

THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE  
OF THE  
CHINESE METHODIST CHURCH  
IN  
AUSTRALIA  
CONSTITUTION,  
DOCTRINES  
AND  
DISCIPLINE  
**[2020 Edition]**

(Released 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 incorporating amendments up to 28/11/2020)

[Inside cover intentionally left blank]

# The Book of Discipline of The Chinese Methodist Church in Australia 2020

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Historical Statement</b>	
<b>Part I - The Constitution</b>	
Division I      Preamble -----	9
Division II     Interpretation -----	10
Division III    Name and Membership -----	10
Division IV     Episcopacy and Ministry -----	11
Division V      Organization and Procedures -----	12
Division VI     Discipline and Restrictive Rules -----	15
Division VII    Title Properties and Common Seal -----	16
Division VIII   The Judiciary -----	17
Division IX     Amendments and Voting Rights -----	17
Division X      Dissolution -----	18
 <b>Part II - Doctrinal Statements and the General Rules</b>	
The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church -----	19
The General Rules of the Methodist Church -----	24
 <b>Part III - Social Principles</b>	
The Methodist Social Creed -----	27
 <b>Part IV - Rules of Organization and Administration</b>	
<i>Chapter One - The Local Church:</i>	
Definition of Local Church -----	35
Foundation of a Local Methodist Church -----	36
Church Membership -----	36
The Local Church Executive Committee -----	46
The Executive Committee -----	47
Committee on Public Relations -----	49
Committee on Literature -----	49
Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary -----	49
Local Church Program Committee -----	49
Committee on Membership and Evangelism -----	50
Committee on Christian Education -----	51
Church School Superintendent -----	55
Committee on Missions -----	56
Committee on Christian Social Concerns -----	57
Committee on Stewardship & Finance -----	57
Committee on Worship and Music -----	58
Task groups -----	59
Lay Activity in the Local Church -----	59
Congregational Meeting -----	60

## **Chapter Two - The Conferences:**

I) <i>Mission/Annual Conference:</i>	
Composition and Character -----	61
Organization -----	62
Powers and Duties -----	63
Business of the Conference -----	63
Records and Archives -----	64
Disciplinary Questions -----	65
Conference Agencies -----	69
Board of Nominations -----	69
Conference Executive Board -----	70
Board of Appointments -----	70
Board on the Ministry -----	70
Board of Laity -----	73
Board of Evangelism -----	74
Board of Missions -----	76
Board on Christian Education -----	78
Board on Christian Social Concerns -----	81
Board on Worship and Music -----	83
Board on Investigation -----	86
Discipline Review Committee -----	87
II) <i>District Conference</i> -----	89
III) <i>The Local Conference:</i>	
General Provision -----	90
Power and Duties -----	92
Committee on Nominations -----	94
Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations -----	94
Disciplinary Questions -----	96
Miscellany -----	96

## **Chapter Three - The Ministry**

Nature of Ministry -----	97
The Ordained Ministry -----	97
Ministerial Orders -----	98
The Local Ministry -----	98
Appointment of Local Preacher and Deacons -----	101
The Itinerant Ministry -----	102
Deacon -----	103
The Elders -----	105
Election into Full Connection -----	106
Termination of Conference Membership -----	111
Superannuated Ministers -----	113
General Provisions -----	113
Ministers from other Churches -----	114
District Superintendent -----	115
Diaconal Ministers -----	118
The Presidency -----	120
The Episcopacy -----	123
The Superintendency -----	125
Schools of Theology -----	126

<b>Chapter Four - Church Property Management</b>	
All Titles – In Trust-----	129
Holding Body -----	129
The National Laws -----	129
Board of Trustees -----	130
General Provisions -----	130
Building, Purchasing, Remodeling -----	131
Church Location and Building -----	132
Property Management -----	132
Committee on Property Management -----	133
Episcopal Residence -----	133
Institutions and Programs -----	133
<b>Chapter Five - Administrative Agencies</b>	
General Provisions -----	135
The Conference Boards -----	136
<b>Chapter Six - Judicial Administration</b>	
The Judicial Council -----	139
Trials -----	142
<b>Chapter Seven - Financial Administration</b>	
Board of Finance -----	157
Committee on Stewardship & Finance -----	158
Local Church Treasurer -----	159

**Part V - The General Services of The Church**

The Order of Worship (Brief Form) -----	161
The Order of Worship (Complete Form) -----	162
The Order for the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism -----	164
The Order for Confirmation and Reception into the Church --	167
The Order for the Administration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion -----	168
Proper Prefaces for Certain Days to Precede the Sanctus in the Order for Holy Communion -----	174
Order for the Administration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion (Brief Form) -----	174
The Order for the Service of Marriage -----	177
The Order for Burial of the Dead -----	180
The Order for the Ordination of Deacons -----	188
The Order for the Ordination of Elders -----	190
The Order for the Consecration of Bishops -----	194
The Order for the Commissioning of Diaconal Ministers ----	198

**Part VI - The Schedules**

<b>Schedule I -</b> Chapter 1: Constitution of The Methodist Women’s Fellowship -----	201
Chapter 2: By Laws of MWF (Conference Level) -----	203
Chapter 3: Constitution of MWF (Local Level) -----	207
Chapter 4: By Laws of MWF (Local Level) -----	209
<b>Schedule II -</b> Constitution of The Methodist Men -----	212
<b>Schedule III -</b> Constitution of The Methodist Youth Fellowship -----	215



## PART I

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONSTITUTION OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA (INC) ARBN 063388778</b></p>
--

### DIVISION I

#### PREAMBLE

- 1.1 We, the delegates to the Mission Conference held in Adelaide, South Australia between 1st to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1995 representing the Local Church Executive Committees of the following Local Churches, namely:

Methodist Church in Australia, Perth, Western Australia  
Chinese Methodist Church of Melbourne, Victoria  
Trinity Methodist Church, Mt. Waverley, Victoria  
Melbourne Chinese Methodist Box Hill Church Inc. Box Hill, Victoria  
Chinese Methodist Church of Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia  
Chinese Methodist Church of Sydney, Sydney, New South Wales  
Chinese Methodist Church of Brisbane, Brisbane, Queensland  
Methodist Church in Australia, Indooroopilly, Queensland  
(the founding local churches)

duly accredited to attend and represent these founding local churches (FLC).

- 1.1.1 **Holding** the FLC are connectional Methodist Churches and desiring that the essential unity as Methodist be made actual in organization and administration in Australia,
- 1.1.2 **Recognizing** that there are in existence church / preaching centres/ points which are Local Churches (LC) in formation namely,
- (i) Preston Preaching Centre, Melbourne VIC
  - (ii) Immanuel Methodist Church, Perth WA
  - (iii) Canberra Preaching Centre, ACT
  - (iv) Wollongong Preaching Centre, Wollongong, NSW

And such others formed hereinafter in accordance with this Constitution and the Methodist Discipline would automatically become Local Churches.

- 1.1.3 **Resolve:** that the Constitution tabled before this session of the Mission Conference be adopted with amendments and shall replace the Constitutions of all state incorporation of the FLC.

## **DIVISION II**

### **INTERPRETATION**

- 2.1 Wherever applicable, the singular will include the plural and the masculine will include feminine.
- 2.2 Terms and expressions in this Constitution shall be given the same meaning given to it in the Methodist Discipline, wherever applicable.
- 2.3 The Conference shall mean the Mission Conference established on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1994, the Provisional Annual Conference and the Annual Conference which would come into being on there being five elders and ten elders respectively constituting its membership.
- 2.4 During the transitional period of the Mission Conference and the Provisional Annual Conference, any reference in this Constitution to the spiritual and executive head of the Methodist Church in Australia shall mean the Superintendent and the President respectively.
- 2.5 The abbreviations MCA, CMCA, MD and LC refer to the Methodist Church in Australia, the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia, Methodist Discipline and Local Church respectively.
- 2.6 The transitional period shall be the period before the inauguration of the Annual Conference in accordance to Clause 2.3.

## **DIVISION III**

### **NAME AND MEMBERSHIP**

#### **NAME**

- 3.1. The name of the Church shall be the Methodist Church in Australia (MCA) which name may be translated into languages other than English by the Conference. The Chinese Methodist Church in Australia (CMCA) being the legal successor of the Methodist Church in Australia, Inc. (MCA) registered under ARBN 063388778, MCA in this Discipline shall hereinafter mean CMCA.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.2 Members of the LC shall be deemed to be members of MCA who are baptized in accordance with Christ's commands and have received proper instructions as determined by the MD and who, before a congregation of a LC assembled at a Sunday service make a fresh and personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ and are deemed to submit themselves to the government of the MCA. A record of names of members shall be kept at the minister's office of the LC by the Secretary.

- 3.3 The Local Conference may remove from the register such persons whose whereabouts are not known after posting a notice of its intention to do so at the premises of the LC where such persons were members, for a period 26 weeks.

## **DIVISION IV**

### **EPISCOPACY AND MINISTRY**

- 4.1 The MCA shall be an episcopal Methodist Church.
- 4.2 During the transitional period when the Conference shall be termed the Mission Conference, it shall have a Superintendent who shall be assisted by District Superintendents all of which positions shall be filled by elders in full connection with the Conference. The term of office of the Superintendent shall be for two (2) years. The Superintendent shall not be elected for more than two (2) successive terms.
- 4.3 When the Provisional Annual Conference shall be inaugurated in accordance with Clause 2.3, the Conference shall elect a President as the spiritual and executive head of the MCA. The term of office of the President shall be for three (3) years and shall not be elected for more than two (2) successive terms.
- 4.4 When the Annual Conference shall be inaugurated in accordance with Clause 2.3, the Conference shall elect a Bishop as the spiritual and executive head of the MCA.
- 4.5 The District Superintendents shall in addition to their duties and powers contained in the MD pertaining to their respective Districts deputize for the Superintendent/President/Bishop as they may be directed by the Executive Board.
- 4.6 The Provisional Annual Conference shall become an Annual Conference at the session of the Conference (not an Extraordinary Conference) following the event when there shall be ten (10) Elders in full connection with the conference. At this Conference, a Bishop shall be elected for the quadrennium. A Bishop shall not be elected to serve for more than two (2) successive terms.
- 4.7 The Superintendent or President or Bishop shall preside at all sessions of the Conference and shall decide all questions of law coming before him in the regular business of a session; provided that such question be presented in writing for the pending case only until each shall have been affirmed by the Judicial Council. The Superintendent or President or Bishop shall report in writing annually all his decisions of law, with the syllabi of the same to the Judicial Council, which shall affirm, modify or reverse them.
- 4.8 The Conference shall elect biennially / triennially or for quadrennium a Board / Council on Superintendency/ Presidency / Episcopacy comprising two (2) ministerial and two (2) lay members which shall review the work and administration of the Superintendent/ President or Bishop and present its report from time to time to the Conference for such action as the Board/

Council may deem appropriate in accordance with the Constitution and the MD. The Superintendent/ President or Bishop shall meet with the Board/ Council at least once a year. The Chairman of the Council shall be elected by the Conference every year.

