return.
4. In challenging the Church to spiritual renewal.

Special Managed Project Fund

GC Disaster Relief Fund works through the national and international infrastructure of the Church of God (Seventh Day), whenever possible, to meet the varied needs of disaster victims. This fund provides basic food stuffs, temporary housing, community feeding projects, and construction projects like churches, individual homes, and bridge and road construction. The fund falls under the auspices of the director of Missions Ministries.



Publications Ministries

Bible Advocate Press

The purpose of Publications Ministries is to produce and distribute gospel literature for the edification of Christians and for the evangelization of those who do not know Christ.

The Church of God publishing work began in August 1863, with the first issue of *The Hope of Israel*, the forerunner of the present *Bible Advocate* magazine. Soon thereafter, gospel booklets and tracts were produced, as well as several other Church publications. After a short time in Michigan, the publishing work was moved to Iowa, then to Stanberry, Missouri, in the 1880s. Another move in 1972 brought the work to Denver, Colorado. Today the *Bible Advocate*, *Abogado de la Biblia*, and gospel literature are sent to many countries. They are online as well.

Products available from the Bible Advocate Press

Bible Advocate and *Abogado de la Biblia*

Sabbath school curriculum for adults, youth, and children

Gospel literature, printed in English and Spanish

Books

Publications online

Bible Advocate Online (baonline.org) - current issue, archive, extras, and more

Publications (publications.cog7.org) - all our printed studies and literature, including the Seekers program, now managed through Publications Ministries

Online bookstore (cog7.org/online-store/)

Now What? (nowwhat.cog7.org) - stories of hope for the unchurched

Facebook (www.facebook.com/BibleAdvocate)

Artios Christian College

Brief: Artios Christian College is the educational and ministry training arm of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

The mission of Artios Christian College is to equip leaders for a vibrant 21st Century Church. Artios accomplishes this mission through the operation of an online college for Christians who want to influence their families, churches, communities, and workplaces to more closely reflect God's heart and plan for the world of the 21st century. Artios equips Christians to be vibrant leaders -through flexible programs, affordable courses, and other focused resources that lay a foundation of biblical theology, restoration, and missional engagement. Artios makes training available to men and women across North America and throughout the world through the use of online courses and resources.

Artios serves the North American Ministerial Council, the License and Credentials Committee, and the Board of Directors in the pursuit of excellence in ministry by providing the required education for all three levels of documentation within the NAMC.

History: The Church of God has been committed to providing college-level ministerial training since 1951. This has been offered in various ways over the years:

- Midwest Theological Seminary/Midwest Bible College, Stanberry, MO (1951-1976)
- Ministerial Training Center/Summit School of Theology, Denver, CO (1976-2001)
- Ministries Training System (MTS), regional classrooms (2002-2009)
- LifeSpring School of Ministry, online and regional classrooms (2009-2016)
- Artios Christian College, online classrooms (2017-Present)

Artios Christian College continues the vital work of training men to be pastors in the Church of God (Seventh Day) and training both men and women to lead in a variety of ways in the church and world. In the spirit of MTS they continue to "take the training to the people", while pursuing the highest standards of spiritual formation, skill development, and academic rigor.

Programs: Artios Christian College offers three programs for degree-seeking students:

- Certificate of Leadership Studies - designed for individuals who have a desire to develop their understanding and practice of Christian leadership. This flexible, 28-credit program allows students to select a range of interdisciplinary courses relevant to multiple arenas of influence or choose from one of the following tracks: Biblical Instruction, Biblical Guidance, Church Administration, Family Ministry, Missional Engagement, Spiritual Formation, or Worship.
- Associate of Christian Leadership- designed for individuals who are pursuing vocational or long-term service in Christian leadership. Full-time students can complete this program in as little as one year, while part-time students can complete it in as little as three years.



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- Bachelor of Arts in Christian Leadership- a BA completion program designed for individuals who are pursuing vocational or long-term service in Christian leadership AND who already have an Associate's or Bachelor's degree from a qualified institution. Full-time students can complete this program in as little as one year, while part-time students can complete it in as little as three years.

In addition to these programs Artios Christian College facilitates the wide-ranging educational and training work of the Church of God (Seventh Day) as it seeks to equip all of the saints for the work of the ministry. To learn more about Artios Christian College visit artioscollege.org.

Statement of Faith

Church of God (Seventh Day)

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Statement of Faith

Church of God (Seventh Day)

Introduction

The Church of God (Seventh Day) endeavors to carry out the Great Commission by discipling people for the Lord Jesus Christ through evangelism and instruction from the Word of God. To assist the Church in this, the North American Ministerial Council, comprising the Church's ministerial body, has adopted the twelve statements of belief in this booklet to introduce the Church's teaching and practice. While the Church has always maintained an open creed, these statements preserve its theological heritage, and present its latest and best understanding of Scripture.

1. The Holy Bible

The Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, is God's inspired Word. Inerrant in its original writing, the Bible is the only authoritative and infallible rule of faith and conduct for humanity.

2. The Deity

The sovereign deity of the universe is God Almighty, who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. He is eternal, infinite, holy, self-existent Spirit who created, sustains, rules, redeems, and judges His creation. He is one in nature, essence and being. God is revealed in Scripture as Father and Son.

GOD THE FATHER

God the Father of whom are all things, whom no one has seen nor can see, reigns in the heavens and transcends our complete knowing. He is revealed as our loving heavenly Father by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Ultimately, God the Father will restore perfect harmony to all creation through Christ and reign eternally over the redeemed.

