

**CHURCH OF GOD
74th INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
2012**

**CHURCH OF GOD
BOOK OF DISCIPLINE,
CHURCH ORDER,
AND GOVERNANCE**

(Pages 17-184)

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REFERENCES USED IN THIS BOOK

The **capital letter S** followed by an Arabic numeral (**S20** or **S46**, for example) identifies all major headings (Sections) in **this book**.

Under major headings identified by an S number:

Roman numerals identify subheadings. **Capital letters** identify divisions under subheadings. **Arabic numerals** identify paragraphs or numbered sections within a division.

Capital letter A as in (58th A., 1980,) means 58th General Assembly, 1980.

DF as in (DF 4) means Declaration of Faith, Article 4.

CT as in (CT 6) means Church Teaching, Number 6.

Bk.M. means Book of Minutes (1906-1917)

LAMA as in (LAMA) means Like a Mighty Army, A History of the Church of God, Definitive Edition (1996)—the Church of God history by Dr. Charles W. Conn.

In the references, **a year listed in brackets**, such as [1994], indicates some action taken by the International Executive Council or the International Executive Committee.

In the references, **numbers in parentheses**, such as (14) or (8), means Item 14 or Item 8.

Words in brackets [] indicate an editorial correction or explanation.

State Overseer as used herein may refer to the overseer of a state, states, or part of a state in the U.S.A., or to the overseer of a designated country, region or territory. Terms used may be state overseer, state/territorial overseer, or state/regional overseer.

The terms Biblical and Scriptural, as used in this book, mean, based on or consistent with the teachings of the 66 books of the Protestant Bible, Old and New Testaments.

**CHURCH OF GOD
BOOK OF DISCIPLINE,
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DECLARATION OF FAITH

CHURCH TEACHINGS

CHURCH GOVERNMENT—GENERAL

CHURCH GOVERNMENT—STATE

CHURCH GOVERNMENT—LOCAL

CHURCH GOVERNMENT—MINISTRY

CHURCH GOVERNMENT—PERSONNEL

(This Heading Only for USA)

DECLARATION OF FAITH (42nd A., 1948, pp. 31, 32)**We believe**

1. In the verbal inspiration of the Bible.
2. In one God eternally existing in three persons; namely, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
3. That Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. That Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead. That He ascended to heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father as the Intercessor.
4. That all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that repentance is commanded of God for all and necessary for forgiveness of sins.
5. That justification, regeneration, and the new birth are wrought by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.
6. In sanctification subsequent to the new birth, through faith in the blood of Christ; through the Word, and by the Holy Ghost.
7. Holiness to be God's standard of living for His people.
8. In the baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to a clean heart.
9. In speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance and that it is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost.
10. In water baptism by immersion, and all who repent should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
11. Divine healing is provided for all in the Atonement.
12. In the Lord's Supper and washing of the saints' feet.
13. In the premillennial second coming of Jesus. First, to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air. Second, to reign on the earth a thousand years.
14. In the bodily resurrection; eternal life for the righteous, and eternal punishment for the wicked.

Loyalty to Statements of Faith

We recommend that the president, board of directors, and faculty members of Lee University and all other Church of God schools, sign a contract that they will not teach, publish, or allow to be taught or published anything contrary to the Declaration of Faith, or any other established doctrine of the church (43rd A., 1950, p. 16; 54th A., 1972, p. 55).

Posting Declaration of Faith

We further recommend that a copy of the Declaration of Faith be posted in the offices of the general overseer, the general director of Publications, and every classroom [of Church of God schools] (42nd A., 1948, pp. 31, 32).

Commitment to Our Pentecostal Heritage

Our Pentecostal heritage and beliefs are increasingly scrutinized and discounted by those who seek to redefine our church in a manner which would give us an identity other than being a true Pentecostal church as found in the New Testament.

Therefore, we, the Church of God, go on record as making a renewal commitment to our Pentecostal heritage and beliefs, and to our Pentecostal statement of faith, in our Declaration of Faith, items 8 and 9:

8. In the baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to a clean heart.
9. In speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance and that it is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost (72nd A., 2008).

CHURCH OF GOD TEACHINGS

The Church of God stands for the whole Bible rightly divided. The New Testament is the only rule for government and discipline.

1. The Church of God stands now, as it has always stood, for the whole Bible rightly divided, and for the New Testament as the only rule for government and discipline. It has been necessary at times for the International General Assembly of the church to search the Scriptures and interpret the meaning of the Bible to arrive at what is the true and proper teaching of the church on various subjects, but always with the purpose and intention to base our teachings strictly upon the Bible.
2. For this purpose, a committee was appointed to report at the 1910 Assembly giving a collection of some of the teachings made prominent by the church, together with the Scriptures upon which these teachings were based; and that committee did report, and the matter contained in the report is set forth on page 47 of the printed *Minutes* of that Assembly.
3. However, the *Minutes* do not show that the report was officially adopted by the Assembly. The matters set forth in that report are simply a collection of some of the more important things that we have always believed, practiced, and taught, and is the law as set forth in the Holy Bible. We do not now attempt, and never have attempted, to make a law, but we have merely interpreted the Scriptures, and we have here set forth the laws that we have found there.
4. In order that there may be a record of the divine law, as set forth in the Scriptures, and as found and interpreted by the Assembly, it is now declared and reaffirmed that we accept and stand for the whole Bible rightly divided, and for the New Testament as our rule of faith and practice, and we do now declare the laws and teachings of the Bible, as set forth in the report of the said committee on page 47 of the 1910 *Minutes* of the General Assembly under the heading "Church of God Teachings" to be the official findings and interpretations of the 1930 Assembly of the Church of God upon the teachings and subjects thereon dealt with (25th A., 1930, p. 23).
5. **The Church of God Book of Discipline, Church Order, and Governance** shall be taught in all Church of God Bible schools and colleges, and ministerial students shall be required to take an examination equal to the questionnaire used in examining applicants for the ministry (43rd A., 1950, p. 18).

DOCTRINAL COMMITMENTS (55th A., 1974, p. 51; 67th A., 1998, p. 51)

1. Repentance. Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19 (DF 4).
2. Justification. Romans 5:1; Titus 3:7 (DF 5).
3. Regeneration. Titus 3:5 (DF 5).
4. New birth. John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9 (DF 5).
5. Sanctification subsequent to Justification. Romans 5:2; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:12 (DF 6).
6. Holiness. Luke 1:75; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Hebrews 12:14 (DF 7).
7. Water baptism. Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9, 10; John 3:22, 23; Acts 8:36, 38 (DF 10).

8. Baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to cleansing; the enduement of power for service. Matthew 3:11; Luke 24:49, 53; Acts 1:4-8 (DF 8).
9. The speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance as the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost. John 15:26; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:1-7 (DF 9).
10. The Church. Exodus 19:5, 6; Psalm 22:22; Matthew 16:13-19; 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8; 2:42-47; 7:38; 20:28; Romans 8:14-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 12:12-31; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:9, 21; Philippians 3:10; Hebrews 2:12; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 John 1:6, 7; Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17.
11. Spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:1, 7, 10, 28, 31; 14:1.
12. Signs following believers. Mark 16:17-20; Romans 15:18, 19; Hebrews 2:4.
13. Fruit of the Spirit. Romans 6:22; Galatians 5:22, 23; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:11.
14. Divine healing provided for all in the Atonement. Psalm 103:3; Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:17; James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24 (DF 11).
15. The Lord's Supper. Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (DF 12).
16. Washing the saints' feet. John 13:4-17; 1 Timothy 5:9, 10 (DF 12).
17. Tithing and giving. Genesis 14:18-20; 28:20-22; Malachi 3:10; Luke 11:42; 1 Corinthians 9:6-9; 16:2; Hebrews 7:1-21.
18. Restitution where possible. Matthew 3:8; Luke 19:8, 9.
19. Premillennial second coming of Jesus. First, to resurrect the dead saints and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air. 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:1. Second, To reign on the earth a thousand years. Zechariah 14:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14, 15; Revelation 5:10; 19:11-21; 20:4-6 (DF 13, 14).
20. Resurrection. John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:5, 6 (DF 3, 13, 14).
21. Eternal life for the righteous. Matthew 25:46; Luke 18:30; John 10:28; Romans 6:22; 1 John 5:11-13 (DF 14).
22. Eternal punishment for the wicked. No liberation nor annihilation. Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 3:29; 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9; Revelation 20:10-15; 21:8 (DF 14).

PRACTICAL COMMITMENTS

(55th A., 1974, p. 51; 56th A., 1976, pp. 55, 56; 62nd A., 1988, Journal, p. 52)

I. SPIRITUAL EXAMPLE

We will demonstrate our commitment to Christ through our practice of the spiritual disciplines; we will demonstrate our commitment to the body of Christ through our loyalty to God and commitment to His church; and we will demonstrate our commitment to the work of Christ through our being good stewards.

A. Practice of Spiritual Disciplines

Spiritual disciplines involve such practices as prayer, praise, worship, confession, fasting, meditation, and study. Through prayer we express our trust in Jehovah God, the giver of all good things, and acknowledge our dependence on Him for our needs and for the needs of others (Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-13; James 5:13-18). Through both private and public worship we bless God, have communion with Him, and are provided daily with spiritual enrichment and growth in grace. Through periods of fasting we

draw close to God, meditate on the passion of Christ, and discipline ourselves to submit to the control of the Holy Spirit in all areas of our life (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14-17; Acts 14:23). Through confession of our sins to God we are assured of divine forgiveness (1 John 1:9—2:2). The sharing of our confession with other believers provides the opportunity to request prayer and to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2; James 5:16). Through meditation on and study of the Word of God we enhance our own spiritual growth and prepare ourselves to help guide and instruct others in Scriptural truths (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; 2 Timothy 2:15, 23-26).

B. Loyalty to God and Commitment to the Church

The life of Christian discipleship calls for the fulfillment of our duties to the body of Christ. We are to unite regularly with other members of the church for the purpose of magnifying and praising God and hearing His Word (Matthew 18:20; John 4:23; Acts 2:42, 46, 47; 12:24; Hebrews 10:25). Sunday is the Christian day of worship. As the Lord's Day, it commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead (Matthew 28:1) and should be employed for worship, fellowship, Christian service, teaching, evangelism, and proclamation (Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Colossians 2:16, 17). We are to provide for the financial needs of the church by the giving of tithes (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23) and offerings (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-24; 9:1-15). It is our duty to respect and submit to those whom the Lord Jesus has placed over us in the church (1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13; Hebrews 13:7, 17). Our exercise of authority must be as a spiritual example rather than as a lord over God's flock (Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Peter 5:1-3). Furthermore, our submission must be a manifestation of the spiritual grace of humility (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5, 6). Finally, we are to avoid affiliation with oath-bound societies. Such societies may appear to have spiritual character, but by being oath-bound and secretive, they contradict Christian spirituality (John 18:20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Christians must not belong to any body or society that requires or practices an allegiance that supersedes or excludes their fellowship in Christ (Matthew 12:47-49; John 17:21-23).

C. Being Good Stewards

In the Scriptures, the virtues of thrift and simplicity are honored, but the vices of waste and ostentation are solemnly prohibited (Isaiah 55:2; Matthew 6:19-23). The living of a godly and sober life requires the wise and frugal use of our temporal blessings, including time, talent, and money. As good stewards we are to make the most of our time, whether for recreation or for work (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5). The idle use of leisure time degrades (2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; 1 Timothy 5:13), but the edifying use of it brings inner renewal. All our work and play should honor the name of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). As good stewards we must use fully our spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 27-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:9-11) and natural talents (Matthew 25:14-30) for the glory of God. As good stewards we must recognize that the wise use of money is an essential part of the Christian's economy of life. God has committed temporal blessings to our trust (Matthew 7:11; James 1:17).

II. MORAL PURITY

We will engage in those activities which glorify God in our body and which avoid the fulfillment of the lust of the flesh. We will read, watch, and listen to those things which are of positive benefit to our spiritual wellbeing.

A. Glorifying God in Our Body

Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and we are to glorify God in our body (Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 10:31). We are to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). Examples of fleshly behavior which do not glorify God are noted in several passages of Scripture (Romans 1:24; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8). Sinful practices which are made prominent and condemned in these scriptures include homosexuality, adultery, worldly attitudes (such as hatred, envy, jealousy), corrupt communication (such as gossip, angry outbursts, filthy words), stealing, murder, drunkenness, and witchcraft. Witchcraft has to do with the practices of the occult, which are forbidden by God and lead to the worship of Satan.

B. Reading, Watching, and Listening

The literature we read, the programs we watch, and the music we listen to profoundly affect the way we feel, think, and behave. It is imperative, then, that the Christian read, watch, and listen to those things which inspire, instruct, and challenge to a higher plane of living. Therefore, literature, programs, and music which are worldly in content or pornographic in nature must be avoided. A Christian is not to attend (or watch on television) movies or theatrical performances of a demoralizing nature (Romans 13:14; Philippians 4:8).

C. Benefiting Spiritual Well-being

The use of leisure time in the life of a Christian should be characterized by those activities which edify both the individual and the body of Christ (Romans 6:13; 1 Corinthians 10:31, 32). We are to avoid places and practices which are of this world. Consequently, a Christian must not be a part of any other types of entertainment which appeal to the fleshly nature and/or bring discredit to the Christian testimony (2 Corinthians 6:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 22; 1 John 2:15-17).

III. PERSONAL INTEGRITY

We will live in a manner that inspires trust and confidence, bearing the fruit of the Spirit, and seeking to manifest the character of Christ in all our behavior.

A. Trust and Confidence

A Christian should be trustworthy, dependable, and a person of his word (Matthew 5:37; 1 Peter 2:11, 12). Therefore, the swearing of oaths is contrary to a Christian's trustworthiness and should be avoided (Matthew 5:34-37; James 5:12). Christ, by precept and example, taught that we love our enemy and prefer our brother (Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3; 1 John 3:16). We should behave in a way that will point others to Christ (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1).

B. Fruit of the Spirit

If we live in the Spirit, we will manifest the fruit (attitudes and actions) of the Spirit and will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16, 22-25; 1 John 1:7). Trustful relationships with others are a natural outgrowth of our positive relationship with the Lord (Psalm 1:1-3; Matthew 22:37-40). A lack of fruit-bearing in our lives will be judged (Matthew 7:16-20; Luke 13:6-9; John 15:1-8).