4.9 The Superintendent / President / Bishop shall be installed or consecrated as the case may be, at such time and place as the Conference shall decide.

4.10 Qualification of Superintendent/President/Bishop:

4.10.1 The provisions contained herein shall apply to candidates for Superintendent, President, or Bishop who shall join the Conference after the conclusion of the third annual session of the Conference (1996).

4.10.2 Candidates of the position of Superintendent shall be elders who are citizens or permanent residents of Australia with five (5) years full connection with Methodist Church recognized by the Conference and shall have a minimum of three (3) years full connection with the Conference.

4.10.3 Candidates for the position of President shall be elders who are citizens or permanent residents of Australia with seven (7) years full connection with Methodist Church recognized by the Conference and shall have a minimum three (3) years full connection with the Conference.

4.10.4. Candidates for the position of Bishop shall be elders who are citizens of Australia with ten (10) years full connection with Methodist Church recognized by the Conference and shall have a minimum three (3) years full connection with the Conference.

## **DIVISION V**

### **ORGANISATION AND PROCEDURES**

#### **CONFERENCE**

5.1 The supreme authority of the MCA shall be the Conference which shall comprise delegates representing LC (as provided herein and the MD) which shall meet annually between the eleventh and the thirteenth month following the previous Conference.

5.2 The Conference shall have full legislative and executive powers and authority which inter alia shall include the following matters:

5.2.1 To define and fix the conditions, privileges and duties of church membership.

5.2.2 To define and fix the qualification, powers and duties of traveling elders, traveling deacons, local elders, local deacons, supply pastor, lay preachers; deaconesses and diaconal ministers.

- 5.2.3 To define and fix the powers, duties and privileges of the District Conferences, Local Conferences and Congregational Meetings.
- 5.2.4 To provide for the organization, promotion and administration of work of the MCA outside its national boundaries.
- 5.2.5 To determine the method of election of the Bishop / President / Superintendent and other officers of the MCA.
- 5.2.6 To define the qualification, powers, duties, privileges and limitations of the episcopacy, and to provide for the discontinuance in office of a Bishop / President / Superintendent because of impairment of health or inefficiency or unacceptability.
- 5.2.7 To declare when a minimum of five (5) or a minimum of ten (10) elders in full connection have come into existence to coincide with the coming into being of the Provisional Annual Conference and the Annual Conference respectively in the event of any doubt.
- 5.2.8 To regulate all matters relating to the form and mode of worship, subject to the Restrictive Rules.
- 5.2.9 To provide a judicial system and a method of judicial procedure for the MCA except as herein otherwise prescribed.
- 5.2.10 To initiate and to direct all connectional works of the MCA and to provide councils, boards, commissions, and committees for their promotion and administration.
- 5.2.11 To determine and provide for the raising and distribution of funds necessary to carry on the work of the MCA, except as herein otherwise prescribed.
- 5.2.12 To establish such councils or bodies for the general work of the MCA as may be deemed advisable.
- 5.2.13 To ensure fair and equitable representation from all groups at all levels of the MCA, with special consideration for and in consultation with existing minority groups.
- 5.2.14 To enact such other legislation as may be necessary in consonance with this Constitution.
- 5.2.15 And such other powers as may be deemed necessary for the administration of the MCA.
- 5.2.16 There shall be such District Conferences as shall be deemed necessary by the Conference from time to time with District Superintendent appointed thereto with powers, duties, and privileges as contained in the MD.

- 5.2.17 There shall be a Local Conference for each LC or a number of congregations with such powers, duties and privileges as contained in the MD.
- 5.2.18 The Conference shall from time to time admit to its full membership LC with the same powers, privileges, obligations and duties pursuant to this Constitution and the MD.
- 5.2.19 The Conference shall be composed of the Bishop / President / Superintendent, all *pastors* in full connection with the Conference, together with such lay members elected by each Local Conference as are hereinafter provided; the Conference Lay Leader, the Conference Secretary, the chairman of the Conference Board of Finance , the Conference president of the Methodist Women Fellowship, the Conference president of the Methodist Adult Fellowship, the Conference director of youth work, and the Conference president of the Methodist Youth Fellowship who shall be not less than 18 years old.

Each LC shall be entitled to one (1) lay delegate. Moreover, for every 100 members, or part thereof, in excess of the first 100 members it shall be entitled to one (1) additional lay delegate, provided however, a LC may have a maximum of three (3) lay delegates on the basis of church membership only, unless the church has more than three (3) ministers in full connection.

- 5.2.20 The lay members of the Conference shall not vote on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its ministerial members, and on the ordination of ministers.
- 5.2.21 The Conference shall formulate a plan for the support of the Superintendency / Presidency / Episcopacy.
- 5.2.22 The Conference shall elect an Executive Board comprising the Bishop/ President / Superintendent and an equal number of ministers and lay members with a total of not be more than fifteen (15) voting members. (District Superintendents who are not elective members shall be ex-officio members without vote). It shall include the Superintendent / President / Bishop as chairman, the Conference Lay Leader, the Conference Secretary, the chairman of the Conference Board on Finance, and the Conference president of the Methodist Women Fellowship. It shall execute the decisions of the Conference and coordinate the work of the councils, boards, commissions and committees of all local churches, organizations and institution within the structure of the MCA.

## **PROCEDURE**

- 5.3 The Conference Secretary shall give due notice of the Conference each year to the LC stipulating the date, time, venue and agenda together with proposed Resolutions and Special Resolutions for proposed amendments to the

Constitution (if any), for delivery to all delegates elected to attend the Conference at least 28 days before the date of the Conference.

- 5.4 All Records, including the register of members, books and documents of the MCA shall be in the Custody of the Conference Secretary and all books of accounts and documents related thereto shall be in the custody of the Treasurer and shall be available to members of the LC for inspection during office hours at the offices of MCA within seven (7) days of request in writing being made.
- 5.5. All Proposals by Local Conference / District Conference shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Board twenty-eight (28) days before the Conference at which such resolutions shall be discussed.
- 5.6 The MCA shall manage its finances and organize its activities, and generally perform such duties as an independent body.
- 5.7 The Conference shall appoint a reputable firm of accountants to advise, formulate and plan its financial management and procedures to be adapted to ensure sound management, planning and accounting of MCA and all LC finances, at all times.
- 5.8 The Conference Secretary, all secretaries of DC, LC and of all Boards, Commissions and Committees of LC shall cause proper minutes of all proceedings of meetings to be recorded and kept in the minute-books after amendment and confirmation of the minutes at the commencement of the following meeting.
- 5.9 Local Conference shall be held at least twice annually. The LCEC shall act as its delegate between conferences. Extraordinary meetings of all Local Conferences, LCEC, all Committees, Commissions of DC, and Boards of the MCA and the LC shall be called at the request of the Minister, Chairman or Secretary or on the written request of three (3) members of the LCEC, Committees, Commissions, or Boards.
- 5.10 The Chairperson of all meetings of conferences, councils, boards, commissions, and committees shall have a casting vote.

## **DIVISION VI**

### **DISCIPLINE AND RESTRICTIVE RULES**

#### **METHODIST DISCIPLINE**

- 6.1 The Constitution of MCA, together with the Articles of Religion of the MCA which shall be also known as the Doctrinal Statement(AR), and also with, *inter alia*, the General Rules (GR), Social Principles (SP), Rules of Organization and Administration (ROA), General Services of the Church (GSC) and the Schedules shall objectively and collectively be referred to and cited as the Methodist Discipline(MD).

## **RESTRICTIVE RULES**

- 6.2 The Conference shall not revoke, alter or change the AR, or the GR, or establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to the present existing and established standards of doctrine.
- 6.3 The Conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of the government of MCA so as to do away with episcopacy and plan of the itinerant general superintendency.
- 6.4 The Conference shall not do away with the privileges of our ministers' right to trial by a committee and of appeal; neither shall it do away with the privilege of members' right to trial before the church or by a committee, and of appeal.

## **DIVISION VII**

### **TITLE PROPERTIES AND COMMON SEAL**

#### **PROPERTIES**

- 7.1 The Title to all assets including real estate, monies and chattels wherever situated shall be held in the name of the MCA by itself or by Board of Trustees elected by the Annual Conference.
- 7.2 The MCA may purchase real or personal properties for its use or the use of LC or organizations and institutions which are part of its structure in any part of Australia if such is needed for the accomplishment of its objects and purposes. It may raise funds for the purpose of acquiring real estate and chattels that are needed for its use by gifts, devises, bequests and grants of real estate, monies, and personal property. The MCA shall have the power and authority to borrow money by giving securities by way of mortgages of real estate owned by it and to incur indebtedness for its purposes in whatever manner it may deem necessary and prudent.
- 7.3 All funds raised by a LC or by MCA specifically for the acquisition, development or improvement of real estate (project) shall be held and disbursed by the MCA for the benefit only for the project of that LC.
- 7.4 The property and income of the MCA shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the MCA and no part of that property or income may be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of the CMCA, except in good faith in the promotion of those objects.
- 7.5 The powers under Division VII shall be exercised by the Conference through its Board of Trustees as contained in the MD under the Section on "Trustees and Church Property Management".

## **COMMON SEAL**

- 7.6 The MCA shall have a Common Seal which shall be in the custody of the Superintendent/ President/Bishop. All deeds, instruments and other documents in writing required to be executed by the MCA shall be executed by the Common Seal being affixed thereon in the presence of the Superintendent / President / Bishop and one other member of the Conference Executive Board, or of BCPM, both of whom shall also countersign thereon.