JESUS THE SON

Jesus Christ is God's one and only begotten Son. As begotten, not created, He shares the nature, names, and attributes of God with the Father. As Son, not Father, Jesus is subordinate to His Father in rank. From eternity, the Son was with the Father, shared the Father's glory as the pre-incarnate Word, and with Him created and sustains all things. Jesus the Christ (Messiah) was born of the virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, thus uniting two natures — human and divine. Jesus lived without sin, died as an atoning sacrifice for sin, was entombed for three days and three nights, was resurrected bodily, and ascended to His Father to serve as mediator and high priest. He reigns as Lord in heaven and will return to earth as judge and king. Now it pleases the Father that the Son is preeminent in all things and receives our worship.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the promised divine helper who proceeds from the Father and Son. The Spirit is God's presence and power in the world and indwells believers. By the Holy Spirit,



God inspired and illuminates the Scriptures; convicts and regenerates sinners; sanctifies, teaches, comforts, guides, and preserves believers; and empowers them for service. Evidences of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life are faith in Christ, obedience to God, and the spiritual fruit of love.

3. Man, Satan, Sin, and Death

Humanity was created in the image of God as sinless, but not naturally immortal. Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve yielded to the temptation of God's adversary, Satan. The Devil, capable of transforming himself into an angel of light to deceive and destroy humanity, will finally be destroyed in the lake of fire. As a result of Adam's fall, all humanity became sinners by nature and by choice. The result is spiritual separation from God, physical death in an unconscious state, and eternal death for those who do not receive salvation in Christ.

4. Man, Salvation, and Life

Sinful humanity may be saved from the penalty of eternal death and receive eternal life instead, solely by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from human merit, works, or ceremonies. Atonement for sins, with its attendant promise of eternal life, comes through Christ's death and resurrection on our behalf and is received in human experience by faith and repentance.

5. The Church

The church of God in Scripture is a spiritual body of believers who hold the faith of Jesus and keep the commandments of God. Under the lordship of Christ and the authority of His Word, the church exists universally and locally for purposes of worshipping God, preaching the gospel, nurturing believers, and serving humanity. Christians should participate in the church's mission by service to others and fellowship with believers.

6. Christian Ordinances

Christ prescribed two ordinances that confirm faith in Him: 1) water baptism, preceded by a confession of faith in Christ and repentance, represents the believer's initial union with Christ by depicting death to sin, burial by immersion in water, and rising to a Spirit-controlled life; and 2) Lord's Supper, a memorial to Christ's atoning death. Believers commemorate Christ's death by eating the bread of communion and drinking from its cup, symbols of His broken body and shed blood, thus demonstrating fellowship with our Savior until He returns. It is accompanied by the washing of feet. We observe this Supper annually in the season it was instituted and are charitable toward those who observe it at other times.

7. The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments were known and obeyed by faithful people before the law was given at Sinai. Later incorporated into the new covenant by the example and teaching of Christ, they constitute the basic moral code for humanity and are obeyed to demonstrate the believer's love for God and his fellowman.

8. The Sabbath

The seventh-day Sabbath is God's gift to humanity from creation, was written into the Ten Commandments by God's finger, kept and taught by Jesus, and observed by the apostolic church. A memorial of both creation and redemption, the Sabbath should be faithfully celebrated by believers now as a day of rest, worship, and well-doing.

9. Marriage

Marriage is an institution of God and is an exclusive lifetime union between one man and one woman for the purpose of perpetuating humanity and enriching human experience. Reflecting the bond between Christ and His church, marriage may be broken only by sexual immorality. Like the Sabbath, marriage dates to Creation week, is intrinsic to the moral law, is reformed in Christ's teachings, and finds its ultimate meaning at His return.

10. Christian Living

Christians are called to holiness in thought, word, and deed and to express faith in Christ through devotion to God and godly interaction with others. As a result — not a cause — of redemption, believers should 1) develop relationship with God through Bible reading and study, prayer, fasting, worship, and obedience; 2) relieve the physical and spiritual needs of humanity by compassionate social action and gospel witness; 3) oppose pride, envy, indolence, lust, covetousness, and other evils in the spirit; 4) refuse immoral amusements and practices such as pornography, sexual immorality, and homosexuality in the flesh; and 5) observe these Bible principles: give tithe and freewill offerings for the support of the church and its gospel ministry; eat for food only those meats the Bible describes as "clean"; regard participation in physical warfare as contrary to a Christian's humanitarian calling; avoid intermixing Christianity with extra-biblical practices, as in the common observances of Sunday, Christmas, Easter, Lent, and Halloween.

11. Prophecy

Bible prophecy preserves and strengthens a believer's hope for the Second Advent. It identifies religious, social, and political trends and events, including the rebirth of the nation of Israel, which point to the imminent return of Christ and the eventual establishment of God's eternal kingdom on earth.

12. The Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God (kingdom of heaven) is realized in three phases:

THE PRESENT KINGDOM

The spiritual kingdom of grace exists now as God rules in the lives of obedient believers. This kingdom was announced and revealed through the prophets and the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. We enter this kingdom when we turn from sin to serve God through faith in Jesus Christ.

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM OF CHRIST

Jesus will return to earth in power and glory to resurrect the righteous dead, bestow immortality and eternal life upon the resurrected and the living righteous, avenge the saints, and be glorified in them. His earthly reign of one thousand years will be a universal kingdom in which all principalities, powers, and enemies are overcome. At its conclusion, the unrighteous will be resurrected to suffer annihilation at the great white throne judgment.

THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD

God's eternal kingdom will begin when Jesus Christ, having put all enemies under His feet, turns the kingdom over to the Father. God will dwell with the redeemed in a new heaven and a new earth where no disappointment, defilement, or death can enter and where righteousness and peace will prevail forever.