C. Character of Christ

Love for others is the hallmark of the Christ-life (John 13:34, 35; 15:9-13; 1 John 4:7-11). In His relationship with His Father, Jesus displayed submission (Luke 22:42; John 4:34; 5:30). In His relationship with others, He demonstrated acceptance (John 8:11), compassion (Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34), and forgiveness (Matthew 9:2; Luke 5:20). We cannot bear the fruit of the Spirit and manifest the character of Christ without being spiritually joined to Christ (John 15:4, 5) and without having the seed of the Word planted in our heart (John 15:3; 1 Peter 1:22, 23).

IV. FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY

We will give priority to fulfilling family responsibilities, to preserving the sanctity of marriage, and to maintaining divine order in the home.

A. Priority of the Family

The family is the basic unit of human relationship and as such is foundational to both society and the church (Genesis 2:18-24). The divine origin of the family, along with its foundational character, makes it imperative that we give priority to ministry to the family, both from a personal and corporate standpoint. The practice of Christian disciplines and virtues should begin in the home (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7). Therefore, our families should establish some pattern for family devotions and should endeavor to provide a Christian environment in the home (1 Timothy 3:3, 4; 5:8).

B. Sanctity of Marriage

Marriage is ordained of God and is a spiritual union in which a man and a woman are joined by God to live together as one (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:7). Because of the divine character of marriage, it is a lifelong commitment with the only clear Biblical allowance for divorce being fornication (Matthew 5:32; 19:9).

Sexual involvement either before marriage or with someone other than the marriage partner is strictly forbidden in Scripture (Exodus 20:14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-18). Understanding the sanctity of marriage, partners should strive to maintain a happy, harmonious, and holy relationship. Should divorce occur, the church should be quick to provide love, understanding, and counsel to those involved. The remarriage of divorced persons should be undertaken only after a thorough understanding of and submission to the Scriptural instructions concerning this issue (Matthew 19:7-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 7:2, 10, 11). Should a Christian desire to remain single, this decision should be respected and should be seen as a viable Scriptural alternative (1 Corinthians 7:8, 32-34).

C. Divine Order in the Home

When God created man, He created them male and female (Genesis 1:27). He gave them distinctly different characteristics (1 Corinthians 11:14, 15; 1 Peter 3:7) as well as different responsibilities (Genesis 3:16-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7). In God's order the husband is head of the home (Ephesians 5:22-31; Colossians 3:18, 19), parents are to nurture and admonish their children (Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21), and children are to obey and honor their parents (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20). In order for harmony to exist in the home, God's order of responsibility must be observed.

V. BEHAVIORAL TEMPERANCE

We will practice temperance in behavior and will abstain from activities and attitudes which are offensive to our fellowman or which lead to addiction or enslavement.

A. Temperance

One of the cardinal Christian virtues is temperance or self-control (1 Corinthians 9:25; Titus 1:8; 2:2). It is listed as fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23). We are admonished to practice moderation and balance in our behavior (Philippians 4:5). The Scripture indicates that it is within our prerogative to control our thinking (Philippians 4:8), our anger (Ephesians 4:26), and our communication (Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:8). To exercise self-discipline reflects the power of God in our life (1 Corinthians 9:27; 2 Peter 1:5-11).

B. Offensive Behavior

The Bible speaks clearly that we are to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others as a demonstration of our love for them (Matthew 22:39; Romans 12:9-21; 13:10; Philippians 2:3-5). At times it is necessary for us to control our behavior so as not to bring offense to others (Romans 14:13-21; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13). As we know Christ after the Spirit, we are also to know others in the same manner so we will not judge them after their outward behavior alone (2 Corinthians 5:16). A respect and tolerance for differences in others should characterize our relationships (Romans 14:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 8:8; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13; 1 Timothy 4:1-5).

C. Addiction and Enslavement

One of the primary benefits of our liberty in Christ is freedom from the domination of negative forces (John 8:32, 36; Romans 6:14; 8:2). We are counseled not to put ourselves again under bondage (Galatians 5:1). Therefore, a Christian must totally abstain from all alcoholic beverages and other habit-forming and mood-altering chemical substances and refrain from the use of tobacco in any form, marijuana, and all other addictive substances and, further, must refrain from any activity (such as gambling or gluttony) which defiles the body as the temple of God or which dominates and enslaves the spirit that has been made free in Christ (Proverbs 20:1; 23:20-35; Isaiah 28:7; 1 Corinthians 3:17; 5:11; 6:10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; James 1:21).

VI. MODEST APPEARANCE

We will demonstrate the Scriptural principle of modesty by appearing and dressing in a manner that will enhance our Christian testimony and will avoid pride, elaborateness, or sensuality.

A. Modesty

According to the Biblical idea, modesty is an inner spiritual grace that recoils from anything unseemly and impure, is chaste in thought and conduct, and is free of crudeness and indecency in dress and behavior (Ephesians 4:25, 29, 31; 5:1-8; 1 Timothy 2:9, 10). Therefore, modesty includes our appearance, dress, speech, and conduct and can be applied to all situations. The essential issue is, does our style of life please or displease God?

B. Appearance and Dress

Our life, character, and self-image are reflected by our apparel and mode of dress. The admonition of Scripture, "Be not conformed to this world," reminds us that our manner of dress must be modest and decent (Romans 12:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 23). It is not displeasing to God for us to dress well and be well groomed. However, above all we must seek spiritual beauty, which does not come from outward adornment with jewelry, expensive clothes, or cosmetics, but from good works, chaste conversation, and a meek and quiet spirit (Philippians 4:8; 1 Peter 3:3-5).

C. Pride, Elaborateness, Sensuality

As godly people we are to abstain from all lusts of the flesh and avoid dressing in a manner that encourages immoral thoughts, attitudes, and lifestyles (Galatians 5:13-21; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 1:4). Our beauty does not depend on elaborate, showy dress; extravagant, costly attire; or on the use of jewelry or cosmetics but on our relationship with Christ. External adornment, whether clothing or jewelry, as an outward display of personal worth, is contrary to a spiritual attitude (James 2:1-4).

VII. SOCIAL OBLIGATION

It should be our objective to fulfill our obligations to society by being good citizens, by correcting social injustices, and by protecting the sanctity of life.

A. Being Good Citizens

As Christians we are members of the kingdom of God as well as a social order of this world. Obedience to God requires us to act in a responsible manner as citizens of our country (Mark 12:13-17; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17). Therefore, we should support civil law and order; hold our leaders in respect and pray for them; participate in school, community, and governmental activities; exercise our voting rights; and speak out on clear-cut moral issues. God's law is supreme, but we are to obey the laws of our country insofar as they are not in conflict with obedience to God (Acts 5:29). When it becomes necessary to disagree with practices and requirements of government, we should do so out of a concern for the promotion of righteousness and not out of delight in discord and controversy.

B. Correcting Social Injustices

Love for others and the recognition of the equal worth of all people in the sight of God (Acts 10:34; 17:26) should compel us to take steps to improve the situation of those who are underprivileged, neglected, hungry, homeless, and victimized by prejudice, persecution, and oppression (Matthew 22:39; Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 3:17). In all of our dealings, we must be sensitive to human needs (Luke 10:30-37; James 1:17) and guard against racial and economic discrimination. Every person should have freedom to worship and participate in the life of the church regardless of race, color, sex, social class, or nationality.

C. Protecting the Sanctity of Life

God alone confers life (Genesis 1:1-31); therefore, we are responsible to God to care for our physical life and that of others. If the circumstances require, we must be prepared to risk our life in the service of our neighbor (John 15:13); but the general rule is that we must respect our physical life and employ every worthy means to maintain it. Since God alone confers life, God alone must decide when it is to be ended (Psalm 31:14, 15). Because a human fetus is sacred and blessed of God, we believe we have the responsibility to protect the life of the unborn (Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41). It is our firm conviction that abortion, and euthanasia of the aged, mentally incompetent, terminally ill, and otherwise handicapped, for reasons of personal convenience, social adjustment, or economic advantage, are morally wrong. Furthermore, we believe it is our Christian responsibility to care for the earth and its resources. In the beginning God gave man dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26-30). This does not, however, give us license to pollute our natural environment or to waste the resources of the earth.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. NEW BIRTH

1. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).
2. Is being born of water a natural or a spiritual birth? Natural, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6) (20th A., 1925, p. 39; DF 5, 6; CT 4).

II. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH**Water Baptism**

1. Water baptism is to plunge or dip, or a burial beneath the surface of the water and a lifting out again (6th A., 1911, p. 6).
2. Water baptism is not a door into the church, but an act of obedience after one has been converted (7th A., 1912, p. 19).
3. We recognize immersion as the Scriptural mode of water baptism. We recommend that our disciples be baptized by a minister who is baptized in the Holy Ghost. However, inasmuch as the apostles baptized before and after Pentecost, we leave this matter with

the conscience of the individual, and we should not exclude them if they are satisfied with their baptism, provided they have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (10th A., 1914, p. 26; 28th A., 1933, p. 43).

4. That water baptism be administered by ordained ministers or bishops, and that it be in accordance with the commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19: "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (39th A., 1944, p. 30; DF 10; CT 7).
5. That we authorize the printing of certificates of baptism and recommend that they be issued to those baptized by the officiating minister (41st A., 1946, p. 26).

B. Lord's Supper (Communion) and Feet Washing

The subject of Communion and Feet Washing was considered and the Assembly decided that both are taught in the New Testament and may be engaged in at the same service or at different times at the option of the local churches. In order to preserve the unity of the body, and to obey the sacred Word, it was recommended that every member engage in these sacred services, which should be observed one or more times each year (1st A., 1906, Bk. M., p. 15; DF 12).

III. FAMILY WORSHIP

Family worship was considered and the Assembly recommended and urged that the families of all the churches engage in this very sacred and important service at least once a day, and at a time most convenient to the household, and that the parents should see that every child is taught as early as possible to reverence God and his parents, by listening quietly and attentively to the reading of God's Word and getting down on his knees during the prayer. The pastor and deacons of each church were advised to use their influence and make special efforts to encourage every family in the church to engage in this devotional exercise every day (1st A., 1906, Bk. M., p. 17).

IV. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

1. That all former rulings on divorce and remarriage be revised to read as follows: All parties who have put their companions away for the cause of fornication, having been divorced and remarried, the Church of God (28th A., 1933, pp. 43, 44; Amended 33rd A., 1938, p. 50).
2. Inasmuch as the divorce evil has grown to such alarming proportions and since the Church of God is a holiness institution divinely ordained to serve the best interests of the human race, therefore, be it resolved that we reaffirm our traditional position regarding the sanctity of the home and the sacredness of marriage vows, both of which should be held inviolate for the protection of our national security. Inasmuch as we also consider such present social trends to be detrimental to the home, the church, and the nation, be it further resolved that the minister be an example of Christian chastity and that his marital status be above question. The Church of God must have the highest type ministry—a ministry whose moral and spiritual experiences provide the incentive to develop the Christian character indispensable to the national honor of our republic and the preservation of our Christian principles (43rd A., 1950, p. 18).

V. LODGES AND FRATERNAL ORDERS

1. The Church of God teaches against members belonging to lodges.
2. Should anyone unite with the church who has insurance with a fraternal or secret order, he may continue his insurance with said order, provided he does not attend their secret meetings (35th A., 1940, pp. 31, 32).

VI. DIVINE HEALING

We recommend that our people in testifying to divine healing refrain from using expressions making thrusts at physicians or the use of medicine. Preach and testify to divine healing as a privilege, giving God the glory (24th A., 1929, p. 35).

VII. COMBATANT MILITARY SERVICE

The Church of God believes that nations can and should settle their differences without going to war; however, in the event of war, if a member engages in combatant service, it will not affect his status with the church. In case a member is called into military service who has conscientious objections to combatant service, the church will support him in his constitutional rights (23rd A., 1928, p. 24 (2); 40th A., 1945, p. 31).

VIII. TOBACCO

This Assembly agreed to stand with one accord in opposition to the use of tobacco in any form (1st A., 1906, Bk. M., p. 16; 56th A., 1976, p. 48).

IX. QUESTION AND ANSWER

- Q. Should those who do not pay tithes have a voice in the church?
- A. If a member does not have enough interest in the church to support it with his tithes, he should have respect enough for the church to keep quiet in business meetings (22nd A., 1927, p. 32).

**RESOLUTION RELATIVE TO PRINCIPLES
OF HOLINESS OF CHURCH OF GOD**

(48th A., 1960, pp. 51, 52; 56th A., 1976; DF 7; CT 6; 65th A., 1994, pp. 124, 125)

The foundation of the Church of God is laid upon the principles of Biblical holiness. Even before the church experienced the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, its roots were set in the holiness revival of the past century. It was, and is, a holiness church—holiness in fact and holiness in name.

The passing of 90 years has not diminished our holiness position or convictions. The years have, instead, strengthened our knowledge that without holiness it is impossible to please God.

We hereby remind ourselves that the Scriptures enjoin us at all times to examine our own hearts. The continuing and consistent life of holiness requires this. Conditions of our day desperately require it. The subtle encroachment of worldliness is a very real and unrelenting threat to the church. We must therefore beware lest we become conformed to the world, or lest a love for the world take root in our hearts to manifest itself as lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, or the pride of life.

For these reasons, we present the following:

WHEREAS, the Church of God is historically a holiness church; and

WHEREAS, we are enjoined by the Scriptures to be so; and WHEREAS, a tide of worldliness threatens the spirituality of the church;

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Church of God, reaffirm our standard of holiness, in stated doctrine, in principles of conduct, and as a living reality in our hearts; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the Church of God, believe a life of holiness is a balanced life in spirit, mind, and body, and that it places the believer in a Christlike relationship to God and fellowmen; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, as ministers, maintain this standard in our own lives, in our homes, and in our pulpits; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, as ministers and members, rededicate ourselves to this purpose, and guard our lives against conformity to the world in appearance, in selfish ambition, in carnal attitudes, and in evil associations; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, as ministers and members, seek to conform to the positive virtues of love, mercy, and forgiveness as taught by Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES FOR MINISTRY

(65th A., 1994, Item 2, pp. 78-83; 71st A., 2006, p. 44)

PREAMBLE

Begun in 1886, the Church of God has been signally blessed of God. The growth of the church is attributable to a number of factors. Some of the most significant are (1) obedience to the Word of God; (2) reliance upon the Holy Spirit; (3) faithfulness to our call; (4) evangelistic fervor; (5) openness to all people; (6) missionary outreach; (7) discipleship training; and (8) a deep desire to retain the roots of Pentecostal worship, prayer, revival, and holiness.