## **DIVISION VIII**

### **THE JUDICIARY**

- 8.1 There shall be a Judicial Council. The Conference shall determine the number and qualifications of its members, their term of office, and the method of election and the filling of vacancies.
- 8.2 The Judicial Council shall have the authority:
- 8.2.1 To determine the constitutionality of any act of the Conference upon an appeal of one-fifth of the members of the Conference.
  - 8.2.2 To hear and determine any appeal on a question of law made in the Conference when the said appeal has been made by one-fifth (1/5) of that conference present and voting.
  - 8.2.3 To affirm, modify or reverse decisions of law made by the Superintendent / President / Bishop in Conference.
  - 8.2.4 To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by the Conference upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof.
  - 8.2.5 To have such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by the Conference.
  - 8.2.6 To provide its own methods of organization and procedure.
- 8.3 All decisions of the Judicial Council shall be final. When the Judicial Council shall declare unconstitutional any act of the Annual Conference then in session, that decision shall be reported back to the Conference immediately.
- 8.4 The Conference shall establish for the MCA a judicial system which shall guarantee to ministers and members before the congregation a right to trial by a committee.

## **DIVISION IX**

### **AMENDMENTS AND VOTING RIGHTS**

#### **AMENDMENTS**

- 9.1 Amendments to the Constitution shall be made upon a three-quarters (3/4) majority of the Conference present and voting except in the case of the Restrictive Rules. The vote, after being completed, shall be canvassed by the Superintendent / President / Bishop, and the amendments voted upon shall become effective immediately following the session of the Conference unless otherwise specified.
- 9.2 All legislation of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Australia and amendments to the Social Principle (SP), Rules of Organization and Administration (ROA), and General Services of Church (GSC) shall be by a three-quarters majority vote and shall become effective immediately following the session of the Conference at which it is enacted unless otherwise specified.
- 9.3 Proposals for the Amendments to the Constitution shall originate at Local Conferences.

## **VOTING RIGHT**

- 9.4 *All* LC delegates to the Conference shall be entitled to vote and be entitled to hold elected office. All decisions of the Conference, District Conference, Local Conference, Boards, Commissions and Committees shall be by majority vote unless otherwise provided herein.

## **DIVISION X**

### **DISSOLUTION**

- 10.1 If upon the dissolution or winding up of the MCA there remains after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities of any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid or distributed among the members of this MCA, but shall be given or transferred to some other incorporated society having objects similar, wholly, or in part to the objects of the MCA and which shall prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property amongst its or their members, or to some charitable objects, of an incorporated society which shall be determined by the Conference at or before the time of dissolution or winding up, or in default thereof if insofar as effect cannot be given to such determination then such payments or distribution shall be determined by a Judge of the State Supreme Court or Federal Court of Australia wherever applicable.

## **PART II**

<b>DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS AND THE GENERAL RULES</b>
---

### **18. THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION OF THE METHODIST CHURCH**

#### **Article I. - Of Faith in the Holy Trinity**

There is but one living and true God, everlasting without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity - the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

#### **Article II. - Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very Man**

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of man.

#### **Article III. - Of the Resurrection of Christ**

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

#### **Article IV. - Of the Holy Ghost**

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

#### **Article V. - Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation**

The Holy Scripture contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or to be thought requisite necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church. The names of the canonical books are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, Cantica or Song of Solomon, Four Prophets the Greater, Twelve Prophets the Less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

#### **Article VI. - Of the Old Testament**

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign

that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given by God to Moses as touching ceremonies and rites doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

**Article VII. - Of Original or Birth Sin**

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

**Article VIII. - Of Free Will**

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

**Article IX. - Of the Justification of Man**

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.

**Article X. - Of Good Works**

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

**Article XI. - Of Works of Supererogation**

Voluntary works - besides, over and above God's commandments - which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required; whereas Christ saith plainly: When ye have done all that is commanded of you, say, "We are unprofitable servants."

**Article XII. - Of Sin after Justification**

Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against Holy Spirit, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Spirit, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say that they can no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

**Article XIII. - Of the Church**

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

**Article XIV. - Of Purgatory**

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshipping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the Word of God.

**Article XV. - Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People Understand**

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to administer the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood by people.

**Article XVI. - Of the Sacraments**

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as having partly grown out of the corrupt following of the apostles and partly are states of life allowed in the Scripture, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith, I Cor.11:29.

**Article XVII. - Of Baptism**

Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

**Article XVIII. - Of the Lord's Supper**

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves, one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is the partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of the bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of the Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

**Article XIX. - Of Both Kinds**

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

**Article XX. - Of the One Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross**

The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission for pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

**Article XXI. - Of the Marriage of Ministers**

The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

**Article XXII. - Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches**

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike, for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposefully doth openly break the rites and the ceremonies of the church to which he belongeth, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like) as one that offendeth against the common order of the church and wounded the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

**Article XXIII. - Of the Duty of Christian to the Civil Authority**

It is the duty of all Christians, and especially of all Christian ministers, to observe and obey the laws and commands of the governing or supreme authority of the country of which they are citizens or subjects or in which they reside, and to use all laudable means to encourage and enjoin obedience to the powers that be.

**Article XXIV. - Of Christian Men's Goods**

The riches and goods of Christians, are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

**Article XXV. - Of a Christian Man's Oath**

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James, his apostle, so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

**Article XXVI. - Of Sanctification**

Sanctification is the renewal of our fallen nature by the Holy Ghost, received in faith through Jesus Christ, whose blood of atonement cleanseth from all sin; whereby we are not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but are washed from its pollution, saved from its powers, and are enabled, through grace, to love God with all our hearts and to walk in his holy commandments blameless.

## **19. THE GENERAL RULES OF THE METHODIST CHURCH**

### **The Nature, Design, and General Rules of Our United Societies.**

In the latter end of the year 1739, eight to ten persons who appeared to be deeply convicted of sin and earnestly groaning for redemption, came to Mr. Wesley in London. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that we would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over the heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), he gave those advises from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meeting with prayers suited to their several necessities.

This was the rise of the **United Society**, first in Europe, then in America. Such a society is no other than “a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.”

That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the **leader**. It is his duty:

1. To see each person in his class at once a week at least, in order:(a) to inquire how his soul prospers;(b) to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require;(c) to receive what he is willing to give towards the relief of the preachers, church, and poor.

2. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week, in order:(a) to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly and will not be reproved;(b) to pay the stewards what he has received of his class in the week preceding.

There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies - “a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.” But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits.

It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

*First:* By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as:

- (a) The taking of the name of God in vain.
- (b) The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or buying or selling.
- (c) Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.
- (d) Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.

- (e) Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother, returning evil for evil, or railing for railing, the using of many words in buying or selling.
- (f) The buying or selling of goods that have not paid the duty.
- (g) The giving or taking of things on usury - that is, unlawful interest.
- (h) Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or ministers.
- (i) Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.
- (j) Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:
  - The putting on of gold and costly apparel.
  - The taking of such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.
  - The singing of those songs, or reading of those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.
- (k) Softness and needless self-indulgence.
- (l) Laying up treasures upon earth.
- (m) Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire for salvation.

*Second:* By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

1. To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison;

2. To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it."

3. By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only.

4. By all possible diligence and frugality, that the Gospel be not blamed.

5. By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ,

to be as the filth and the offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely, for the Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire for salvation.

*Third:* By attending upon all the ordinances of God, such as:

- (a) The public worship of God.

- (b) The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.
- (c) The Supper of the Lord.
- (d) Family and private prayer.
- (e) Searching the Scriptures.
- (f) Fasting or abstinence.

These are the General Rules of our societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observes them not, who habitually breaks any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

## **PART III**

### **SOCIAL PRINCIPLES**

#### **20. THE METHODIST SOCIAL CREED**

##### **I. Our Heritage.**

The interest of The Methodist Church in social welfare springs from the gospel, and from the labours of John Wesley, who ministered to the physical, intellectual, and social needs of the people to whom he preached the gospel of personal redemption.

In our historic position we have sought to follow Christ in bringing the whole of life, with its activities, possessions, and relationships into conformity with the will of God.

As Methodists we have an obligation to affirm our position on social and economic questions.

##### **II. Our Theological Basis.**

The Methodist Church must view the perplexing times and problems that we face today in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus. Jesus taught us to love our neighbours and seek justice for them as well as for ourselves. To be silent in the face of need, injustice, and exploitation is to deny him.

We believe that God is Father of all peoples and races, that Jesus Christ is his Son, that all men are brothers, and that each person is of infinite worth as a child of God.

We believe that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” Our own capacities and all we possess are gifts of the Creator, and should be held and used in stewardship to him.

We believe that God in Christ is seeking to redeem all men and also society. This redemption is a continuing necessity.

We believe that the grace of God in Christ is available for redemption from individual and social sin as we seek in penitence and obedience to do his holy will.

We believe that all persons have supreme value in the sight of God, and ought to be so regarded by us. We test all institutions and practices by their effect upon persons. Since Jesus died for the redemption of all men, we believe we should live to help save man from sin and from every influence which would harm or destroy him.

##### **III. Our Declaration of Social Concern.**

Applying the foregoing principles, The Methodist Church declares itself as follows:

(A) The Family: We seek equal rights and justice for all persons; protection of the individual and the family by high standards of morality; Christian

education for marriage, parenthood, and the home; adequate housing, improved marriage and divorce laws.

We believe that the Church must be vitally concerned with the health and welfare needs of all people, first within the family, and where necessary, through institutional care with high standards of scientific service and Christian dedication.

We believe that planned parenthood, practiced with respect for human life, fulfills rather than violates the will of God. It is the duty of each married couple prayerfully and responsibly to seek parenthood, avert it, or defer it, in accordance with the best expression of their Christian love. Families in all parts of the world should have available to them necessary information and medical assistance for birth control through public and private programs. This issue must be seen in reference to the pressing population problem now before the whole world.

*We affirm that life begins at conception and that the human embryo is not simply a mass of tissue that has the potential to become a human being – it is the beginning of a human life with a vast potential. We therefore do not subscribe to abortion, except on medical grounds. We call on all Christians to a searching and prayerful inquiry in situations in which abortion may be contemplated and to seek medical, pastoral and other appropriate counseling.*

We believe it is the plain responsibility of the family, as it is also the deep concern of the community, that welfare of children whose mothers are employed outside the home be safeguarded. This responsibility includes provision for the protection, education, spiritual nurture, and wholesome recreation of every child, and for religious and educational programs which will secure these ends.

*The Church views with great concern the increasing number of divorces and affirms the need adequate premarital and marital counseling as well as marital enrichment programs. We also encourage an active and supportive commitment of the church and our society to minister in love to the divorced and their families.*

*We recognize the burden of single parent families and the need for understanding, care and support from the community and the church. We view with concern the diminishing time available for families to be together in our modern society. Families need to give priority to spending quality time together for family life enrichment and in worship and in recreation. We believe that children have a duty to honour, respect and care for their parents especially in sickness and old age.*

**B. Economic Life:-** 1. Christianity and the Economic Order. - With full acknowledgment of stewardship under God and accountability to him, we stand for the acquisition of property by moral processes and the right to private ownership thereof. We refuse to identify Christianity with any economic system. We are under obligation to test each aspect of every economic order by the commands of Christ and judge its practices by the Christian gospel. We believe that it is our duty not only to bring Christ to the individual, but also to bring the increasingly technological society within which we live more nearly into conformity with the teachings of Christ. We believe that a free democratic way of life, influenced by Christian principles, can

bring to mankind a society in which liberty is preserved, justice established, and brotherhood achieved.

We believed in the use of such opportunities for political action as are consistent with Christian principles. We urge Christians to view political responsibilities as an opportunity for Christian witness and service.

2. Responsible Use of Power. - The Christian point of view demands that concentrations of power in government, labor, business, and religious organizations be used responsibly. The task of the church in this regard is to help people in positions of power and the organizations which they serve to achieve and exercise a high level of social responsibility.

3. Poverty and Unemployment. - We believe that the economic development which makes possible material plenty for all imposes upon us great moral responsibility, in that the physical and spiritual development of millions of persons throughout the world is hindered by poverty. We therefore stand for the eradication of poverty everywhere.

We believe it is our Christian duty to provide opportunities for education and training for people to earn a living for themselves and their dependents, so that they may take advantage of new technology.

Lack of significant employment tends to destroy human self-respect. We believe that employable workers must be safeguarded from enforced unemployment.

4. Wealth.- We recognize the perils of prosperity. Our Lord has told us that we cannot serve God and mammon. As Christians we must examine earnestly before God our personal and business practices, lest we adopt the standards and assumptions of a materialistic society. Churches and their institutions as well as individuals own property, invest funds, and employ labor. In these areas practices and relationships must conform to highest Christian standards.

5. Working Conditions.- We oppose all forms of social, economic, and moral waste. We urge the protection of the worker from dangerous and unsanitary working conditions, and from occupational diseases.

We stand for reasonable hours of labor, for just wages, for a fair day's work, for a fair day's wages, for just working conditions, for periods of leisure, and for an equitable division of the product of industry.

We believe special protection should be provided for women and children, as well as migrant workers and others especially vulnerable to exploitation.

6. Social Benefits for Workers. - We stand for public and private programs of economic security for old age, for adequate insurance covering sickness and injury to the workers and for increased protection against those preventable conditions which produce want.

7. The Right to Organize for Collective Bargaining. - We stand for the right of employees and employers alike to organize for collective bargaining,

protection of both in the exercise of their right, the responsibility of both to bargain in good faith, and the obligation of both to work for the public good.

8. Town and Country Life. - We recognize the basic significance of town and country areas in relation to population supply, natural resources, community life, and Christian culture. We believe farmers, other agriculture workers, and those displaced by mechanization should have opportunity to earn a fair income.

Methodism, because of its large town and country membership and world-wide impact, must lead in developing an adequate Christian program in rural areas everywhere. This should pertain to people in their relationship to God, to the

stewardship of the soil and the conservation of all natural resources, and to family, church, and community welfare.

9. Urban Life. - We believe the inner city to be a mission field crying out for bold new creative ways of witness. Here is emerging a pagan generation committed to values that run counter to those of the Christ. Therefore we call our urban congregation to a deeper involvement in neighborhood life. We call the Church to come into the city for Christ's sake, there to touch all forgotten persons with his passion.

10. Christian Vocation. - We believe that every employable person so far as possible should be engaged in some vocation productive of common good. Every such vocation should be viewed as a Christian calling by those who pursue it as well as by those who receive its benefits, and our daily work should be regarded as a sphere of service to God. The creative use of leisure is also a major responsibility for the Christian.

C. The Church and General Welfare. - The Church is called to be a redeeming community of discerning Christian love - a fellowship of those who confess their sin, who rejoice in the love of God freely given, and who commit themselves continually to spiritual excellence in every facet of life.

1. Alcohol problems. - We believe that the Christian principle of love for God and neighbor calls us to abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages and to minister to those victimized by their use. The use of beverage alcohol imperils the abundant life to which Christ calls us. This is especially true in an organized and mechanized society. Individuals and families are destroyed by its use. We join with men of good conscience who seek to overcome the social, economic, and moral waste which this indulgence has created. The Church must become a healing and redemptive fellowship for those who suffer because of beverage alcohol.

2. Crime and Rehabilitation. - We stand for the application of the redemptive principle in treating law offenders and for study and action directed toward the improvement of laws, correctional facilities and services, and court procedures in order to facilitate rehabilitation. For this reason we deplore capital punishment.

We do not believe an individual should be excused from his personal responsibility to society; but we recognize that crime, and in particular juvenile delinquency leading to crime, is often a result of family failure and bad social

conditions. Christian citizens and churches have a special opportunity and responsibility for creating those conditions of family life and social surroundings, wholesome recreation, vocational training, personal counseling and social adjustment by which crime may be reduced and offenders rehabilitated and redeemed by God's grace.

3. Gambling. - We stand for the achievement of community and personal standards, which make unnecessary the resort to petty or commercial gambling as a recreation, escape, or producer of public or charitable revenue. As an

act of faith and love, Christians should abstain from all gambling, and should participate in efforts to minister to those victimized by the practice, including compulsive gamblers.

4. Mental Health and Medical Care. - we stand for the provision of adequate medical care for all people, with special attention being given the aging, the young, and minority and low income groups. We strongly favor the healing ministries of the Church and other private groups. We support our government, individuals, and foundations in required research in public health; and we support legislation to meet these needs.

We believe that adequate facilities with professionally trained staff must be made available for the emotionally ill and the mentally retarded of every community. We also believe that churches may become spiritual centres of healing through worship, pastoral concern, and volunteer service for the emotionally ill.

5. Drug Abuse. - We seek to overcome those social and psychological forces which lead so large a part of our society to unhealthy dependence upon tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. The illicit traffic in drugs cannot be tolerated. Society must provide through public and private facilities for the treatment, rehabilitation, and after-care of narcotic addicts and other victims of drug abuse.

6. Sex in Christian Life. - We believe that sexual intercourse within holy matrimony with fidelity and love is a sacred experience and constitutes a needed expression of affection. We also believe that sexual intercourse outside the bonds of matrimony is contrary to the will of God. the outrageous exploitation of the strong forces underlying sexual experience is a destructive element of our culture. It not only distorts the meaning of sex experience but constitutes a blasphemous disregard of God's purpose for men and women. A case in point is the distribution of hard-core pornographic and other sex-exploitive material. We advocate thorough educational efforts in home, church, and school designed to elevate our whole understanding of the meaning of sexual experience.

*The practice of homosexuality is unbiblical and is incompatible with the Christian life and teachings. The MCA recognizes that homosexual persons are individual of sacred worth who need the ministry and guidance of the Church as well as spiritual and emotional support of a caring fellowship and community of faith. Nevertheless, no practicing homosexual persons shall be permitted to hold positions of authority within the Church.*

7. Social Welfare. - We believe that meeting human need is both a private and a community responsibility. Adequate public assistance should be made

available to all persons solely on the basis of need. Every individual should provide for his own needs and share responsibility for the needs of others to the full extent of his ability, but we believe that no person in an affluent society should be demoralized because of unmet need.

D. Human Rights. - 1. Freedom from Discrimination.-

We stand for equal rights for all racial, cultural, and religious groups, and insist that the principles set forth in this creed apply to all alike. The right to choose a home, enter a school, secure employment, vote, and have access to public accommodations should be guaranteed to all regardless of race, culture, national origin, social class, or religion. Neither should any person be denied equal political, economic, or legal rights or opportunities because of sex.

That the Church should ever refuse access to worship or membership in its fellowship to any person because of race, color, or national origin is contrary to our fundamental Christian convictions.

2. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights.- We stand for freedom of speech, assembly, and press and broadcasting. The fundamental responsibility in the use of these freedoms and the justification of their exercise is adherence to the truth.

We stand for the right of all individuals and groups to advocate any peaceful and constitutional method for the solution of the problems that confront society.

E. Peace and World Order. - We believe that Christianity cannot be nationalistic; it must be universal in its outlook and appeal. The influence of the church must always be on the side of every effort seeking to remove those conditions of heart and mind, of social, economic, and international injustice, and of ideological conflict in which wars begin.

We must actively and constantly create the conditions of peace. We stand for the promotion of understanding, reconciliation, and good will; the relief of suffering, the lifting of living standards around the world; concern for the freedom and welfare of dependent and subject persons; the removal of racial tensions; the taking of steps towards disarmament; and the support of patient negotiations.

1. International Organization. - We believe that the United Nations is a working centre of international co-operation which provides the most hopeful avenue leading to peace and world order. The United Nations with its related agencies should be strengthened through governmental co-operation and support. This effort deserves the support of all Christians. The Church itself, as a world fellowship, makes an important contribution to the development of world order.

2. The Christian and Military Service. - The Methodist Church, true to the principles of the New Testament, teaches respect for properly constituted civil authority. It encourages both love of country and love of all men. Believing that government rests upon the support of its conscientious citizens, it holds within its fellowship those who sincerely differ as to the Christian's duty in regard to military service. We ask and claim exemption by legal processes from all forms of military

preparation or service for all religious conscientious objectors, as for those of the historic peace churches. We recognize the right of the individual to answer the call of his government according to the dictates of his Christian conscience. We also recognize that non-violent resistance can be a valid form of Christian witness. In all of these situations members of The Methodist Church have the authority and support of their church.

IV. Our Mandate: Read, Study, Apply. - We recommend that this Social Creed be presented to our congregations orally or in printed form at least once a year, and that frequent references be made to it. Every local church shall encourage the study of the Social Creed and seek to apply its principles.

[This page intentionally left blank]

## **PART IV**

### **RULES OF ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

#### **CHAPTER ONE**

##### **The Local Church**

###### **Section I. Definition of Local Church**

21. The church is a community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by man divinely called and the Sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit the church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers, and the redemption of the world.

22. The Church of Jesus Christ exists in and for the world. It is primarily at the level of the local church that the Church encounters the world. Located in nearly every community, the local church is a strategic base from which Christians move out to the structures of society.

23. The local church is a connectional society of persons who have professed their faith in Christ, have been baptized and have been organized under and subject to the Discipline of The Methodist Church in order that they may hear the Word of God, receive the Sacraments, and carry forward the work which Christ has committed to His Church.