As with other religious organizations, we now face great and complex challenges. About us are undeniable signs that tough times lie ahead for any movement attempting to survive and grow with an attitude of business as usual. We must take an honest look at our challenges, and we must not complacently assume immunity to the difficulties faced by other larger, more traditional denominations, some of which are already in the embrace of noticeable decline.

We fully accept the uniqueness of our position as one of the leading Pentecostal churches in the world. We see ourselves as a divine work of the Holy Spirit, a vital part of a spiritual movement called to help usher in revival and bring renewal to a spiritually hungry world.

For all of us, this is an awesome and sobering responsibility.

STATEMENT OF VISION

Our vision arises from our understanding of what the sovereign God purposes to do for and through His church. The Great Commission remains our mandate from Christ.

The Church of God is to be:

1. A movement committed to the authority of Holy Scripture for faith and direction.
2. A fellowship whose worship brings God's power into the life of the church and extends that power through the lives of believers into the marketplace of life.
3. A body that is directed by the Spirit, fully understanding that baptism in the Holy Spirit is both a personal blessing and an endowment of power for witness and service in fulfilling the Great Commission.
4. A people who hunger for God, experience the presence of God, and stand in awe of His holiness as He changes believers into conformity with Christ.
5. A New Testament church which focuses on the local congregation where the pastor nurtures and leads all members to exercise spiritual gifts in ministry.

6. A church that loves all people and stands opposed to any action or policy that discriminates against any group or individual because of race, color, or nationality.
7. A movement that evidences love and concern for the hurts and loneliness of the unsaved through aggressive evangelistic, discipling, and nurturing ministries.
8. A church that is Christ-centered, people-oriented, and need-sensitive in all its programs and ministries.
9. A movement that promotes policies and ministries which reflect an open, sincere effort to remain relevant to each generation.

STATEMENT OF MISSION

The mission of the Church of God is to communicate the full gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19, 20) in the Spirit and power of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 6, 13-18) (71st A., 2006, p. 44).

COMMITMENTS TO OUR MISSION AND VISION

(70th A., 2004, pp. 50-54)

These items reflect our core values in regard to fulfilling our mission and vision.

1. PRAYER

We commit ourselves to making prayer the highest priority of the church demonstrated by

- Every local church becoming a house of prayer for all nations. Emphasizing communication with God as the highest privilege and greatest responsibility of every member.
- Modeling by all church leadership of an active and effective prayer life.
- Uniting with other believers in corporate and intercessory prayer.
(Isaiah. 56:7; Mark 11:17; Romans. 8:26; 1 Corinthians 14:14, 15; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-4, 8; James 5:14, 15)

2. PENTECOSTAL WORSHIP

We commit ourselves to gather regularly as the local expression of the Body of Christ to participate in Pentecostal worship that exalts God, engages the heart, mind, and soul, and challenges to deeper commitment and discipleship. This commitment will be demonstrated by

- Assisting local churches in planning and preparing for meaningful, anointed worship.
- Equipping pastors and other worship leaders to lead authentically expressed, spiritually alive worship.
- Modeling varying styles and forms of worship that glorify God and encouraging outreach and service.
- Emphasizing the importance of Biblical stewardship and the centrality of God's Word as elements of worship.

(John 4:24; Psalm 29:2; Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Isaiah 58; Matthew 25:31-46)

3. WORLD EVANGELIZATION

We commit ourselves to intentionally reaching the unconverted, baptizing them in water, and leading them to unite with the church. This commitment will be demonstrated by

- Viewing all the nations of the world as our mission field.
- Encouraging our local churches to adopt and intercede for an unreached people group. Resource materials will be provided by the Ministry of World Missions.
- Asking all national churches of the Church of God international to adopt and implement measurable steps to evangelize and disciple unreached people groups inside and outside of their own regions (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 15:19-24; Revelation 5:9).
- Encouraging every local church to increase a minimum of 10 percent per year through conversion growth.
- Cultivating a genuine passion for the lost that will compel members to personally communicate the gospel of Jesus and demonstrate His love to those outside the faith.
- Discipling new believers and passing on our faith to the next generation.
- Practicing lifestyle evangelism.

(Matthew 9:37-38; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-18; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-15)

4. CHURCH PLANTING

We commit ourselves to identifying, training, and resourcing God-called church planters and to intentionally planting new life-giving churches. This commitment will be demonstrated by

- Focusing designated resources of the local church, state/ regional offices, and the International Offices for planting new churches
- Starting the number of church plants equal to a minimum of 3 percent of the total number of churches in a state/region/nation annually.
- Developing a certified training program in our Ministry of USA Missions and educational institutions for church planters and home missions.
- Emphasizing the health and viability of new church plants as well as the number of churches planted.
- Affirming the different models of church planting for different situations.
- Recognizing church planting as an apostolic ministry for our day.

(Matthew 16:18; John 4:35; Acts 2:47; 14:23; Ephesians 5:25-28)

5. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We commit ourselves to identifying and developing individuals whom God has called and given leadership gifts and challenging them to become servant-leaders. We will demonstrate our commitment by

- Creating an environment in which men and women with ministry gifts are developed to serve as servant-leaders.
 - Equipping, empowering, and releasing lay leaders to serve as ministry partners both inside and outside the local church.
 - Providing relevant resources and training opportunities for both clergy and laity.
 - Encouraging pastors to lead through vision, to communicate the vision to the congregation, and to organize the body and each of its ministry groups so the vision can be realized.
- (Mark 3:13-15; 2 Timothy 2:2; 2:15; 3:14-17; Ephesians 4:11-13)

6. CARE

We commit ourselves to the challenge of being a church that genuinely cares for one another and for those who are lost, hurting, and needy. We will demonstrate our commitment by

- Building loving, caring relationships within families, between members, and within the communities we serve.
- Obeying the Care Commission of Christ in Matthew 25. Cultivating compassion and showing mercy to the unloved, the undesirable, and the unreached of our society.
- Establishing in each local church some type of outreach ministry that demonstrates our genuine concern and love for the disadvantaged or oppressed.

(Psalms 86:15; Matthew 25; Luke 6:36; Acts 20:28)

7. INTERDEPENDENCE

We commit ourselves to the principle of interdependence, acknowledging our interconnectedness and dependence on all the members of the Body of Christ. We will demonstrate our commitment by

- Reaching out to others in the Body of Christ for collaboration, resource sharing, and learning opportunities.
- Encouraging local churches to build relationships with like-minded and like-hearted churches in their communities to work together to reach the lost.
- Involving clergy in the processes of mentoring, coaching, and consulting on the local, state, regional, national and international levels to increase the level of trust and support among ministers.
- Engaging in dialogue and partnership with local, national, and international organizations who seek to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ.

(Colossians 2:19; 1 Corinthians 12:14-31; Galatians 6:1-6)

LOCAL CHURCH

- A. Priority Statement:** The Church of God recognizes the local church as the foundation of all ministry activities and will renew efforts to acknowledge, affirm, strengthen, and support the central importance of the ministry of the local church.

B. For Implementation We Recommend:

1. More open proclamation of the joy and power of worship (Isaiah 6:1-4; Psalms 147:1; 149:1; 150:1-6; John 4:23, 24; 9:31; Revelation 11:16).
2. Prayerful search for clearer understanding of spiritual gifts and their operation in the church (1 Corinthians 12:1-11; 14:1-40; Romans 12:4-8).
3. Greater care in the appointment of pastors, with emphasis on compatibility and interrelationships between congregation and leaders (Titus 1:5-9; Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 13:17, 18; Romans 12:14-21).
4. Strengthening the pastor in his role as spiritual shepherd with first responsibility for prayer and ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4; 2 Timothy 2:15).
5. More emphasis on teaching pastors to train and involve lay men and women for effective ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 4:11-16; 5:17; 1 Peter 4:10, 11).
6. Development of a method for objective evaluation of local church ministries (2 Corinthians 13:1-3, 5; Colossians 1:9-20).

LAITY

A. Priority Statement: The Church of God will further emphasize the doctrinal position of the priesthood of all believers and will encourage laity to assume a rightful Biblical role as full partners in ministry throughout every area of the church.

B. For Implementation We Recommend:

1. Renewed and expanded efforts by all pastors to train, inspire, equip and release laypeople for ministry in strategic areas of local church and community service (Acts 6:1-7; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-10).
2. Specific steps for defining and developing the ministry of deacons and elders (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Titus 1:5-9).
3. Joint sessions between lay and ministerial leadership in establishing harvest goals and objectives for the Church of God.
4. Continued study as to the role of laity in the International General Assembly of the Church of God.

CLERGY

A. Priority Statement: The Church of God believes that from within the priesthood of all believers God specifically selects, calls, anoints, and commissions certain individuals for extraordinary service and leadership and that this special (clergy) calling is of God's sovereign will, characterized by individuals with spiritual passion, love for the lost, total involvement, lifelong sacrifice, and servant leadership rather than by those seeking position or personal honor.

B. For Implementation We Recommend:

1. More emphasis upon local church confirmation, affirmation, and endorsement of ministerial applicants prior to their seeking exhorter's license (Acts 13:1-4; 14:23).
2. Establishing more specific Scriptural and practical assessment and appraisal procedures for evaluating ministers of all ranks and in all positions on a continuing basis (Romans 12:2; 13:5; 2 Timothy 4:5).

3. Heightened emphasis on continuing education for all ministers through formal institutions and special seminars, study programs, and conventions (2 Timothy 2:15).
4. Recognition of the vital role women presently give in Church of God ministry—their teaching, preaching, administrative and leadership skills—and renewed encouragement and support for their ministry, in keeping with that obvious emphasis found in the Gospels, throughout the Book of Acts, and in the Epistles (Acts 16:14, 15, 40; 18:26; 21:8, 9; Romans 16:1-7; Titus 2:3-5).

LEADERSHIP

A. Priority Statement: The Church of God believes leaders must exemplify the servant qualities of Jesus (Matthew 20:27, 28; Philippians 2:17), that they must conform to the highest moral and ethical standards (Titus 1:5-9), and that they must place the welfare of others before that of themselves (John 10:11; 1 Peter 5:2).

B. For Implementation We Recommend:

1. That full honor, respect, and recognition be given to the Holy Spirit, who is Himself the true leader of the church (Acts 13:4; 15:28; 16:6, 7).
2. Greater attention to personal accountability and positional responsibility on the part of all leaders, with Scriptural emphasis on caring (pastoral) relationships (1 Corinthians 12:25; Colossians 4:17; 1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 13:17).
3. More emphasis on the Scriptural qualifications for bishop (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and greater care in the leadership selection and appointment process.
4. More delegating of secondary matters (Acts 6:3) in order to keep the role of bishop in perspective (Acts 6:4).
5. More focus by the leadership in the utilization of ministry resources and skills of retired clergy at the local, district, state, and national levels (Romans 13:7).

CONSECRATION

A. Priority Statement: The Church of God resolutely declares that its accomplishments can never be truly reflected in numerical growth, physical accomplishments, or the adulation of men; but our true success as God's church is always measured in terms of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

B. For Implementation We Recommend:

1. Renewal of our pledge to do whatever is necessary to be God's people on this earth (Ephesians 3:14-21).
2. Periodic calls throughout the church for solemn assemblies (Joel 2:15-17) which involve confession, repentance, dedication, and obedience to the voice of God (2 Chronicles 7:14; Romans 12:1; James 4:8-10).
3. Reaffirmation of our belief and daily practice of Biblical holiness and personal integrity (1 Corinthians 7:34; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Colossians 1:21, 22; 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8; 2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 12:14).

4. That our clergy and laity seek for vision and passion, both of which are born in and maintained by prayer (Joel 2:28; Acts 26:19; Romans 9:2, 3; 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8).
5. A renewed commitment to become more responsive to the voice of God to our society for justice, righteousness, and all other Scriptural principles rather than a mere echo of popular opinion (Luke 3:4; Acts 4:10-12; Ephesians 6:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:20; Micah 6:6-12; Amos 5:1-27).

COMMISSION ON ORGANIZATION REPORT

(65th A., 1994, Item 3, pp. 83-85)

LOCAL CHURCH

1. That we acknowledge the local church as God's primary force in the evangelization of the world and discipling of believers in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.
2. That each local church follow the Scriptural pattern in developing a ministry of elders and deacons, identifying, training, and setting forth those individuals gifted in these ministries.
3. That the general church constituency be given the opportunity to evaluate the present pastoral selection and appointment process.

DISTRICT

1. That we reaffirm the value, visibility, and authority of the district overseer. And, further, that the state overseer consult with the district overseer before the appointment of a pastor on his district.
2. That a district overseer's manual be developed and updated on a regular basis.
3. That the work of the district overseer be evaluated on an annual basis.

STATE/REGIONAL

1. That a policy relative to boundaries (geographical, ethnic, linguistic) which allows for smaller states or regions to be consolidated with one another or with adjoining supporting states or regions to form a supporting entity be developed and implemented in order to promote growth in ministry.
2. That when state or regional properties such as campgrounds and/or recreational areas are to be purchased or sold, the ministers and laity in that state or region be given an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

NATIONAL

That each country, where practical, conduct a national assembly, at which consideration would be given to business pertaining to the ministry of the church in that country. Further, that each country determine the frequency, format, and voting constituency of its assembly. All business conducted at any national assembly must be in keeping with the *Minutes* of the International General Assembly. That healing and reconciliation of the races be a priority and that each governing body of each nation reflect the races in its structure.

INTERNATIONAL

1. That the Church of God, in accordance with the Biblical pattern, is an international church. It is international in scope, operation, and ministry, working for a common ministry and purpose in various nations and cultures of the world.

2. That the scope of the church is “all nations,” “every creature,” and “every kindred, tongue, and people,” in obedience to Christ’s command to “go into all the world.” The church, as a truly international organization, transcends culture, race, nationalism, politics, and economics. Therefore, it considers the world its parish, and all of its constituents are valued and necessary members of one international body.
3. That the Church of God is international in the highest and finest sense, working for a brotherhood among all races, peoples, customs, and nations, which is made possible through a network of offices and personnel on the local, district, state, provincial, and territorial levels. God set the gifts of administration within the church, and these gifts are not restricted in their operation by national boundaries or cultural distinctions.
4. That all of the Biblical ministries were given for all people of the earth. The Great Commission sets forth the international ministry to “preach the gospel to every creature,” to make disciples and teach all nations. To this end the Church of God is dedicated. Further, our first priorities are to love God and love people (Matthew 22:36-40).

CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE: FAITH-IDENTITY-MISSION CENTENNIAL RESOLUTION (1996)

(66th A., 1996, Item 1, pp. 52-55)

I. IMPLEMENTING OUR MISSION

WHEREAS the Church of God has experienced 100 years of Holy Spirit revival since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Shearer Schoolhouse in 1896; and

WHEREAS God has abundantly blessed and prospered the Church of God as evidenced by its growth to over 4 million members and its representation in approximately 130 countries around the world; and

WHEREAS the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” cannot be fulfilled unless believers take the responsibility to be a personal witness,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we reaffirm our mission to perpetuate the full gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19, 20), in the Spirit and power of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 6, 13-18), through specific attention to and emphasis upon the centrality of God’s Word, world evangelization, ministerial development, Christian discipleship, lay ministry, Biblical stewardship, church growth, church planting, family enrichment, and servant leadership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we implement this mission expeditiously, utilizing every available resource, understanding the urgency of the hour and acknowledging our dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit to effectively reach our generation for Christ.

II. REAFFIRMING OUR FAITH

WHEREAS one of the greatest strengths of the Church of God has been and still is our insistence on the authority of Scriptures; and

WHEREAS if we are to perpetuate Pentecost in its purest and most dynamic form, we must do everything we can to preserve its doctrinal integrity; and

WHEREAS the Church of God stands now, as it has always stood, for the whole Bible rightly divided and for the New Testament as the only rule for government and discipline; and

WHEREAS the Church of God has sought from its inception and still seeks to exemplify corporate and individual holiness in the light of Christ's purity and His soon return (1 John 3:1-3); and

WHEREAS the success or failure of this Pentecostal heritage we seek to perpetuate is going to depend on how well we live out the faith we proclaim;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we reaffirm our Declaration of Faith as an accurate and effective statement of our theological position; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we reaffirm our confidence in our doctrinal and practical commitments as sound, Scripturally based positions, and that we believe these standards are realistic expectations of faith; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we reaffirm our holiness/Pentecostal tradition and our fundamental theological heritage as we serve God into the next century.

III. RECOGNIZING OUR IDENTITY

WHEREAS the Church of God from its inception has had its own identifying characteristics and was organized to be different from other churches which were perceived to have compromised their Biblical integrity; and

WHEREAS the tendency of individuals, as well as corporate bodies, over a period of time, is to become more like others and to lose their distinctiveness; and

WHEREAS in the midst of the perversity and corruption of the world and the apostasy and compromise that characterizes so much of the modern church, we need to confess our sins, guard against compromise, and pray through in each generation, believing God will cleanse and keep on cleansing us from all sin;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on this occasion of the centennial celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Shearer Schoolhouse, we reaffirm our commitment to those principles upon which the movement was founded and by which it has been guided for 110 years; and

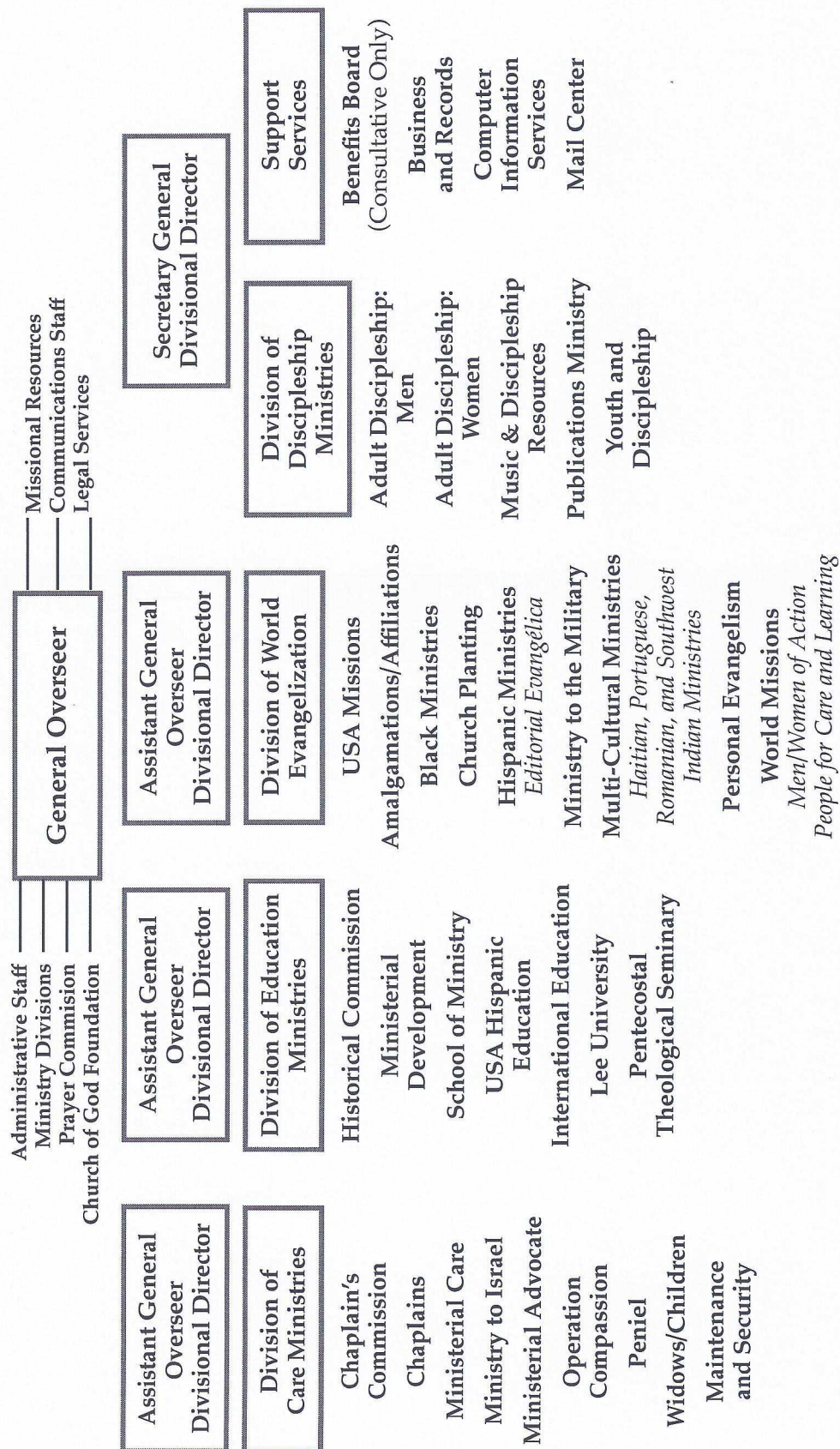
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we reaffirm our uncompromising identity as a Pentecostal church, which still believes in the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance, the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit in the lives of believers, and the operation of the spiritual gifts in the life of the church; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we reaffirm our belief in and our commitment to our historical distinctives. May we forever be known as a church that is Christian, holiness, Pentecostal, evangelistic, benevolent and discipling.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT— GENERAL
(S1 through S20)

Church of God Divisional Structure

(See S6. International Executive Committee, I. 4., p. 191)



INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

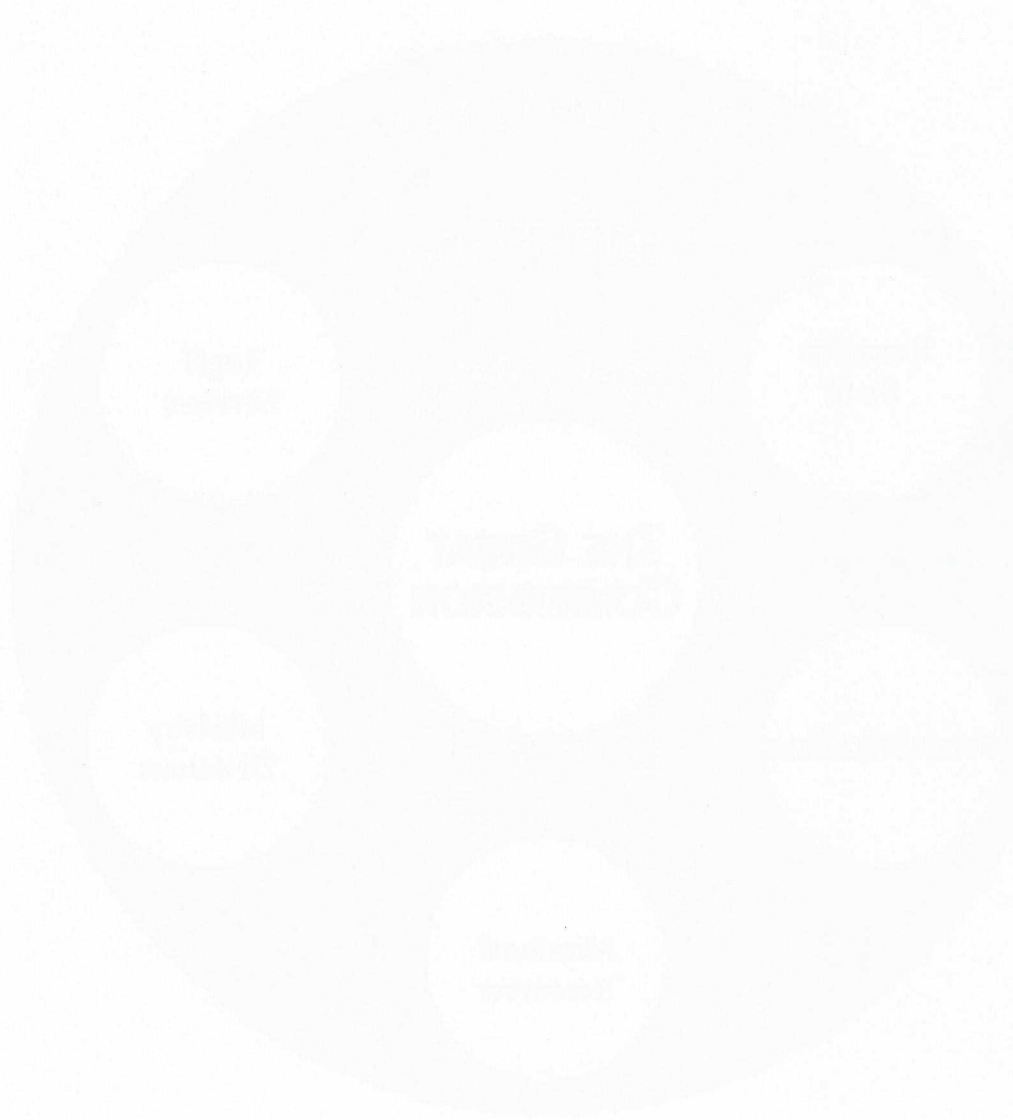


INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



GENERAL OVERSEER





ASSISTANT GENERAL OVERSEERS AND SECRETARY GENERAL

DIVISION DIRECTORS (LEADERS)





S1. GENERAL CHURCH

I. NAME OF CHURCH

1. Decision harmoniously made, CHURCH OF GOD, 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1 (2nd A., 1907, Bk. M., p. 22).
2. We recommend that all of our churches be listed in phone directories and newspapers under the heading Church of God, that they display on their buildings the name Church of God, and that the denominational emblem be used for identification. Any identifying title used to designate a particular church shall include a prominent display of the name Church of God (45th A., 1954, p. 28; 60th A., 1984, p. 43).

II. CHURCH—LOCAL

Whereas many members moving to other parts of the nation find it hard to locate our churches, we recommend that churches make use of all available advertising media, such as newspapers, highway signs, and listing in the yellow pages of telephone directories, hotel directories, and any other door available (48th A., 1960, p. 53).

III. CHURCH TEACHINGS

The Church of God stands now, as it has always stood, for the whole Bible rightly divided, and for the New Testament as the only rule for government and discipline. It has been necessary at times for the International General Assembly of the church to search the Scriptures and interpret the meaning of the Bible to arrive at what is the true and proper teaching of the church on various subjects, but always with the purpose and intention to base our teachings strictly upon the Bible.

IV. FORM OF GOVERNMENT

A. Governing Body

After due consideration the Assembly adopted the following: we do not consider ourselves a legislative or executive body, but judicial only (1st A., 1906, Bk. M., p. 15).

B. Church and State

1. The Church of God is opposed to the union of church and state under any circumstances (3rd A., 1908, Bk. M., p. 27).
2. The Church of God is definitely opposed to any form of dictatorship in matters pertaining to state and civil government. We heartily endorse the democratic way of life and faithfully pledge ourselves to its support, maintenance, and progress (37th A., 1942, p. 36)
3. We, the Church of God resolve that, it is not the right of governments to compel churches or church related institutions to participate in or fund activities that are morally reprehensible (74th A., 2012).

C. Local Church Part of the Assembly

1. The local churches, the names of which are officially registered with the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., are the result of the faithful services of the

ministers and representatives of the International General Assembly, and these churches, when thus received by the representatives of the International General Assembly, then became and composed a part of the International General Assembly. Therefore, the right of any local church as a whole to withdraw from the International General Assembly is not recognized and does not exist, but those members who prove disloyal to the government and teachings as promulgated from time to time by the International General Assembly, or who are otherwise disorderly, are to be dealt with as individuals (15th A., 1920, p. 50; 45th A., 1954, pp. 27, 28; 50th A., 1964, p. 54; [1994]).

2. If a church is organized and they do not accept the teachings of the Assembly, they cannot be recognized by headquarters [at any level of church government] as a Church of God (15th A., 1920, p. 68).

D. Incorporation of Churches (44th A., 1952, p. 30; 68th A., 2000, pp. 82, 83)

State/territorial overseers, on behalf of the churches under their oversight, are encouraged to investigate the necessity of incorporation, under various state laws, after legal advice from competent local attorneys.

It is understood that the laws of some states may prefer incorporation of local churches, while the laws of other states may not. Forms for articles of incorporation, charters, and bylaws of incorporations of local Churches of God shall be prepared, and all of such documents shall be approved by the International Executive Committee in consultation with the Church of God legal counsel, in accordance with all aspects of Church of God polity. All of such documents shall contain provisions that incorporated local churches shall be subject to the Church of God General Assembly *Minutes* in all pertinent matters, including conformity with Church of God deed and property requirements.

(See S46. INCORPORATION OF LOCAL CHURCHES.)

E. Reception of Churches or Association of Churches (63rd A., 1990, p. 78)

When a church or association of churches desires to become affiliated with the Church of God, thus becoming part of the International General Assembly, the church or association must follow the established procedure for acceptance into the Church of God as set forth by the International General Assembly. Appropriate forms of organization, with resolutions to unite with the church, must be processed in a legal business meeting to show acceptance of the faith, government, polity, and practices of the Church of God, and the willingness to abide by the actions of the International General Assembly.