Such a society of believers, being within the Methodist Church is also an inherent part of the Church Universal, which is composed of all those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and in the apostles' Creed we declare to be the holy catholic church.

24. In order that each local church may be an effective connectional unit in The Methodist Church, it shall be the duty of all district superintendents and pastors to organize and administer the churches committed to their care in accordance with the plan hereinafter set forth.

25. Each Local Church shall have a definite membership and evangelistic responsibility. It shall be held accountable for its present members, wherever they live, and for persons who choose it as their church, wherever they live.

26. 1. A Local Conference shall consist of one or more churches which are organized under, and subject to, the Discipline of The Methodist Church, and to which a minister is or may be duly appointed or appointable as the pastor in-charge.

2. A Local Conference of two or more churches is a circuit.

3. A parish shall be identified as an area of service with the membership and constituency of one or more local churches having a co-ordinated program and organization to fulfill a ministry directed at all the people of the area. It may include local churches of other denominations.

## **Section II. The Foundation of a Local Methodist Church**

27. 1. A new local church or mission shall be established only with the consent of the Conference and be established at another parish away from the original church provided (i) that there are thirty (30) members and (ii) a pastor can be assigned. The sponsors may be a Local Conference. It shall recommend to the Conference for approval. The Superintendent / President / Bishop shall at the request in the prescribed form by not less than thirty (30) registered members above the age of eighteen interested in the proposed church call such members to meet at an appointed time and place, or he may by written authorization designate any pastor to call such a meeting.

2. The Superintendent / President / Bishop, or the minister holding authority from him, shall preside and shall appoint a secretary to keep a record of the meeting. Following a period of worship opportunity shall be given to those in attendance to present themselves for membership by proper certificate of Transfer.

3. Persons desiring to become members on profession of their faith in Christ shall also be given opportunity to present themselves for membership. When the presiding minister is satisfied as to the genuineness of their faith and purpose, they shall be received into the membership of the church.

4. A list shall be made of all the persons received into the membership of the proposed church, by transfer and on profession. Those persons in the membership eighteen years of age and over shall be members of the Constituting Church Conference, and each shall be entitled to vote.

5. The Constituting Church Conference shall then be called to order, and it shall proceed to choose the elective stewards of the church, on nomination of a committee on nominations. Such committee shall be appointed by the presiding minister or elected on nomination from the floor as the Constituting Church may determine. In either case the presiding minister shall be chairman. When the elective stewards have been chosen in proper number, the presiding minister shall declare the church properly constituted.

6. The presiding minister shall then adjourn the Constituting Church Conference and call to order the Local Conference. The membership of the Local Conference shall be the newly elected stewards and others entitled to membership. The Local Conference shall then elect such officers of the church as the Discipline requires, including trustees of church property, and shall set up committees as provided in the Discipline. When such officers have been duly elected and the proper committee constituted, the church is duly organized, and from this point its work shall proceed as described in the Discipline; provided that when a newly organized church is attached to a circuit, the Local Conference shall not be held until such time as representatives from all churches can be properly assembled for that purpose.

## **Section III Church Membership**

28. The Methodist Church is a part of the Church Universal. Therefore all persons, without regard to race, color, national origin or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, to participate in its programs, and when they

take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into its membership in any local church in the connection.

29. The membership of a local Methodist Church shall consist of all persons who have been received into its fellowship on profession of their faith, or by transfer from another church, and whose membership has not been terminated by death, transfer, withdrawal, expulsion, or action of the Local Conference.

30. A member of any local Methodist Church is a member of the total Methodist connection.

31. All persons received into the fellowship of The Methodist Church shall, by the grace of God, fulfill their membership vows through an active expression of their faith, bring their gifts and services into conformity with the redemptive will of God and witnessing for Jesus Christ in all areas of life.

#### **Section IV Duties of Members and Meaning of Membership**

32. When persons unite with a local Methodist Church, they profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, and in the Holy Spirit. They covenant together with God and with the members of the local church to keep the vows which are a part of the order of confirmation and reception into the church. Every member should be loyal to The Methodist Church, faithfully upholding the doctrine, policy, rules and regulations of the church as herein set forth. They should be faithful in attending the stated services of divine worship in the church, in celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in reading and meditating upon the Scriptures, in engaging in private prayer, and in participating in the public meetings for prayer and Christian fellowship. Heads of families should be diligent in conducting family worship, in providing Christian instruction and guidance for the household, and in setting a good example in all manner of Christian living. Every member who is serious about his personal salvation and his desire to follow Christ will give evidence of his sincerity by avoiding that which is forbidden in the Word of God and by endeavoring to do that which is enjoined therein. He will not only avoid the evils specifically forbidden in the Holy Scriptures, but will also refrain from that which cannot be practised in the name of Christ. He will endeavor to love God with his whole heart and to serve him with all his strength, faithfully discharging every duty belonging to the service of God.

33. Faithful membership in the local church is essential for personal growth and for developing an increasing sensitivity to the will and grace of God. As a member involves himself in private and public prayer, worship, the Sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving and holy disciplines, he grows in his appreciation of Christ, his understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and an understanding of himself.

34. Faithful participation in the corporate life of the congregation in an obligation of the Christian to his fellow members of the Body of Christ. A member is bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks and celebrate the joys of his fellow members. He is also called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

35. A member of The Methodist Church is to be a servant of Christ on mission in the local and worldwide community. This servanthood is performed in his family life, daily work, recreation and social activities, responsible citizenship, the issues of his corporate life and all his attitudes towards his fellowmen. Participation in disciplined groups is an expected part of his mission involvement. He is called upon to be a witness for Christ in the world, a light and leaven in society, and a reconciler in a culture of conflict. He is to identify himself with the agony and suffering of the world and to radiate and exemplify the Christ.

36. Should any member give evidence of a lack of commitment to the faith, it shall be the responsibility of the local church and the pastor to minister to him to the end that he may reaffirm his commitment to the church and to the ministry of loving service.

37. Every member of the church should study the principles of Christian stewardship and dedicate himself, his time, his talents, and his substance to God and the advancement of his kingdom. In recognition of God's ownership he should practise systematic and proportionate giving (Mal. 3:8-12; I Cor. 16:2). He should regard Christian liberality as a privilege and sacred duty, and freely give of his substance for the spread of the gospel at home and abroad, for the maintenance of the local church and for the support of the agencies and enterprises of the general church.

38. Dissension in the church, both in spirit and in practice, should be avoided. Members should ever be diligent to maintain the unity of the church, local and general. They should not speak disparagingly of one another, but pray earnestly for and in honor prefer one another and together labor "to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

39. The foregoing rules as taught in the Holy Scriptures and enjoined upon believers are herein set forth for the guidance of the members of the church and for the proper regulation of the church. Should any members violate or habitually neglect these rules, those who have been appointed to watch over them shall admonish them in love; but if, after repeated and prayerful admonition they do not reform, they shall be dealt with as those disobedient to the order and Discipline of the church.

## **Section V. Admission to The Church**

40. All persons seeking to be saved from their sins and sincerely desiring to be Christian in faith and practice are proper candidates for membership in The Methodist Church. When such persons offer themselves for membership, it shall be the duty of the pastor, or of proper persons appointed by him, to instruct them in the meaning of the Christian faith and the history, organization and teaching of The Methodist Church, using materials approved by The Methodist Church to explain to them the baptismal and membership vows; and to lead them to commit themselves to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. When they shall have given proof of the genuineness of their faith in Christ and of their desire to assume the obligations and become faithful members of The Methodist Church, after the completion of a period of training not less than three months or twelve sessions, and after the rite of Baptism has been administered to those who have not been previously baptized, the pastor shall bring them before the congregation, administer the vows and receive them into fellowship of the church, and duly enroll them as members.

41. A duly authorized minister of The Methodist Church while serving as chaplain of any organization, institution, or military unit, or as a campus pastor, or while otherwise present where a local church is not available, may receive a person into the membership of The Methodist Church when such person shall have given proof of the genuineness of his faith in Christ and of his desire to assume the obligations and become a faithful member of the Church. After the vows of membership have been administered, such minister shall issue a statement of membership to the local church of the choice of the person concerned, and the pastor thereof on receiving such statement shall duly enroll him as a member.

42. Any candidate for church membership who for good reason is unable to appear before the congregation may, at the discretion of the pastor, be received elsewhere in accordance with the Ritual of The Methodist Church. The name of such a person shall be placed on the church roll and announcement of his reception shall be made to the congregation.

43. A person who is a member of The Methodist Church may have his membership transferred from one local church to another by a certificate of transfer.

44. A member in good standing in any Christian denomination who has been baptized and who desire to unite with The Methodist Church may be received into membership by a certificate of transfer from his former church, or by his own declaration of Christian faith, and upon affirming his willingness to be loyal to The Methodist Church, and after he and the members of the church have entered into solemn covenant with one another as provided in the Ritual.

## **Section VI. Affiliate and Associate Membership**

45. A member of The Methodist Church residing away from his usual residence for less than twelve months in a town or city may on his request be enrolled as a affiliate member of a local Methodist Church located in the vicinity of his temporary residence. His home pastor shall be notified of his affiliate membership. Such membership shall entitle him to the fellowship of that church to its pastoral care and supervision, and to participation in its activities, but he shall be counted and reported only as a member of his home church. A member in good standing of another denomination may be enrolled as an associate member under the same conditions and privileges, except that he shall not hold any elective office in the Local Conference.

## **Section VII. Transfer and Termination of Membership**

46. Membership in a local church may be terminated by death, transfer, withdrawal, expulsion, or action of the Local Conference. It shall be the duty of the pastor of the charge or of the membership secretary to keep an accurate record of all termination of membership and to report each Local Conference the names of all persons whose membership has been terminated since the conference preceding, in each instance indicating the reason for such termination.

47. If a member of a local Methodist Church is residing away from his usual residence for more than twelve months from his home church that he cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, he shall be encouraged to transfer his membership to a Methodist Church in the community of his newly established

residence. As soon as his pastor is reliably informed of his change of residence, actual or contemplated, it shall be the pastor's duty and obligation to assist him to establish himself in the fellowship of a church in the community of his future home, and to send to a Methodist pastor in such community, or to the district superintendent, or (if neither is known) to the Board of Evangelism, a letter of notification, giving the latest known address of the person or persons concerned and requesting local pastoral care. The above procedure is based on the recognition that absentee membership is not good for the individual or the church, and that it is essential that we recognize that the care of souls and the building up of the whole church is more important than retaining membership in a particular congregation, whether for sentiment or other reasons.