(See S49. AFFILIATION WITH CHURCH OF GOD.)

F. Cooperation With PCCNA (42nd A., 1948, p. 32; [The Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) became the PCCNA in 1994.])

The Church of God shall cooperate with the Pentecostal/ Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) in their endeavors.

V. FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

A. Church—Nonprofit Organization

In order that there be no misunderstanding as to the objectives and purposes for which the affairs of the Church of God are conducted, it is hereby expressly declared that the Church of God shall continue to be as it has been heretofore, a religious, nonprofit organization, not operated for the financial gain or profit of any person or group, and that all net receipts of the Church of God shall be used for religious, charitable, and educational purposes (44th A., 1952, p. 35).

B. General Financial Drive

No general project which would necessitate a financial drive among the local churches shall be undertaken without the approval of the International General Assembly (38th A., 1943, p. 30).

S2. BYLAWS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

(53rd A., 1970, p. 27, 28; 67th A., 1998, p. 54; 68th A., 2000, pp. 83-86)

ARTICLE I

Name

The official name shall be Church of God (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1: 1).

ARTICLE II

Temporal Nature

The Church of God is incorporated in the state of Tennessee (U.S.A.) as a not-for-profit organization and is recognized as a 501 (c) (3) corporation under the Internal Revenue Code (U.S.A.) or the corresponding sections of any prior or future Internal Revenue Code (U.S.A.).

ARTICLE III

Governance

The current edition of the *Minutes* of the Church of God International General Assembly contains rulings of the most recent meeting of the Church of God International General Assembly, and church polity statements and rules of church discipline, order, and governance still in effect from all previous Church of God General Assemblies, including these bylaws.

ARTICLE IV

Mission Statement

The mission of the Church of God is to communicate the full gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19, 20) in the Spirit and power of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 6, 13-18) (71st A., 2006, p. 44).

ARTICLE V

Members

The membership of the Church of God shall be composed of Christians who have accepted the teachings, doctrines, and government of the Church of God, and who have been formally received into its fellowship pursuant to the guidelines established by the International General Assembly. Procedures for excluding members shall be set by the International General Assembly upon recommendation of the International General Council.

ARTICLE VI

Governing Bodies

1. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Members

The International General Assembly is composed of all members and ministers of the Church of God 16 years of age and above. Members and ministers of the Church of God present and registered at the International General Assembly shall comprise its voting constituency (64th A., 1992, p. 73; 65th A., 1994, Item 1, p. 78).

Purpose

The purpose of the International General Assembly is to advance the mission, vision, and commitments of the Church of God as stated in the International General Assembly **Minutes** (73rd A., 2010).

Meeting

The International General Assembly shall meet biennially to consider all recommendations from the International General Council.

Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall serve as the official guide for the business of the International General Assembly in all matters to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the International General Assembly.

Elections

The International General Assembly shall elect the general overseer, the assistant general overseers, the secretary general, the director of Youth and Discipleship, the assistant director of Youth and Discipleship, the director of World Missions, and the assistant director of World Missions (58th A., 1980, pp. 29-32, (1-4; 73rd A., 2010).

Officers, Committees

The officers of the International General Assembly shall consist of the moderator and a secretary. The general overseer shall preside as moderator. He shall also appoint parliamentarians to serve during the International General Assembly meetings. He shall also appoint members of committees called for by the International General Assembly.

The secretary general shall serve the Assembly as secretary. He shall be responsible for recording actions by the Assembly and shall be the custodian of the records of the Assembly.

Parliamentary Procedure

Debate on all motions shall be governed by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Each member has the right to speak on every question. However, he cannot make a second speech on the same question as long as any member who has not spoken on the question desires the floor (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*).

It is the prerogative of the moderator to recognize each speaker and to determine a balance of negative and affirmative speeches.

Debate may be limited by a proper motion (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*).

2. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL

Members

The International General Council is composed of all ordained bishops of the Church of God, who shall comprise its voting constituency.

Agenda

1. The International General Council shall meet biennially to consider all recommendations from the International Executive Council. The International General Council agenda shall be mailed to the ordained bishops at least thirty (30) days prior to the International General Council (Minutes of the July 1966, International Executive Council, page 93).
2. The International General Council shall consider and prepare such recommendations as are Scriptural and proper in matters pertaining to the welfare of the church. Such recommendations are to be presented to the International General Assembly for final disposition.
3. The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the official guide for the business of the International General Council in all matters to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the International General Council. As a guide for the order of business, the agenda presented by the International Executive Council shall claim the attention of the Council first.
4. Any new business shall be presented to the chairman of the motions committee, which committee shall receive, classify, clarify, eliminate duplication, and dispatch for placement on the agenda following the completion of the printed agenda. Any new business presented to the motions committee shall be presented in typewritten form not later than 2 p.m. of the third day of the International General Council.
5. The International General Council shall nominate to the International General Assembly the general overseer, the assistant general overseers, the secretary general, the general Youth and Discipleship director, the assistant general Youth and Discipleship director, the director of World Missions, and the assistant director of World Missions (73rd A., 2010 [effective 2012]).
6. The International General Council shall elect the Council of Eighteen ([1972]; 58th A., 1980, pp. 29-32 (1-4)).

Officers and Committees

1. The officers of the International General Council shall consist of the moderator and a secretary. The general overseer shall preside as moderator. He shall also appoint parliamentarians to serve during the International General Council meetings. He shall also appoint members of committees called for by the International General Council.
2. The secretary general shall serve the Council as secretary. He shall be responsible for recording actions by the Council and shall be the custodian of the records of the Council.

Parliamentary Procedure and Authority

1. The names of all persons on the nomination ballots receiving twenty-five (25) or less votes for an elected office shall be posted in an appropriate designated place in lieu of reading those names to the International General Council.
2. Debate on all motions shall be governed by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Each member has the right to speak on every question. However, he cannot make a second speech on the same question as long as any member who has not spoken on the question desires the floor (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*). It is the prerogative of the moderator to recognize each speaker and to determine a balance of negative and affirmative speeches.
3. Debate may be limited by a proper motion (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*).

3. INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Authority

This council shall consider and act upon any and all matters pertaining to the general interest and welfare of the Church of God.

Members

The general overseer, his assistants, the secretary general, and eighteen councilors [the Council of Eighteen] elected by the Executive Council of the church.

Meeting

At a time set by the general overseer, the International Executive Council shall meet and adopt recommendations to be brought before the International General Council.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the International Executive Council shall be set by the International General Assembly upon recommendation by the International General Council.

ARTICLE VII

Executive Board

International Executive Committee—The executive officers of the Church of God shall be the general overseer, three assistant general overseers, and the secretary general. These shall constitute the International Executive Committee. Their tenure in office, manner of selection, duties

and authorities, and procedure for filling vacancies shall be decided by the International General Assembly upon recommendation from the International General Council.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

Standing Boards and Committees—Standing boards and committees as called for by the International General Assembly or International General Council shall be appointed by the International Executive Committee. The general overseer shall be an ex officio member of all standing boards and committees.

ARTICLE IX

Parliamentary Authority

The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the official parliamentary guide for conducting the business of the church.

ARTICLE X

Amendment of Bylaws

Amendment

The power to alter, amend, or repeal these bylaws shall be vested in the International General Assembly and exercised only by a two-thirds vote of the International General Assembly upon recommendation of a two-thirds vote of the International General Council.

Previous Notice

In order to amend, alter or repeal these bylaws, previous notice will be considered fulfilled if the following guidelines to notify the constituency are observed:

(1) Mail to ministers whose addresses are on record at the Church of God International Offices in Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., including national and territorial leaders, the notice and copies of the proposed change(s) to the Bylaws of the Church of God to be considered by the International General Council not later than 90 days prior to the opening of the International General Council. Pastors should make this notice available by public announcement and/or posting to their congregations.

(2) Include the notice and a copy of the proposed change(s) to the Bylaws of the Church of God to be considered by the International General Council in at least two issues of the Church of God Evangel preceding the opening of the International General Council.

(3) Post the notice and a copy of the proposed change(s) on the church's Internet web site.

(4) The proposed change(s) may be amended, but cannot be amended beyond the scope of the notice. Any change of the bylaws approved by the International General Assembly will go into effect immediately upon its adoption, unless the motion to adopt specifies another time for its becoming effective.

S3. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

I. DEFINITION (15th A., 1920, p. 50 (2); [1994]; 68th A., 2000, pp. 78, 86, 87)

1. The International General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) is that organized body with full power and authority to designate the teaching, government, principles, and practices of all the local churches composing said Assembly [1994].
2. One of the first principles accepted in the earliest history of its organization was that we accept the whole Bible rightly divided, which is today one of the most sacred principles; therefore, we meet in biennial conference with all ministers and laymen who wish to attend to search the Scriptures and put them into practice. Our teachings and faith are the same as originally accepted in its original organization, and all the changes in government and management have been duly authorized by the International General Assembly in its various sessions which adopts measures by a majority vote of all Church of God members present and registered at the International General Assembly, being their privilege to vote on any and all propositions presented. Nominees by the International General Council are declared elected to office on a majority vote of the International General Assembly (15th A., 1920; 45th A., 1954, p. 33; 64th A., 1992, p. 73).

II. PROCEDURES

1. The question as to whether records should be kept of this and other Assemblies like this was discussed, passed, and recommended as Scriptural (1st A., 1906, Bk. M., p. 15).
2. Arrangements for the time and place of the International General Assembly shall be left to the International Executive Council (35th A., 1940, p. 31).

Because both public and private schools are adjusting their schedules to begin the first week of August in most states, consideration should be made to holding the General Assembly no later than the last week of July. This would help parents of school-age children, and ministers' wives who teach school, to not miss the first days of school (70th A., 2004 p. 57).

3. The general overseer is authorized to call an International General Assembly of ministers provided that travel and other conditions are such that the International Executive Committee and the Council of Eighteen deem it wise to do so (40th A., 1945, p. 31).
4. Following our custom that has always governed our International General Assembly in the past, we recommend that no books be sold on the grounds except through the bookstand [the official exhibit area] (25th A., 1930, p. 22).

III. ROLE OF THE LAITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (66th A., 1996, Item. 7, p. 62, 63)

Whereas New Testament church lay leaders were partners in ministry and in discerning major decisions affecting the church in general (Acts 6:1-7; 15:2, 4, 22, 30; Romans 16:1-15; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3, 15-19; 2 Corinthians 8:18, 19; Philippians 4:1-3; Colossians 4:7-17); and

Since the first General Assembly in 1906, it has been the practice of the Church of God to rely on this vital partnership between laity and ministers; and
The International General Assembly grants to its laity the same voice that it affords all credentialed ministers during the International General Assembly sessions,
Therefore, when funds are available, after the pastoral family's needs have been met, churches are encouraged to provide financial assistance for laity to attend the International General Assembly and national convention; and
All delegates (preregistered at least 30 days in advance of the Assembly), shall be mailed a copy of agenda items that are being presented to the International General Council for possible inclusion on the International General Assembly agenda; and
Study shall be given by the International Executive Council to increasing the time allotted for International General Assembly business, to provide more opportunity for laity to participate in the discussion of the issues; and
We affirm the Biblical and historical role and importance of the laity in the International General Assembly of the Church of God.

S4. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL

I. SELECTION (45th A., 1954, p. 33; 68th A., 2000, pp. 78, 81)

The International General Council is composed of all ordained bishops and shall comprise its voting ranks. Ordained ministers, exhorters, and laity shall be privileged to sit in the International General Council, without voting privileges (51st A., 1966, p. 19).

II. DUTIES

The International General Council shall:

1. Meet biennially to consider and prepare such recommendations as are Scriptural and proper in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the church. Such recommendations are to be presented to the International General Assembly for final disposition.
2. Nominate to the International General Assembly the general overseer, his assistants, the secretary general, the general Youth and Discipleship director, the assistant general Youth and Discipleship director, the director of World Missions, and the assistant director of World Missions (49th A., 1962, p. 31; 52nd A., 1968, pp. 33, 34 (1); (1972); 58th A., 1980, pp. 29-32 Items 1- 3; 73rd A., 2010 [effective 2012]).
3. Elect the members of the Council of Eighteen (61 A., 1986, p. 53 (1)).

III. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL AGENDA

Inasmuch as the official agenda, which is to claim the attention of the International General Council, is mailed to the ordained bishops at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the International General Council, all recommendations must be received by the International Executive Council in time for consideration at its April session in order to appear on the Assembly agenda (53rd A., 1970, p. 57 Item 18).

IV. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL MOTIONS COMMITTEE

Previous notice shall be required for any motion which greatly alters the organizational structure of the Church of God. When motions are presented to the Motions Committee, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. Each motion will be processed by the Motions Committee according to the guidelines of the Church of God book of *Minutes*.
2. The Motions Committee will initially determine if the motion would "greatly alter the organizational structure of the Church of God."
3. If, in the opinion of the moderator, the motion would "greatly alter the organizational structure of the Church of God," the motion will be read to the body by the chairman of the Motions Committee at the direction of the moderator with the notation that it is a motion that will require previous notice before final disposition.
4. The moderator will explain that if the motion passes in the present International General Council, it will be placed on the agenda of the following International General Council in order to fulfill the requirement of previous notice.
5. The item will then be open for full debate on the presently-convening International General Council floor.
6. If the motion does not receive a majority vote, it falls to the floor.
7. If the motion receives a majority vote, it is committed to the International Executive Council with the mandate that it be placed on the agenda for the next International General Council in a manner that fulfills the requirements of previous notice (74th A., 2012).

S5. INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (LAMA, p. 555; 25th A., 1930, p. 23 (20); 37th A., 1942, p. 36 (1); 39th A., 1944, p. 37 (23); 43rd A., 1950, pp. 14, 15 (5); 45th A., 1954, p. 34 (34); 50th A., 1964, p. 50 (5); 50th A., 1964, p. 56 (19); 52nd A., 1968, p. 33, 34 (1); 61st A., 1986, p. 53 (1); 62nd A., 1988, Journal, p. 52; 64th A., 1992, pp. 87, 88; 65th A., 1994, Item 8, p. 89; 68th A., 2000, pp. 77, 78; 69th A., 2002, p. 50; 71st A., 2006, pp. 46, 47; 73rd A., 2010)

I. SELECTION

1. The general overseer, his assistants, the secretary general, and eighteen councilors [the Council of Eighteen] constitute the International Executive Council of the church.
2. The International Executive Council is comprised of the International Executive Committee and eighteen (18) elected members. Not less than nine (9) members shall be pastors at the time of their election. Further, two (2) members of the Council of Eighteen shall be at the time of their election foreign nationals residing and ministering outside the United States (69th A., 2002, p. 50). No member of the International Executive Committee who has just completed his tenure of office shall be eligible to serve on the International Executive Council for the ensuing International General Assembly term.
3. In accordance with the memorandum of agreement, the moderator of the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa shall be a member of the International Executive Council of the Church of God in America, and the general overseer of the Church of God shall be a member of the Executive Council of the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa (46A., 1956, p. 28 (47)).