48. When a pastor discovers a member of the Methodist Church residing in his community whose membership is in a church so far removed from his place of residence and for more than twelve months that he cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, it shall be his duty and obligations to give pastoral care to such person and to persuade him, if possible, to transfer his membership to a local Methodist Church in the community where he resides.

49. When a pastor shall receive from the pastor of another Methodist Church, or from the person concerned, a request for a Certificate of Transfer, he shall issue the same in the following form:

*This is to certify that A. B. who resides at..... has been a member of the ..... Methodist Church in ..... On request his (her) membership is hereby transferred to the ..... Methodist Church in ..... and he (she) is affectionately commended to its care and fellowship. Notice of this certificate of transfer has been sent to the person above named.*

..... Pastor

Date .....

Address.....

The original certificate shall be accompanied by a blank for the acknowledgment of the same in the following form:

*The certificate of transfer of the membership of A. B. from the ..... Methodist Church in ..... to the ..... Methodist Church is hereby acknowledged. he (she) has been duly received into our fellowship and recorded as a member in this church.*

..... Pastor

Date.....

Address.....

Notice shall be sent to the person whose membership is thus being transferred in the following form:

*This day I have issued a certificate of transfer of your membership to the ..... Methodist Church in ..... commending you to its care and fellowship. In your new relationship we bid you Godspeed.*

..... *Pastor*

*Date.....*

*Address.....*

The Certificate of transfer shall be sent directly to the pastor of the Methodist Church to which the Certificate is issued, or to the direct superintendent if there is no pastor. On receipt of such Certificate of Transfer, the pastor or the district superintendent receiving the same shall record on the membership roll of the church the name of the person thus transferred, and the person shall be a member thereof; whereupon the pastor or district superintendent shall certify to the pastor issuing the certificate that the name appearing on said certificate has been duly entered on the membership roll of the receiving church. The sending pastor shall thereupon remove the name from his roll.

50. A pastor upon receiving a request from a member of his church to transfer to a church of another denomination, or upon receiving such request from a pastor or duly authorized official of another denomination, shall (with approval of the member) issue a Certificate of Transfer and shall properly record the transfer of such person on the membership roll of the local church; and his membership shall thereby be terminated. For the transfer of a member of The Methodist Church to a church of another denomination forms similar to those just described shall be used, with the substitution of the name of the other denomination for the word, "Methodist" in appropriate places in those forms.

51. If a minister is informed that a member of his church has without notice united with a church of another denomination, he shall make diligent inquiry; and if the report is confirmed, he shall enter "withdrawal" after the person's name on the membership roll, and shall report the same at the next Local Conference.

52. If a member proposes to withdraw from The Methodist Church, he shall communicate his purpose in writing to the pastor of the local church in which his membership is held. On receiving such notice of withdrawal, the pastor shall properly record the fact of withdrawal on the membership roll. If requested, the pastor shall give a statement of withdrawal to such member.

**Section VIII. Children and The Church**

53. Because the redeeming love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ extends to all persons, and because Jesus explicitly included the children in his kingdom, the pastor of each church shall earnestly exhort all Christian parents or guardians to present their children to the Lord in Baptism at an early age. Before Baptism is administered, he shall diligently instruct the parents or guardians regarding the meaning of this Sacrament and the vows which they assume. It is expected of all diligence in bringing them up in conformity to the Word of God and in the fellowship of the church. It is

required that at least one of the parents or guardians shall be members of a Christian church or that sponsors who are members shall assume the Baptismal vows. They shall be admonished of this obligation and earnestly exhorted to faithfulness therein. At the time of Baptism they shall be informed that the church with its church school program will aid them in the Christian nurture of their children.

54. The pastor of the church shall, at the time of administering the Sacrament of Baptism, furnish the parents or guardians of the child who is baptized with a Certificate of Baptism, which shall also clearly state that the child is now enrolled as a preparatory member in The Methodist Church. He shall also admonish members of the congregation of their responsibility for the Christian nurture of the child.

55. The pastor shall keep and transmit to his successor as accurate register of the names of all baptized children in his charge, including both those who have been baptized there and those who have been baptized elsewhere. This shall constitute the preparatory membership roll of the church. It shall give the full name of the child, the date of birth, the date and place of baptism, and the names of the parents or guardians and their place of residence.

56. All baptized children under the care of a Methodist Church shall be retained as preparatory members in the church until this status is terminated by:

1. reception into full membership, after a proper course of training, both in the church school and in the pastor's class;
2. transfer with their families to another Methodist Church;
3. transfer with their families to a church of another evangelical denomination;
4. death;
5. withdrawal; or
6. transfer to the constituency roll of the church at the age of sixteen.

The preparatory membership roll shall be balanced each year by adding and subtracting the names received and removed during the year.

57. It shall be the duty of the pastor, the parents or guardians, and the officers and teachers of the church schools to lead the children of the church to an understanding of the Christian faith, to an appreciation of the privileges and obligations of church membership, and to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and to guide them in the use of the means of grace in living the Christian life. The pastor shall, at least annually, organize the children who have arrived at the age of decision into classes of instruction for church membership, using materials produced by The Methodist Church. Whenever children so trained in a course of study approved by The Methodist Church shall give evidence of their own Christian faith and purpose and of understanding the privileges and obligations of church membership, they may be received into full membership in the church.

## **Section IX. Youth**

58. It is strongly recommended that each local church offers for youth who are members of the church an advanced class of instruction in the meaning of the Christian life and church membership. It is further recommended that this course taught by the pastor emphasize the doctrines of The Methodist Church and the nature and mission of the Church, leading to continued growth in the knowledge, grace and service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Section X. Care of Church Members**

59. The local church shall endeavor to enlist each member in activities for spiritual growth and in participation in the services of church and its organizations. It shall be the duty of the pastor and of the *Committee on Membership and Evangelism*, by regular visitation, care, and spiritual supervision, to provide necessary activities and opportunities for spiritual growth through individual and family worship, and to aid continually the members to keep their vows to uphold the church by attendance, prayers, gifts, and service. The church has a moral and spiritual obligation to nurture its non-participating and indifferent members.

60. While primary responsibility and initiative rest with each individual member faithfully to perform the vows of membership which he has solemnly assumed, if he should be neglected of that responsibility, these procedures shall be followed:

1. If a member residing in the community is negligent of his vows, or absents himself from the worship of the church, the pastor and the membership secretary shall report his name to the special committee charged with the responsibility for reclaiming the negligent, which committee shall do all in its power to re-enlist him in the active fellowship of the church. It shall visit him and make clear to him that while his name is on the roll of his particular local church he is a member of The Methodist Church as a whole, and that, since he is not attending the church where his name is enrolled, he is requested to do one of three things : (a) renew his vows and become a regular worshipper in the church where his name is recorded; (b) request transfer to another Methodist Church where he will be a regular worshipper; or (c) arrange transfer to a particular local church of another denomination. If the member does not comply with any of the available alternatives over a period of three years, his name may be removed.
2. If a member whose address is known is residing outside the community and is not participating in the worship or activity of the church, the directives to encourage him to transfer his membership shall be followed each year until he joins another church or requests in writing that his name be removed from the membership roll; provided, however, that if after three years the committee has not been able to relate him to the church at his new place of residence, his name may be removed by the procedures of clause 5 below.
3. If the address of a member is no longer known to the pastor, the membership secretary, and the Committee on Membership and Evangelism, they shall make every effort to locate him, including listing his name in the church bulletin, circularizing it throughout the parish, and

reading it from the pulpit. If he can be located, the directives of either Clause 1 or 2 above shall be followed; but if after three years of such efforts his address is still unknown, his name may be removed from the membership roll by the procedures of clause 5 below.

4. The minister, the membership secretary and the Committee on Membership and Evangelism, shall review annually the membership rolls of the church and shall see that they are complete and accurate. They shall report their findings to the Local Conference, including the names of the members whose addresses are unknown.
5. If the directives in Clauses 1, 2 or 3 above have been followed for the specified number of years without success, the member's name may be removed from the membership roll by vote of the Local Conference on recommendation of the minister and the Committee on Membership and Evangelism, each name being considered individually. On the roll there shall be entered after his name: "Removed by order of the Local Conference"; and if the action is on the basis of clause 3, there shall be added: "Reason: address unknown." The membership of the person concerned shall thereby be terminated and the record thereof shall be retained.
6. Recognizing that the church has a continuing moral and spiritual obligation to nurture all persons, even those whose names have been removed from the membership roll, it is recommended that the names so removed be inscribed on a roll of names removed by Local Conference action. It shall then become the responsibility of the pastor and/or the Committee on Membership and Evangelism to review this roll at least once a year. After the review has been made, it is recommended that the pastor and/or the Committee contact those whose names remain, either in person or by other means, in the most effective and practical manner. The names and addresses of those who have moved outside the local church's area should be sent to local churches in their new communities, that those churches may visit and minister to them.

61. If a Local Church is discontinued, the district superintendent shall select another Methodist Church and transfer their membership thereto, or to such other churches as they may select.

## **Section XI. Membership Groups**

62. 1. The membership of the local church may be arranged geographically in groups with a leader for each group designed to involve the membership of the church in its ministry to the community. These groups shall be of such size, usually not larger than eight or ten families, as to be convenient and effective for service. Such groups may be especially helpful in evangelistic outreach, by contacting newcomers and unreached persons, by visitation, by holding prayer meetings in the home, by distributing Christian literature and by other means. Nonresident members should constitute a special group to be served by correspondence. The groups shall be formed and the leaders appointed by the Local Conference upon recommendation of the minister.

2. A structure for Small Groups, Small Groups Leaders and Small Group

Meetings may be organized within the local congregation under the supervision of the pastor(s) with the following responsibilities and programs:

- a) Small Groups may be organized to meet regularly for the purposes of Bible study and prayer; spiritual nurture; care and support of members; evangelistic outreach; involvement of new members; accountable discipleship in the community;
- b) Small Groups may be formed as regular groups; clusters of families; interest groups, or age-level groups;
- c) Where Small Groups are formed, **Small Group Leaders may be appointed by the Local Church Executive Committee under the direct supervision of the pastor(s) or a member of the certified/ qualified worker of the church appointed by the pastor(s) and the Small Groups Coordinator. Leaders must be responsible to the pastor(s);**
- d) Where Small Group Leaders are appointed, they may meet regularly with the pastor(s) and the Lay Leader of the congregation.

3. A Small Group Committee may be formed with the Small Groups Coordinator as the chairperson.

4. The Small Groups Coordinator shall assist the pastor(s) in:
- a) the coordination of the small group program and structure;
  - b) the organization of the small group events including training of members and leaders;
  - c) promotion of small group ministry so that there may be maximum participation by members.

## **Section XII. Membership Records and Reports**

63. The minister shall report to each Local Conference the names of persons received into the membership of the church or churches since the Local Conference preceding, and the names of persons whose membership in the church or churches has been terminated during the same period, indicating in the case of each how he was received or how his membership was terminated.

64. Each local church shall accurately maintain the following membership rolls :

1. Full Membership Roll.
2. Preparatory Membership Roll, containing the names and pertinent information of baptized children and youth of the church sixteen years of age and under who are not full members.
3. Members removed by Local Conference Action.
4. Constituency Roll, containing the names and addresses of such person as are not members of the church concerned, including unbaptised children, church school members not yet members of the church, preparatory members who have reached the age of sixteen and who have not been received into full membership, and other non-members for whom the local church has pastoral responsibility.
5. Affiliate Membership Roll.
6. Associate Membership Roll.

65. The Local Conference may elect a Membership Secretary, whose duty shall be under the direction of the minister, to keep accurate records of all membership rolls, and to report to each meeting of the Local Church Executive Committee through the Committee on Membership and Evangelism.

### **Section XIII The Local Church Executive Committee**

66. General Provisions: In every Local Church there shall be an administrative body called the *Local Church Executive Committee*, (hereinafter designated as the *Executive Committee*); and it shall be the duty of the minister and the district superintendent to see that such organization is set up in every local church as hereinafter set forth. The Executive Committee shall be responsible to the Local Conference, and shall report regularly to the sessions of the Local Conference as its work and the occasion may require, and as the Local Conference may request.

67. The Executive Committee shall be constituted of the following persons :

1. The minister of the local church and duly appointed associate minister or ministers, if any, and deaconesses, if any.
2. The stewards of the local church, duly elected.
3. The ex-officio stewards of the local church.
4. The Chairman of the Committee on Church Property Management shall be ex-officio member.

68. All lay members of the Executive Committee shall be members of the local Methodist Church, and in nominating and electing persons to such membership the utmost care shall be taken that only morally disciplined persons shall be so nominated and elected.

69. 1. Stewards shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church and are competent to administer its affairs.
2. The elective stewards shall not be less than 21 years of age nor more than 70. They may be elected annually or biennially.
3. An elective steward must have been a member of the Methodist Church for at least two years before being eligible for election. A steward who becomes an affiliate member of another Methodist Church shall not be elected as a steward in that church during the first year as an affiliate member. An associate member shall not be elected as a steward unless his or her membership has been transferred to a Methodist Church for more than two years.
4. The above restriction in (3) may be waived at the discretion of the Superintendent / President / Bishop after considering the local needs.
5. Stewards-elect shall take office at the beginning of the Conference year

following their election; provided, that in cases where a steward is elected to fill a vacancy in the Executive Committee he shall take office immediately after election. Vacancies may be filled by the Local Conference in regular or special session; under no circumstances shall stewards be elected by the Executive Committee.

6. Each Local Church shall be entitled to not fewer than three (3) or more than five (5) stewards, exclusive of ex-officio and honorary stewards.

70. The following officers, if members or affiliate members of the Local Church, shall be ex-officio stewards during their respective terms of office, and shall exercise all the rights and privileges which belong to a steward in The Methodist Church; the church lay leader, the associate lay leader, the church business manager, the director of Christian Education or the assistant director, the church school superintendent, the *Conference delegate & first reserve*, the chairman of the Committees on Stewardship and Finance; Christian Education; Christian Social Concerns; Membership and Evangelism; Missions; Worship and Music, the secretary of stewardship, the president of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the president of the Methodist Men, the church treasurer or treasurers, the financial secretary, the membership secretary, the president of the Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, the president of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, captain of the Boys' Brigade, the captain of the Girls' Brigade, the president of the Youth Council and the chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee.

71. A Local Church by action of the Local Conference shall establish a limit to the consecutive terms of office for any or all the elective or appointive officers of the local church except where its membership is less than one hundred.

72. In each Local Church the Local Conference may make provision for the recognition of the faithful service of those stewards on the Executive Committee who have reached the age of seventy, or who may have become physically incapacitated, by electing them honorary stewards until such time it is revoked by the Local Conference. An honorary steward shall be entitled to all the privileges of a steward, except the right to vote.

73. The *Executive Committee* shall be organized annually/*biennially* by the election of a chairman, a vice chairman, and a secretary. These officers shall be elected by the members of the Executive Committee on the nomination of a Committee on Nominations. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

74. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee:

1. To administer the affairs of the Local Church both spiritual and temporal as hereinafter set forth subject to the authority of the Local Conference.
2. To promote and to have general supervision, under the direction of the minister, of the administration and program of the local church.
3. After consultation with the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations, to recommend to the Local Conference, at the session next

preceding the Annual Conference, the ancillary benefits and other allowances of the minister, and of the associate minister or ministers, if any, and to make ample provision for the other financial needs of the local church.

4. Upon recommendation of the Program Committee to study and approve the program of the Local Church.
5. To promote interest in all the agencies authorized by the Annual, District and Local Conferences.
6. To discharge faithfully any and all duties and responsibilities committed to it by the Local Conference or by the law of the Church.
7. To develop in the members of the congregation a feeling of responsibilities in the establishment of new churches and church schools; and when specifically authorized by the district superintendent to organize and sponsor new churches and church schools needed in the community.
8. To make proper and adequate provision for the financial needs of the Local Church, including ministerial support (i.e. for the minister or ministers, associate minister or ministers, district superintendent, conference pensioners or claimants, bishop or president), approved items of local expense, commitments and undertakings, budget and other items apportioned to the local church by the proper authorities, and all obligations assumed by the Local Church.

75. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once in two months at a time determined by itself. Special meetings shall be convened at the request of the Chairman, or the Minister or one half of the total membership of the Executive Committee.

76.1 The Executive Committee shall not deny or take from any organization in the Local Church a right or power granted it by the Discipline.

2. The Local Church Executive Committee Chairperson shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) chairing the Executive Committee meetings and leading it in fulfilling its responsibilities;
- b) preparing and communicating the agenda of the committee meetings, in consultation with the pastor(s), lay leader(s) and other appropriate persons;
- c) reviewing and assigning responsibilities for the implementation of actions taken by the committee;
- d) communicating with members of the committee and others as appropriate to permit informed action at committee meetings;
- e) participating in leadership training programs;
- f) shall be entitled to attend meetings of all committees of the Church as an ex-officio member.

77. **Other Committees:** For the promoting of other interest and activities in the Local Church the Executive Committee may create from its own membership and from the membership of the Local Church such other committees as it may judge necessary, exercising care that these committees do not overlap or conflict with the committees of the Local Conference. At least one member of each committee shall be a member of the Executive Committee. Except where the Discipline provides otherwise, each committee shall elect its officers; provided that the chairman of each shall be a member of the Executive Committee. Each committee shall be responsible to the Executive Committee, and shall report to the Executive Committee regularly (and to the Local Conference, if requested). The Executive Committee may create such committees as it may determine and may appear advisable for the prosecution of his works, e.g. :

(a) The **Committee on Public Relations**, whose duty shall be to provide information for the public with which it deals, including the community, the members and the friends of the Local Church, using every possible medium of communication available. It shall also serve the several program agencies of the local church in public information and promotion.

(b) The **Committee on Literature**, whose duty shall be to call attention to the publication of new books of worth informing and building the Christian life, arrange for exhibits of books and pamphlets relating to the work of The Methodist Church, promote the observance of Bible Sunday, secure subscription to general church, conference and area publication, and promote the use of approved publications in the church school.

#### **Section XIV Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary**

78. The **Local Church treasurer or treasurers** shall receive and disburse all money contributed to causes represented in the Local Church budget, and such other funds and contributions as the Executive Committee may determine; or the Local Conference may elect a treasurer to receive and disburse funds and contributions for local church expense and a treasurer to receive and disburse funds towards the commitments and undertakings budget or contributions for similar causes, in every case under the supervision and direction of the Executive Committee. The treasurer shall remit to the Conference Treasurer all such Conference commitments then on hand as and when required.

79. If a financial secretary is elected, he shall receive the contributions to the Local Church, keeping records of the contributions and their payments, and disburse them promptly to the treasurer, or treasurers. If a financial secretary is not elected, the treasurer or treasurers shall assume these responsibilities; provided, however that they may be assumed by a church business manager, if deemed desirable by the minister and the Executive Committee.

#### **Section XV The Church Program Committee**

80. Authorization: There may be a **Local Church Program Committee** in each Local Church which shall correlate the program proposals of the committees into

a unified and comprehensive program. The Program Committee shall be amenable to the Executive Committee to which it shall report its plans for review and approval. Upon approval of the program by the Executive Committee, the **Program Committee** shall see that the program plans are implemented. It shall further be responsible for developing the recommended budget which will be needed to underwrite the proposed program and submit the same to the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.

81. **Membership:** The Membership of the Local Church Program Committee shall be composed of the minister and other staff persons who are engaged in program work and the ex-officio stewards as in paragraph 70, the age level directors (if elected); one representative from each of the followings: Methodist Women's Fellowship, Methodist Men, Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, Methodist Youth Fellowship, Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade; and such other persons as the Local Conference may elect upon nomination by the Committee on Nominations. It shall annually/ biennially elect its own chairman, vice-chairman and secretary.

82. **Age Level Work:** In order to expedite the work of the Local Church Program Committee in adapting the program to the needs of children, youth and adults, the Program Committee may organize Age Level Work Subcommittees; a Children's Work Subcommittee, a Youth Work Subcommittee and an Adult Work Subcommittee. These shall serve as subcommittees of the Program Committee. Their membership shall be elected by the Program Committee. Each Age Level Work Subcommittee shall annually/biennially elect its own chairman, vice-chairman and secretary.

83. **Age Level Directors;** The Local Conference may annually elect upon nomination by the Committee on Nominations a Director of Children's Work, a Director of Youth Work and a Director of Adult Work. Each age level director, shall under the direction of the minister, study the needs of the age level for which he is responsible and assist in adapting the program of the local church for persons of that age.

## **Section XVI Committees in the Local Church**

84. The Executive Committee may organize such committees as are needed to effect a broad coverage of the manifold interests of the local church.