4. The eighteen (18) members shall be elected by the International General Council biennially, with a member being eligible to succeed himself for one term (S3, V, A, 9).
5. The eighteen (18) members shall be elected from the ordained bishops and no chief executive officer, or his assistant, of any church agency which presents a budget to a divisional leader, shall be eligible to serve on the International Executive Council.

II. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCIES

Should any one of the 18 positions on the Council of Eighteen be vacated because of death, disability, advancement, resignation, or the member in any wise being disqualified, the General Overseer shall submit to the International Executive Council, in session, the names of the next two men receiving the highest votes on previous ballots who are eligible at the time of this special election, and whose election would retain the required minimum numbers of pastors and/or foreign nationals as required by the International General Assembly **Minutes**. The one receiving the majority vote of the International Executive Council shall be declared elected to fill the unexpired term. If more than one half of the vacated term remains, the member elected to fill that term will be eligible to succeed himself for only one additional term. If a vacancy occurs after April 1 of an International General Assembly year, that vacancy will not be filled (71st A., 2006, pp. 46, 47).

III. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES

1. This council shall consider and act upon any and all matters pertaining to the general interest and welfare of the Church of God. At a time set by the general overseer, the said council shall meet and adopt recommendations to be brought before the International General Council (56th A., 1976, p. 49, 1, 2).
2. All measures designed to change or alter any teaching of the Church of God, before being presented to the International General Council, shall first be submitted to the International Executive Council in writing prior to the meeting of the International General Council (45th A., 1954, p. 34 (34); 49th A., 1962, p. 34 (11)).
3. All measures designed to change, alter, or delete any doctrine of the Church of God as prescribed in the Declaration of Faith, before being presented to the International General Assembly, shall be first submitted to the International Executive Council in writing twelve (12) months prior to the regular session of the International General Council, and must have a three-fourths majority vote to carry. The measure shall then be submitted to the International General Council for consideration, and if the International General Council approves the measure by a three-fourths vote, the International Executive Committee shall place the said measure in the *Church of God Evangel* quarterly for a study until the next regular session of the International General Assembly, thus giving the membership an opportunity to consider and vote on the said measure in the International General Assembly before it becomes a ruling (45th A., 1954, p. 34 (34); 49th A., 1962, p. 34 (11); 50th A., 1964, p. 50 (5); p. 56 (19)).
4. All motions offered to the International Executive Council for consideration to be included on the agenda for the International General Assembly, and/or to be included on the agenda for the International General Council, shall be published online via the

- ministerial reporting website at the end of each International Executive Council meeting (74th A., 2012).
5. The distribution of tithes sent to the international offices of the church shall be in the hands of the general overseer and the International Executive Council (13th A., 1917, pp. 33, 40; 26th A., 1931, p. 104 (2); 33rd A., 1938, p. 51 (4); 39th A., 1944, p. 38 (1); 42nd A., 1948, p. 29; 50th A., 1964, p. 50 (5); p. 56 (19).
 6. Matters which concern difficulties or measures relating to one or more of the general officials shall be referred to the Council of Eighteen for decision (see **S6. V. Discipline**).
 7. Its duty shall be to counsel with the general overseer in all matters pertaining to the general interest of the church. This body of men, or a majority of the same, shall have power to estop any general official of the Church of God for any misconduct, until proper procedures have been followed (64th A., 1992, p. 87).
 8. The general overseer, with the International Executive Council, shall give one of his assistants the World Missions portfolio and assign his duties and authorities (52nd A., 1968, p. 34).
 9. The International Executive Council shall meet every two years with the International Council to discuss and project international ministries (Proverbs 11:14) (59th A., 1982, p. 32).
 10. Allotments for aged and disabled ministers shall be determined by the International Executive Council.
 11. Ministers' credentials having been revoked for the cause of improper conduct with the opposite sex, shall not be restored to them until approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the International Executive Council (42nd A., 1948, p. 29; 65th A., 1994, Item 16, p. 91).
 12. Permission to establish an institution of higher education, that is, a Bible college or a liberal arts college, shall be granted by the International Executive Council (56th A., 1976, p. 54).
 13. The International Executive Council shall be authorized to establish a loan fund to provide interim financing for churches in new fields (53rd A., 1970, p. 58, (19B)).
 14. The International Executive Council is authorized to initiate a radio and television program in the interest of the Church of God (46th A., 1956, p. 30).
 15. Because both public and private schools are adjusting their schedules to begin the first week of August in most states, consideration should be made to holding the General Assembly no later than the last week of July. This would help parents of school-age children, and ministers' wives who teach school, to not miss the first days of school (70th A., 2004 p. 57).
 16. The International Executive Council is authorized to reorganize, amplify, and clarify as necessary all information in the International General Assembly *Minutes* pertaining to property ownership and the various boards of trustees. It is understood that no changes will be made in the intent of the measures, only rearrangement and updating. Further, the International Executive Council shall make this material in its reorganized form available to every pastor and ordained bishop as soon as possible following the International General Assembly (65th A., 1994, Item 8, p. 89).

17. Whereas the Church of God is an international church serving in many nations, societies and cultures; and words may not always convey the same meaning nor the same level of social and cultural appropriateness in these various settings,

Therefore the International Executive Council is authorized to reword information in the International General Assembly *Minutes* to clarify its meaning and protect its social and cultural appropriateness. It is understood that no changes will be made in the intent or essence of the measures.

Further, the International Executive Council is authorized to commission the preparation of an international version of the International General Assembly *Minutes* that takes into consideration the differences in laws and customs between the United States of America and other countries (67th A., 1998, pp. 52, 53).

18. The initial structure of a U.S.A. National Council/Assembly shall be the same as the International General Council/Assembly, and that the International Executive Council shall schedule time for business unique to the United States of America to be handled during the week of the International General Assembly (71st A., 2006, pp. 46, 47).

S6. INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(39th A., 1944 p. 30; 40th A., 1945, p. 28; 44th A., 1952 pp. 31, 35; 45th A., 1954, p. 30; 50th A., 1964 pp. 50, 51; 52nd A., 1968, pp. 33, 34; 64th A., 1992, pp. 86, 87; 68th A., 2000, p. 78)

I. OFFICES-PORTFOLIOS-ORGANIZATION

1. The following offices shall constitute the International Executive Committee: general overseer, first assistant general overseer, second assistant general overseer, third assistant general overseer, secretary general.
2. The general overseer, the three assistants, and the secretary general shall compose the International Executive Committee. We further recommend that the general overseer, with the International Executive Council, designate the fields of their activities.
3. Executive portfolios are to be assigned at the first business session following the election of the officers and are subject to periodic review by the International Executive Council.
4. The organizational chart (page 172 in this book of *Minutes*) shall reflect the executive portfolios assigned by the General Overseer and the International Executive Council for the current Assembly period. (60th A., 1984, p. 41; 69th A., 2002, p. 49).

II. FILLING VACATED OFFICES

Should the offices of any two or more members of the International Executive Committee be vacated simultaneously through death, accident, national disaster, war, national epidemic, or otherwise, a call shall be issued within thirty (30) days by the remaining members of the International Executive Committee for an emergency meeting of the ministers of the Church of God. Three members of the International Executive Council may, by petition, call an emergency meeting of the ministers. The ordained bishops shall nominate to this special session of the ministers names to fill the offices thus vacated. In this special session the ministers shall elect the members to fill the unexpired terms of office (50th A., 1964, p. 52).

III. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES

The International Executive Committee shall:

1. Appoint all state and provincial overseers (35th A., 1940, p. 31).
2. Be authorized to permit state overseers in mission states to continue their work, when necessary, beyond the usual tenure limitation. Further, that time served as a state overseer in mission territory not be counted as part of the tenure limitation on an overseer, if he is appointed to serve as state overseer of a non-mission state (45th A., 1954 p. 26).
3. Appoint all general standing boards and committees. When an individual is appointed as an Administrative Bishop and then elected to the Council of Eighteen, he is not to be appointed to a standing board (70th A., 2004 p. 57).
4. Appoint the presidents of church colleges.
5. Appoint boards to hear cases of appeals of ministers.
6. Act as an emergency board.
7. In case of an emergency the International Executive Committee, with the consent of the respective Ministry heads, shall have authority to transfer money, temporarily, from one Ministry to another (35th A., 1940, p. 31).
8. After a member of the International Executive Committee has served eight years, he shall be ineligible to serve in that capacity for a period of two years (45th A., 1954, p. 27).
9. The appointments of all personnel made by all standing boards and committees and all salaries of same, shall be made subject to the approval of the International Executive Committee (46th A., 1956, p. 28).
10. The International Executive Committee is empowered to counsel with the ministers of any state through the offices of the state overseer and State Council with reference to any change in the state that is deemed advisable to properly carry out an effective operational program, subject to the ratification of the ministers in the respective state (51st A., 1966, p. 59).

IV. LOCAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PLAN (72nd A., 2008)

A Local Church Development Plan shall be implemented by the International Executive Committee, in conjunction with each respective state/regional overseer, for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of local churches in the fulfillment of their mission, through a plan designed to involve lay leadership, together with pastoral oversight, for church growth in the twenty-first century.

This shall be a standardized plan designed to meet the needs of local churches at each numerical level (see **S36**).

V. DISCIPLINE (64th A., 1992, pp. 86, 87)

1. Procedures concerning an International Executive Committee member who has been accused of any misconduct shall become the responsibility of the Council of Eighteen, called into executive session and moderated [chaired] by the first elected member.
2. If the Council of Eighteen believes there is reason to do so, an investigative committee shall be selected from the Council to inquire into any formal charges of misconduct.

3. The Council of Eighteen shall then consider the findings of the investigative committee.
4. Once charges have been filed, the said International Executive Committee member shall be relieved of all responsibilities but retain his salary and benefits until the matter has been resolved.
5. If the Council of Eighteen agrees that the findings of the investigative committee warrant charges being filed, a trial board shall be appointed by the Council to hear the charges.
6. Any appeal of the decision of the trial board must be presented to the chairman [the first elected member, serving as moderator] of the Council of Eighteen, in writing, within 10 days of receiving the written notification of the trial board's decision.
7. If granted by a majority vote of the Council of Eighteen, a board of appeal shall be appointed by the Council. Members of the investigative committee and trial boards shall be ineligible to serve.
8. If the appeal board sustains the guilty verdict, the member shall be removed from office immediately and the filling of the vacancy shall proceed as provided for in the International General Assembly *Minutes*.
9. If the offense warrants such action, the chairman of the Council of Eighteen shall notify the respective state overseer to sign the termination of credentials form.

S7. GENERAL OVERSEER (Presiding Bishop, see p. 260.)

I. SELECTION

1. The general overseer shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected by the International General Assembly. He shall be the highest officer of the church, and it shall be his duty to have general supervision of the work in all fields (39th A., 1944, p. 37).
2. He shall be elected for a four-year term, and he shall be eligible to serve no more than eight consecutive years in this office or on the Executive Committee (41st A., 1946, p. 26; 73rd A., 2010).

II. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES

The general overseer shall:

1. Act as chairman or moderator of the International General Assembly, the International General Council, and the International Executive Council (39th A., 1944, p. 36; 43rd A., 1950, p. 15).
2. Sign and issue credentials to ministers.
3. Keep a record of all the ministers within the bounds of the International General Assembly.
4. Look after the general interest of the churches.
5. Together with the International Executive Council, give one of his assistants the World Missions portfolio and assign his duties and authorities (52nd A., 1968, p. 34).

6. Together with his assistants and the secretary general, appoint all general standing boards and committees biennially, said appointments to be made within two weeks of the close of the International General Assembly, except in cases of emergency (Amended 50th A., 1964, p. 56; 52nd A., 1968, p. 34; 73rd A., 2010).

When an individual is appointed as an Administrative Bishop and then elected to the Council of Eighteen, he is not to be appointed to a standing board (70th A., 2004 p. 57).

7. Together with his assistants and the secretary general, appoint all state and provincial overseers biennially and to have jurisdiction over them (50th A., 1964 p. 56; 52nd A., 1968, p. 33).
8. Together with the other members of the International Executive Committee, to dismiss any appointee in case of necessity.
9. In the event of any emergency which warrants doing so, call the Council of Eighteen and associate councilors into session for counsel.
10. Call the International Executive Council or the International General Council into session.
11. Appoint a committee of three to assist him in preparing a program for the International General Assembly.
12. When necessary for the protection of the church in general, advertise parties causing trouble in the church or churches. This shall be done by the general overseer or state overseer (27th A., 1932, p. 37).
13. The ministerial authority of no person shall be finally terminated until a revocation of his ministry be approved and signed by the general overseer and the chief executive officer of the church in the state or territory in whose jurisdiction the case may be (43rd A., 1950, p. 15).

III. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY

In case the office of the general overseer be vacated because of death, disability, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the first assistant general overseer shall fill the unexpired term of the general overseer (50th A., 1964, pp. 51, 52).

S8. ASSISTANT GENERAL OVERSEERS (Executive Bishops, see p. 260.)

(23rd A., 1928, p. 25; 32nd A., 1937, p. 36; 39th A., 1944 p. 37; 40th A., 1945, p. 28; 41st A., 1946, p. 26; 44th A., 1952, p. 31; 48th A., 1960, p. 32; 50th A., 1964, p. 50; 73rd A., 2010).

I. SELECTION

1. The International General Assembly has created the offices of first, second, and third assistant general overseers. The duties of the first, second, and third assistant general overseers shall be to assist the general overseer.
2. The assistant general overseers shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected by the International General Assembly.
3. The assistant general overseers shall be elected for a four-year term, and they shall be eligible to serve no more than eight consecutive years in either of said offices or on the International Executive Committee.

II. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES

The assistant general overseers shall devote their entire time to the general interest of the church (32nd A., 1937, p. 36).

III. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY

Should the office of an assistant general overseer be vacated because of advancement, death, disability, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the remaining International Executive Committee members shall automatically advance in the order of their election by the International General Assembly (73rd A., 2010).

S9. SECRETARY GENERAL (Executive Bishop, see p. 260.)

(68th A., 2000, pp. 86, 87)

I. SELECTION

1. The secretary general shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected biennially by the International General Assembly.
2. The secretary general shall be elected for a four-year term, and he shall be eligible to serve no more than eight consecutive years in this office or on the International Executive Committee (41st A., 1946, p. 26; 73rd A., 2010).

II. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES

The secretary general shall:

1. Keep all records and reports of the ministers and churches coming to the international offices of the church (42nd A., 1948, p. 29).
2. Be custodian of all general church records and legal documents.
3. Furnish such reports as the divisional directors of ministries and the International Executive Council may require (73rd A., 2010).
4. Have an audit of financial records and furnish the International General Assembly a statement of all receipts and disbursements, assets and liabilities, such statements to be prepared by a certified public accountant annually (40th A., 1945, p. 177).
5. Employ all help necessary for his office; employees' salaries to be set in conjunction with the different divisional ministry directors (41st A., 1946, p. 27; 47th A., 1958, p. 31; 73rd A., 2010).

III. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY

In the event the office of the secretary general be vacated because of death, disability, advancement, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the general overseer shall submit by mail the names of the next two men receiving the highest vote, who were not elected to any general office, to the ordained bishops. The ordained bishops shall select the

one who will fill the vacancy in the secretary general's office. Ballots must be returned to the general overseer within twenty (20) days to be valid votes. The one receiving the majority vote shall be declared elected to fill the unexpired term of the secretary general (39th A., 1944, p. 38; 41st A., 1946, p. 22; [1960]; 50th A., 1964, p. 51, Item 6).

S10. MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP

(42nd A., 1948, p. 33; 46th A., 1956, p. 28; 52nd A., 1968, p. 36; 53rd A., 1970, pp. 40, 41; [1972] [1974]; 73rd A., 2010)

I. DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP

(41st A., 1946, p. 22; 42nd A., 1948, p. 30; 44th A., 1952, p. 30; 46th A., 1956, p. 28, Item 51; 52nd A., 1968, p. 36, Item 4; 53rd A., 1970, pp. 40, 41, Item 8; [1972] [1974]; 73rd A., 2010)

A. Selection, Tenure, and Salary

1. The office of the director of Youth and Discipleship shall be filled by one who shall devote his full time to the promotion of the Church of God youth and discipleship work. He shall be eligible to succeed himself one term. He shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected biennially by the International General Assembly.
2. The salary of the director of Youth and Discipleship shall be set by the International Executive Council (50th A., 1964, p. 56).

B. Duties and Authorities

The director of Youth and Discipleship shall:

1. Promote the general interest of Youth and Discipleship ministries.
2. Work with the International Executive Committee in arranging for and the promotion of national or regional Youth and Discipleship Conferences, as outlined by the International General Assembly.
3. Cooperate with the general director of Publications in the promotion of all youth and Christian education publications.
4. Plan for and promote the general interest of the Home for Children (51st A., 1966, p. 56).

II. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP

(49th A., 1962, p. 31; 52nd A., 1968, p. 36; 53rd A., 1970, pp. 40, 41; [1972]; 73rd A., 2010).

A. Selection, Tenure, and Salary

1. The assistant director of Youth and Discipleship shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected biennially by the International General Assembly. He shall be eligible to succeed himself one term.
2. The salary of the assistant director of Youth and Discipleship shall be set by the International Executive Council (50th A., 1964, p. 56).

B. Duties and Authorities

The assistant director of Youth and Discipleship shall assist the director of Youth and Discipleship.

S11. MINISTRY OF USA MISSIONS (73rd A., 2010)

I. USA MISSIONS BOARD

A. Selection

The USA Missions Board shall consist of not less than five members who shall be appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee (74th A., 2012).

B. Duties and Authorities

The USA Missions Board shall:

1. Serve the needs of the church as they relate to all phases of evangelism and USA missions.
2. Formulate plans and recommendations related to evangelism and church planting. Provide new and practical helps for a vigorous pursuit of a Biblical and balanced evangelistic emphasis.
3. Develop resources suitable for special fields. Offer encouragement for work among all racial and social communities of the nation.

II. DIRECTOR OF USA MISSIONS

A. Selection, Tenure, and Salary

The office of the USA Missions director shall be filled by one who should devote his full time to the promotion of evangelism and USA missions. He shall be eligible to serve in this office no more than four consecutive years. His salary shall be set by the International Executive Council (73rd A., 2010 [effective 2012]).

B. Duties and Authorities

The director of USA Missions shall:

1. Promote evangelism in all phases throughout the church.
2. Work with the International Executive Committee and respective state overseers in the promotion of new works and in missions states.
3. With the consent of the divisional director, have authority to call the USA Missions Board into session, when it is deemed necessary.
4. Work with the International Executive Committee and respective state overseers in arranging for and the promotion of any regional conferences that may be decided upon.
5. Work with the state overseers in the interest of evangelism and home missions.
6. Direct the Pioneers for Christ program (50th A., 1964, pp. 53, 54).

III. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF USA MISSIONS

(58th A., 1980, pp. 31, 32; 73rd A., 2010)

A. Selection, Tenure, and Salary

The assistant director of USA Missions shall be eligible to serve in this office no more than four consecutive years. His salary shall be set by the International Executive Council (73rd A., 2010 [effective 2012]).

B. Duties and Authorities

The assistant director of USA Missions shall assist the director of USA Missions.

IV. RESOLUTION ON USA MISSIONS (70th A., 2004, p. 55; 73rd A., 2010)

WHEREAS most statistical surveys list the U.S.A. as having the third largest pre-Christian population in the world; and,

WHEREAS we need to develop and implement strategies that view the U.S.A. as a mission field; and,

WHEREAS World Missions has been incredibly successful in its mission efforts and offers multiple methods by which the U.S.A. can be reached for Christ;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That we recognize the U.S.A. as a mission field; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the USA Missions ministry develop and deploy home missionaries and request missionaries from other ethnic and language groups from the international body who make up the Church of God; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED That we continue to develop means by which the ministries of World Missions and USA Missions work together in developing strategies and training workers for the world harvest.

S12. MINISTRY OF WORLD MISSIONS

(58th A., 1980, pp. 29-31; 68th A., 2000, pp. 78-80; 73rd A., 2010)

I. WORLD MISSIONS BOARD

A. Selection

The World Missions Board shall consist of not less than seven members who shall be appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee.

B. Duties and Authorities

This board shall concern itself with the worldwide ministries of the Church of God. Their duties and authorities shall be:

1. To develop and set forth the policy of the ministry of World Missions and its operation.
2. To consider and approve the annual budget of the ministry of World Missions for presentation to the International Executive Council.
3. To develop a worldwide strategy of evangelism, [and] education and conservation [of converts].

4. To interview, examine, and determine the eligibility of prospective missionaries.
5. To appoint all [World Missions] overseers, missionaries, educational coordinators, and presidents/directors of all educational institutions. Where practical, the tenure of national/territorial overseers of World Missions areas is for two years with a maximum tenure of twelve consecutive years in office (74th A., 2012).
6. To appoint all field directors and regional superintendents, subject to the approval of the International Executive Committee, and set their salaries.
7. To allow each country/territory flexibility in matters of polity to reflect cultural differences or government requirements, as long as the changes do not conflict with the doctrinal statements or Practical Commitments of the International General Assembly.

II. INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL (66th A., 1996, Item 6, p. 62; 68th A., 2000, pp. 79, 80)

A. Purpose

To give greater involvement in order to support continued development of an international perspective in fulfilling the mission of the Church of God, and to ensure the sponsorship of ministries that meet the needs of persons of different cultural settings, the church must embrace a posture that includes both participation and representation in its general functions (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 15:1-21). This posture should include specialized training programs and materials, opportunities for leadership experience, and open channels for new ideas. It should also provide a forum to discuss International General Council agenda items of concern to the international community and give opportunity for raising international issues for discussion.

B. Members

The International Council is composed of the following:

1. International Executive Committee
2. Director and assistant director of World Missions
3. Moderator of Southern Africa
4. Overseer of Indonesia
5. Two members (ordained bishops), at least one being African American and one Hispanic from the U.S.A., appointed by the International Executive Committee in consultation with the leadership of World Missions.
6. The field director and one selected representative (ordained bishop) from each of the following six areas (72nd A., 2008):
 - Africa
 - Asia-Pacific
 - Canada
 - Caribbean
 - Europe
 - Latin America

7. Others as approved by the International Executive Council (The manner of the selection of representatives is determined by each specific region which would be responsible for the travel expenses of its representative.)

C. Meetings

1. Meetings shall be moderated by the general overseer.
2. This council shall meet at least once every two years to provide input on an advisory basis to the International Executive Council on international issues and items of international interest for the agenda of the International General Council.
3. It shall meet prior to and with the International Executive Council (on related international issues) in the September of the off-Assembly years.

D. Function

The function of the International Council shall be to advise the International Executive Council on issues of international concern and to suggest possible items related to ministry in the international community for inclusion on the agenda of the International General Council.

III. DIRECTOR OF WORLD MISSIONS

A. Selection, Tenure, and Salary

The director of World Missions shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected by the International General Assembly biennially. He shall be eligible to serve no more than four consecutive years. His salary shall be set by the International Executive Council.

B. Duties and Authorities

The director of World Missions shall:

1. Execute all the duties and assignments outlined by the World Missions Board.
2. Be the chief administrator of World Missions.
3. Recommend all prospective area superintendents.
4. Recommend all prospective personnel for approval by the World Missions Board.
5. Approve all convention dates in cooperation with the area superintendents.
6. Delegate any assignments necessary to the administrative assistants.
7. Be responsible for the preparation of the annual budget for the board's approval.
8. In conjunction with the chairman of the World Missions Board, disburse emergency funds as authorized by the board.

IV. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF WORLD MISSIONS

A. Selection, Tenure, and Salary

The assistant director of World Missions shall be nominated by the International General Council and elected by the International General Assembly biennially. He shall

be eligible to serve no more than four consecutive years. His salary shall be set by the International Executive Council.

B. Duties and Authorities

The assistant director of World Missions shall:

1. Execute all the duties and assignments outlined by the director of World Missions and the World Missions Board.
2. Direct the program and assignments of the missions representatives. When area superintendents and missionary overseers are in the United States, he shall be responsible for assigning their deputational work as approved by the director of World Missions.
3. Be an official representative in world fields, state camp meetings, and conventions, as assigned by the director of World Missions [1982].
4. Recommend prospective missionaries to the director of World Missions.

V. METHODS USED FOR RAISING MISSIONS FUNDS

1. State and district overseers shall keep the missions cause before the people in their convention work, and an offering [for missions] shall be taken in each district and state convention. Our members on the field shall be notified in time to give them a chance to bring or send their missions offerings.
2. Beginning September 1, 2010, local church treasurers shall send monthly, with their monthly report, an amount equal to 7 percent of all tithes paid into the local church, to the secretary general, of which, 4.75 percent will be designated for the International offices and 2.25 percent designated for World Missions. (72nd A., 2008; [2010]).

Further, that the amount sent monthly to the secretary general be decreased by one-half percent annually (the reduction shared equally by the International Offices and World Missions) until September 1, 2014, after which World Missions will be funded by not less than one-fourth of the 5 percent received by the International Offices. Any increase beyond this amount must be approved by the International Executive Council (72nd A., 2008; [2010]).

The reduction schedule for the amount of tithes sent to the secretary general, and the percentage division of the amount sent, for the International Offices and World Missions, will be as follows:

September 1, 2010	7%	4.75% International Offices 2.25% World Missions
September 1, 2011	6.5%	4.5% International Offices 2% World Missions
September 1, 2012	6%	4.25% International Offices 1.75% World Missions

September 1, 2013	5.5%	4% International Offices 1.5% World Missions
September 1, 2014 (and continuing)	5%	3.75% International Offices 1.25% World Missions

3. Local church treasurers shall follow the same reduction schedule as that for International Offices and World Missions in the amount sent monthly, with their monthly report, to the state treasurer, from tithes paid into the local church. However, the division of the amount sent to the state treasurer shall be for the support of the state/regional office and home missions (72nd A., 2008; [2010]).

Note: For the schedule of amounts to be sent by the local church treasurer monthly, with their monthly report, from tithes paid into the local church, to the secretary general for International Offices and World Missions, and to the state treasurer for support of the state /regional office and home missions, see page 239 this book.

4. Fifty percent (one-half) of all missions money raised in the district convention shall be kept in the state in which it was raised, to be used to evangelize new fields or, in case of emergency, used to assist small churches. The other 50 percent is to be sent to the secretary general for World Missions. All state overseers shall send their state convention missions offerings to the secretary general prior to the closing of the books for the fiscal year, except missions states, which shall be permitted to keep 50 percent of their district and state convention missions offerings for state missions work (40th A., 1945, p. 31; 56th A., 1976, p. 55).
5. Churches and individuals who so desire shall be granted the privilege of contributing directly to the support of any of our missionaries or workers in world fields and all such contributions shall be sent through the office of the secretary general, subject to the regulations of the World Missions Board.
6. Each state overseer shall remind the churches of their delinquency when they fail to raise their missions quotas regularly.
7. All prospective world missionaries shall be required to obtain a certificate of recommendation from the World Missions Board before they be allowed to solicit funds or supplies (37th A., 1942, p. 37).

VI. Unreached People Groups (70th A., 2004, p. 54)

That our local churches be encouraged to adopt and intercede for an unreached people group. Resource materials will be provided by the ministry of World Missions.

Further, that all national churches of the Church of God international adopt and implement measurable steps to evangelize and disciple unreached people groups inside and outside of their own regions (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 15:19-24; Revelation 5:9).

S13. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY OF AN ELECTED MINISTRY LEADER

(67th A., 1998, p. 52; 73rd A., 2010)

A. Filling Vacancy of Ministry Leader

In the event the office of an elected ministry head becomes vacant because of death, disability, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the assistant director of said ministry shall be elevated to the office of director.

B. Filling Vacancy of Assistant Ministry Leader

In the event the office of an elected assistant ministry head be vacated because of death, disability, advancement, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the general overseer will submit by mail the names of the next two persons receiving the highest vote for that position, who were not elected to any general office, to the ordained bishops, to select the one who shall fill the vacancy in the ministry.

Ballots must be returned to the general overseer within 45 days to be valid votes. The one receiving the majority vote shall be declared to fill the unexpired term of the assistant to the ministry in question.

S14. MINISTRY OF CARE

(44th A., 1952, p. 34; 49th A., 1962, pp. 36, 37; 50th A., 1964, p. 52; [1972]; 55th A., 1974, pp. 55, 56; 73rd A., 2010)

I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. Selection

Members of the Board of Directors of the Church of God Ministry of Care shall be appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee.

B. Duties and Authorities

The Ministry of Care Board of Directors shall:

1. Be responsible for all general institutions of benevolence, such as Home for Children, Home for the Aged, Home for Widows, and Home for Ministers.
2. Be responsible for all the disbursements of the Ministry of Care funds.
3. Adopt rules and regulations governing the admissions, the operation of the Homes, and to safeguard the interest of all persons who are admitted.
4. Approve all applicants recommended by the divisional leader for admissions to the Homes.
5. Provide for the general welfare of the persons in the Homes.
6. See that due care is used for the preservation of sanitary and healthful conditions in each Home.
7. Establish definite policies of sick leave for both professional and nonprofessional personnel.

8. Select, and set the salary of, the social services director of the Homes, subject to the approval of the International Executive Committee.

II. METHODS FOR RAISING HOME FOR CHILDREN FUNDS

Mother's Day shall be set apart as Home for Children Day, and a special offering shall be received for the Home for Children (49th A., 1962, p. 37).

III. HOME FOR CHILDREN—CANADA

The national moderator of Canada shall be authorized to establish and operate a Home for Children in Canada under the auspices of the general overseer and the national moderator of Canada (39th A., 1944, p. 29;[1972]).

S15. MINISTERIAL CARE, CENTER FOR

(59th A., 1982, page 42, item 4; [1996])

A Center for Ministerial Care shall be established by the International Executive Council, with accessibility at both general and state levels, including a toll-free telephone number.

The purpose of this center, staffed by experienced and qualified personnel, shall be to provide nurture and care for ministers and family members on a confidential basis and to restore troubled or erring ministers to emotional and spiritual health (Galatians 6:1, 2).

S16. CHAPLAINS COMMISSION (64th A., 1992, p. 84-86)

I. NAME: CHAPLAINS COMMISSION

II. CHAPLAINS COMMISSION BOARD

A. Selection

The Chaplains Commission Board shall consist of not less than five members, who shall be appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee.

B. Duties and Authorities

The Chaplains Commission Board shall

1. Develop and set forth policies of the commission and its operation.
2. Consider and approve the annual budget of the commission for presentation to the International Executive Council.
3. Establish educational and pastoral standards for all commission endorsements.
4. Interview in person any applicant and spouse prior to final approval for military, institutional, hospital, prison, industrial, or campus chaplaincy, as well as for the specialized ministries of pastoral counselors, clinical pastoral education supervisors, and other pastoral specialists whose employment requires endorsement.

5. Annually review the work and denominational relationship of all endorsed personnel.
6. Delineate policies which enhance the commission's chaplaincy and specialized ministry programs.
7. Establish procedures in the supervision and discipline of endorsed personnel.

III. CHAPLAINS COMMISSION DIRECTOR

A. Selection

The International General Assembly has created the office of director of Chaplains Commission. The International Executive Committee is authorized to fill the office.

B. Duties and Authorities

The Chaplains Commission director shall

1. Be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the commission.
2. Maintain a direct, functional, pastoral, and supervisory relationship with all endorsed personnel.
3. Screen and approve or disapprove all applications for volunteer and all part-time chaplaincy and specialized ministry personnel.
4. Submit an annual report to the International Executive Council of all commission activities.
5. Be the voting representative of the Church of God to national agencies and associations which foster understanding and promotion of chaplaincy and specialized ministry activities.
6. Be the Church of God liaison to all institutions allocating chaplaincy and specialized ministry positions.
7. Periodically visit all endorsed personnel as an expression of the church's support for these ministries.

Initially investigate and evaluate all questions or charges with regard to endorsed personnel's indiscretion and/or violation of church teachings, doctrines, or practical commitments and, if necessary, to submit written recommendations for further investigation and/or discipline to the designated state or territorial overseer.

S17. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, GENERAL

I. STANDING BOARDS AND COMMITTEES (73rd A., 2010; see S7., II., 6)

1. We recommend that all standing [boards and] committees receive remuneration sufficient to cover their expenses when called together by the chairman or ex officio chairman (25th A., 1930, p. 21).
2. The chairman of each board shall be recognized as the proper authority to call all board meetings.

3. In the event the chairman should fail to do so, when necessity demands, any two members of the board shall have the authority to call a board meeting.
4. The general overseer, by virtue of his office, has the right to ask any board to meet, should he deem it necessary.

II. APPEAL BOARD

If an offending minister is not satisfied with the decision of a state board, he may appeal his case to the general overseer, who with his assistants and the secretary general may appoint a board to rehear the case, if in their judgment the case merits a new trial (33rd A., 1938, p. 50; 55th A., 1974, p. 53).

III. EMERGENCY BOARD

The International Executive Committee is empowered to act as an emergency board.

IV. TRUSTEES

A. Boards of Trustees

For the purpose of holding title to church properties (both real and personal) and the management of the same, there shall be a General Board of Trustees; State Boards of Trustees in the various states/territories, and countries; and Local Boards of Trustees in the various communities where local congregations exist. Any property (both real and personal) held by any of these boards is the property of the Church of God and shall be managed and controlled exclusively for the use and benefit of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) (53rd A., 1970, pp. 43, 44; 62nd A., 1988, Journal, p. 49; [1994]).

B. General Board of Trustees, Members

The General Board of Trustees shall consist of seven members, two of whom shall be designated as alternates, appointed biennially at the International General Assembly by the International Executive Committee. Members of the General Board of Trustees so appointed shall hold office until their successors are appointed or until their positions on the board be declared vacant as hereinafter provided (53rd A., 1970, pp. 43, 44; 63rd A., 1990, p. 80).

C. General Board of Trustees, Duties and Authorities

(65th A., 1994, Item 11, p. 89; [1994]).

1. When the International General Assembly is not in session, any five members of the General Board of Trustees shall have power and authority to make all necessary transactions or arrangements for the sale or transfer of property, or for the borrowing of money and the pledging of real estate to secure the payment of the same, and to execute all necessary conveyances pursuant to the direction of the International Executive Committee (53rd A., 1970, pp. 43, 44; 62nd A., 1988, Journal, p. 49; 63rd A., 1990, p. 80).

2. WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) that its general trustees hold title to all the real and personal property owned by, or held for the benefit of, the general church and its headquarters; but
3. WHEREAS, from time to time, certain individuals bestow property and other gifts upon integral agencies of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) and it is necessary that the board of directors of the integral agencies be authorized to receive said property or gift; now
4. THEREFORE be it resolved by the International General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) that these integral agencies of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) are authorized and empowered to receive and hold title to real and personal property; with the duty, where legally possible, to recover to the general trustees of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.) under terms requiring such general trustees to hold title in accord with the conditions imposed by the device or gift (46th A., 1956, p. 30; [1994]).

Any person appointed to said General Board of Trustees shall be a member in good standing of the Church of God (Cleveland Tennessee, U.S.A.). If at any time, any member of any Board of Trustees shall cease to be a member in good standing, or if by reason of death, removal, incapacity, or unwillingness to perform all duties of his office, his place on the board may be declared vacant: on the general board by the general overseer, on a state board by the state overseer, on a local board by a local church conference; [and] the same power that declares said office vacant shall appoint a person to serve until the time for regular appointments, and the one so appointed shall have all authority held by the one removed (35th A., 1940, pp. 32-34; [1994]).

S18. EDUCATION, GENERAL BOARD

(52nd A., 1968, pp. 34-36; 53rd A., 1970, pp. 41, 42; [1972]; 65th A., 1994, Item 18, pp. 92, 93)

I. SELECTION (73rd A., 2010)

The General Board of Education shall consist of not less than five members (at least one of whom shall be from outside the United States), who shall be appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee.

II. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES

1. To stimulate, nurture, and coordinate educational ministries in the Church of God.
2. To update and refine the Master Plan of Education at least every five years and to pursue its implementation.
3. To assist in the development, standardization, and evaluation of educational ministries at all levels in the Church of God.
4. To function in an advisory and consultative capacity to the educational institutions of the Church of God nationally and internationally without impinging upon the authority of the boards of control of these institutions.

To meet at least biennially (at the International General Assembly) in combined session with the presidents/directors and board chairmen of each institution of higher education and other educational leaders as appropriate.

III. INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1. All Church of God agencies (national, state, and local) which desire to establish an institution of higher education should first secure permission from the International Executive Committee for research, study, and planning of such an institution.
2. Permission having been obtained, the agency should work with the General Board of Education in the projection of the plans for and details of operation of the new institution.
3. The results of the research, when finalized, shall be presented to the International Executive Council for approval, and permission to establish a Bible college or liberal arts college shall be granted by the International Executive Council.

S19. LEE UNIVERSITY

I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. Selection

The Lee University Board of Directors shall consist of not less than seven members (two of whom shall be laymen), who shall be appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee (47th A., 1958, p. 33).

B. Duties and Authorities

The Lee University Board of Directors shall:

1. Be a legislative body and determine university policy.
2. Select and employ the university president, subject to the approval of the International Executive Committee.
3. Consider nominations of faculty and university personnel submitted by the president, with power to approve or veto. Upon failure of the president to nominate or renominate suitable persons for department heads, faculty members, or employees of the university, the board shall investigate reasons for his action, and if in their judgment such action is not warranted, any member of the board shall have the privilege of nomination, which the board may approve or veto (46th A., 1956, pp. 22, 23).
4. In session with the president, set salaries of faculty members and other university employees. In session with the president, set prices for tuition, board, private lessons, and all other university fees. The board of directors shall have final jurisdiction of any and all charges brought against any faculty member. It shall approve an annual budget for operation of the university (41st A., 1946, p. 29).

5. Sign a contract and see that the president and all faculty members of Lee University sign a contract that they will not teach, publish, or allow to be taught or published, anything contrary to the Church of God Declaration of Faith or any other established doctrine of the church (43rd A., 1950, p. 16; 54th A., 1972, p. 55).
6. Permit no person unable or unwilling to accept in good faith the Church of God Declaration of Faith to be employed. In the event of the failure on the part of any faculty member to live up to said agreement the board of directors is authorized to dismiss him or her from the faculty.

II. LEE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

A. Selection and Salary

The president shall be selected by the board of directors, who shall also set his salary.

B. Duties and Authorities

The board of directors shall define the duties and responsibilities of the president (53rd A., 1970, p. 39).

III. VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCE

A. Selection

A suitable person shall be employed to fill the office of vice president for business and finance. He shall be selected in the same manner as other university personnel.

B. Duties and Authorities

The duties and responsibilities of the vice president for business and finance shall be determined by the board of directors (46th A., 1956, p. 23).

IV. ADVISORY BOARD

Selection, Duties, and Authorities

That we have an Advisory Board to the Lee University Board of Directors, consisting of all state overseers, which shall meet with the board of directors and the university president at each International General Assembly, to advise with them in matters pertaining to the best interest of the university and church (42nd A., 1948, p. 32).

S20. MINISTRY OF PUBLICATIONS (73rd A., 2010)

I. MINISTRY OF PUBLICATIONS BOARD

A. Selection

The Ministry of Publications Board shall consist of seven members appointed biennially by the International Executive Committee (74th A., 2012).

B. Duties and Authorities

The Ministry of Publications Board shall:

1. With the general director of Publications, appoint, define the duties, and set the salary of all editorial and other personnel necessary for the operation of the publishing program of the church (52nd A., 1968, p. 36).
2. With the general director of Publications, have supervision of the Tennessee Music and Printing Company (46th A., 1956, p. 26).
3. Set up policies whereby the various ministries [of the Publishing House] may be coordinated (44th A., 1952, p. 32).
4. Give final decisions in all matters of business brought before it by the editors, the general director of Publications, or the employees (42nd A., 1948).
5. Pass upon the purchase of all machinery and other non-expendable material.
6. Set and maintain the editorial policies for all our publications (44th A., 1952, p. 32).

II. GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLICATIONS

A. Selection and Salary

1. The general director of the Ministry of Publications shall be appointed by the International Executive Committee. He shall be executive head of the Ministry of Publications and shall be responsible for the total operations of the Publishing House.
2. The International Executive Council shall set his salary.

B. Duties and Authorities

1. The International Executive Council shall outline the areas of job responsibility of the general director of Publications.
2. He shall execute policies as set forth by the Ministry of Publications Board. He shall sign a contract that he will not teach, publish, or allow to be taught or published, anything contrary to the Church of God Declaration of Faith, or any other established doctrine of the church. A copy of the Declaration of Faith shall be posted in the office of the general director of the Ministry of Publications.

III. EDITORIAL POLICIES

1. We believe our literature to be one of the greatest mediums for provoking and shaping the thought of our people in matters pertaining to the amity, progress, and position of our church.
2. We believe the Church of God Evangel and our Sunday School Literature are representative voices of the church as a whole and should not in any circumstances solely reflect the opinion of one section, ministry, or individual.
3. We believe these publications are for the dissemination of the truth, the propagation of the gospel of Christ, and the indoctrination of our people, and must at all times conform

to the Teachings of the Church of God and the Declaration of Faith as outlined by the International General Assembly.

4. We believe our policy should be one of cordiality and friendliness toward all, without the surrender of any of our teachings or principles.
5. It should be the general policy of our official journal, the Church of God Evangel, to publish articles, editorials, news items, reports of activities, and personal testimonies in harmony with and for the best interest of the church.
6. All publications should be Biblical, fundamental, Pentecostal, and evangelistic.
7. They should be patriotic, but not militaristic.
8. They should be nonpolitical and nonracial.
9. They should not be used for propaganda or promotion of personal, secular, or business enterprises.
10. The name Pathway Press shall be adopted by the Publishing House to be used as an imprint on publications of such nature that they will have a potential market outside the Church of God [1974].

IV. CHURCH OF GOD EVANGEL (6th A., 1911, p. 10; 31st A., 1936, p. 35; [1972]; 55th A., 1974, pp. 54, 55; 73rd A., 2010)

The *Church of God Evangel*, being the official journal of the Church of God, is an effective means of acquainting our local congregations and ministers with the doctrine, polity, and various ministries of the Church of God, and is considered an official voice for Pentecost in the world today.