85. 1. The ***Committee on Membership and Evangelism:*** In each Local Church there may be, under the direction of the Executive Committee, a Committee on Membership and Evangelism which shall be auxiliary to the Conference Board and District Commission on Evangelism. It shall be the duty of this Committee to seek out the unsaved and the unchurched in the community, and to exercise all diligence that they may be led into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and into the fellowship of the church. It shall also be the duty of the committee to seek out the inactive and negligent members of the local church, and to use all laudable means to restore them to active participation in the church's life and fellowship.

2. The Committee on Membership and Evangelism shall be composed of the chairman, the minister and associate minister or ministers, if any, the minister or director of evangelism, if any, the local church lay leader or associate lay leader, the membership secretary, the secretary of spiritual life of the Methodist Women's

Fellowship, the church school superintendent, such members of the District Commission on Evangelism as have membership in the local church, a representative each from the Methodist Men, the Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, the Boys' Brigade, the Girls' Brigade, the chairman of Christian Witness of the Methodist Youth Fellowship and the chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee, not fewer than six and as many more members at large elected as the Local Conference shall determine; provided that in small church these provisions may be modified; and provided further that all members of the Committee shall be members of the Methodist Church.

3. At the beginning of each conference year the chairman shall call together the members for organization. The Committee shall elect a vice-chairman, secretary and such other officers and subcommittees as it may determine.

4. The Committee on Membership and Evangelism working with the Program Committee shall promote the program of evangelism in the local church, making use of the guidance materials and program manuals developed by the Methodist Church.

5. If a minister of evangelism is desired, the Local Conference shall request through the District Superintendent that the Superintendent / President / Bishop should appoint one and shall fix his salary.

6. If the employment of a layman as director of evangelism is desired, the minister with concurrence of the Committee shall recommend a proper person to the Local Church Executive Committee, which with the approval of the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop and the Conference Board of Appointments shall have the power to employ him, fix his salary and conditions of service, and terminate his service.

7. The minister or director of evangelism shall be administratively responsible to the minister of the local church, and in cooperation with the minister and the chairman of the Committee on Evangelism shall guide the evangelistic program of the local church.

86. **The *Committee on Christian Education*:** In order that a Local Church may be so organized and administered as to provide effectively for the Christian education of its entire constituency, there may be a Committee on Christian Education in each Local Church under the direction of the Executive Committee. It shall be auxiliary to the Conference Board of Christian Education.

87. 1. The persons holding the following offices are members of the Committee on Christian Education: the chairman, the minister and ministers, associate minister or ministers, the church lay leader or associate lay leader, the church school superintendent, division superintendent, membership cultivation superintendent, minister or directors of Christian Education, minister or director of music, church school secretary, literature secretary and secretary of stewardship. The Methodist Women's Fellowship, the Methodist Men, the Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, the Methodist Youth Fellowship, the Boys' Brigade, the Girls' Brigade, the chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee and the Board of Managers of the kindergarten or Nursery School shall each elect one representative to the Committee. In addition, there shall be no fewer than three and as

many more members at large elected as the Local Conference shall determine, chosen for special competency in the educational work of the Local Church. The membership may be modified to suit small local churches.

2. At the beginning of each conference year the chairman shall call together the members for organization. The Committee shall elect a vice-chairman, a secretary and such other officers and sub-committees as it may determine.

88. The functions and duties of the Committee on Christian Education shall be as follows:

1. It shall determine the policies for the church school as a whole and its parts, and shall give general direction to all the educational work of the local church; provided that the educational program of the local church shall be open to all persons.

2. It shall study the educational needs of the local church and shall provide for the organization, guidance, supervision and, as needed, modification of the church school and of its three divisions with their departments, classes and groups.

3. It shall be responsible for counseling with officers and teachers regarding the curriculum materials used by the classes and departments of the church school, and shall see that they are proper and appropriate for each class and group, and that they are selected from the curriculum materials approved by the Conference Board of Christian Education and are ordered under the supervision of the Committee. It shall be responsible for supervising the selection and use of music and hymnbooks in the church school, in harmony with the standards of the Conference Board of Christian Education, and for the integration of children's and youth choirs into the Christian education program for children and youth. It shall also be responsible for supervising the selection and use of audio-visual materials in the church school and the training of officers, teachers and other workers in their use, and shall see that all audio-visual materials in the church school and the training of officers, teachers and other workers in their use, and shall see that all audio-visual materials used in the church school are in harmony with standards of the Conference Board of Christian Education.

4. In order that the statistical records of church schools in The Methodist Church may be reliable and uniform, it shall follow the standards of membership, attendance and maintenance of the rolls which are established by the Conference Board of Christian Education, and shall use the forms and record books prepared by it.

5. Along with other official bodies in the local church, it shall encourage and maintain opportunities for initiative and expression on the part of youth as well as opportunity for adult counsel.

6. It shall perform the following other duties:

(a) Enlist and train the necessary officers, counselors, teachers and other leaders of organization under its jurisdiction.

- (b) Elect certain officers and teachers as required, fill vacancies in these positions, and, on the recommendation of the minister or the church school superintendent, remove any officer or teacher for unsatisfactory service, habitual neglect, or improper conduct; provided that any officer elected or confirmed by the Local Conference shall be removed from office only by the Local Conference on recommendation of the minister and the Committee on Christian Education.
- (c) Plan the work of the church school by holding regular meetings of Committee and of all church school workers, together and by divisions and departments, if necessary.
- (d) Provide for the proper observance of the special days and occasions in the church year, giving particular attention to the special days that are authorized by the Conference.
- (e) Provide study groups in marriage and Christian family life.
- (f) Plan the financial program of the church school (including the requesting of funds, if needed, through the Committee on Stewardship and Finance), budgeting all church school funds giving careful supervision to expenditures.
- (g) Allocate space for departments and classes and control the equipment provided for the use of the church school.
- (h) Provide for the full utilization of the materials, interpreting and leading up to church membership which are part of the church school curriculum of the Methodist Church and when requested by the minister, assist in training classes for church membership.
- (i) Provide guidance for local church programs in camping.
- (j) Be responsible for the guidance and supervision of all children and youth-serving organizations meeting under the auspices of the local church.
- (k) Cooperate in the development of the total church program.

89. 1. In each local church there shall be a *Church School* for the purpose of discharging the church's responsibility for instructing and guiding its entire constituency in Christian faith and living. The church school shall provide for education in the Holy Scriptures, the Christian religion, and the Church, leading to commitment to Christ and to church membership through worship, fellowship, study, and service. Its program shall include evangelism, stewardship, mission, social concerns, recreation and other activities.

2. The Committee on Christian Education shall organize and administer the church school in harmony with the provisions of the Discipline and in accordance with standards and procedures set forth by the Conference Board of Christian Education.

90. Great care shall be exercised in the selection of teachers, officers and other workers in the church school. They shall be elected annually in the following manner:

1. The Local Conference shall elect to serve from the beginning of the ensuing conference year: (a) the church school superintendent, (b) a membership cultivation superintendent and three or four division superintendents, (c) a director of Christian Education, if desired. Interim vacancies shall be filled by the Committee on Christian Education subject to the concurrence of the minister and the confirmation of the next Local Conference. The number and delegation of officers may be modified to suit small local churches.
2. Each class or group concerned shall elect preferably prior to the beginning of the conference year or as need may arise: (a) youth officers in the Youth Division, (b) officers in the Adult Division, and (c) the teachers of adult classes, which teacher shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the Committee on Christian Education, provided that the number and designation of officers may be modified to suit small local churches.
3. The Committee on Christian Education shall elect preferably prior to the beginning of the conference year or as need may arise, all teachers, officers and workers not otherwise provided for, on nomination of the church school superintendent (or superintendent-elect, if elected and not yet in office) with the approval of the minister, the minister or director of Christian Education, and the divisional superintendents (or superintendent-elect, if elected and not yet in office).

91. 1. On nomination of the minister and with the concurrence of the Committee on Christian Education the Local Conference may request the Superintendent / President/ Bishop to appoint a Minister or Director of Christian Education, or with the approval of the superintendent/president and the Conference Board of Appointments to employ a Minister or director of Christian Education. The Local Conference shall be responsible for the salary and terms of service and shall have powers to terminate service. The Minister or Director of Christian Education shall, in co-operation with the minister of the Local Church and the church school superintendent and under the supervision of the Committee of Christian Education, guide the educational program of the local church in accordance with the standards of the Conference Board of Christian Education. He shall be administratively responsible to the minister. Provided he has the requisite qualifications in Christian Education, his title shall be Minister of Christian Education if he is an ordained ministerial member of a/an Mission/Annual Conference, or Director of Christian Education, if he is a layman. In case he does not possess the requisite qualifications, his title shall be educational assistant. Two or more local churches may join in using the services of such a person.

2. On nomination of the minister and with the concurrence of the Committee on Christian Education, the Local Conference may request the superintendent/president to appoint a Minister or Director of Music, or with the approval of the Superintendent /President/ Bishop and the Conference Board of Appointments employ a Minister or Director of Music. The Local Conference shall be responsible for the salary and terms of service and shall have power to terminate the service. The Minister or Director of Music shall direct the total music program of the local church in accordance with the standards of the Conference Board of Christian Education and of the Conference Board of Music and Worship, if any. He shall be administratively responsible to the minister of the local church. His title shall be Minister of Music, if he is an ordained ministerial member of the Conference, or Director of Music, if he is a layman.

92. In the educational work of the local church the following relationships shall be observed:

1. The Christian education program of the local church school shall be the program set up and authorized by the Conference Board of Christian Education.
2. In the program of work herein outlined, the minister is, as elsewhere in all the work of the local church, the preacher in charge, and is responsible for the local educational program of the local church. Nothing in this plan is to be construed as interfering with his authority and responsibility.
3. The ***Church School Superintendent*** is the administrative officer of the Church school. It shall be his duty to co-operate with the minister or director of Christian Education, if any, to stimulate, encourage, and help the other officers and teachers and to plan with them the work of the church school as a whole and in all its parts. He shall carry out the policies of the Committee on Christian Education.
4. Under the direction of the Committee on Christian Education, the church school shall engage in cooperative enterprises with other Methodist church schools in the same district, and with the church schools of other communions, looking toward community betterment and community service and other Christian activities.

93. The Christian education of church school members calls for curricula which are graded and adapted to the needs of the pupils. The curricula shall be based on sound educational principles and the universal Gospel of the living Christ. Methodist connectionalism requires curricula which contain our traditions, purpose, programs and movements. Each church school shall provide instruction in the curricula approved by the Conference Board of Christian Education. If non-Methodist literature is to be used by any local church or church school, the District Superintendent shall be consulted in the matter, and he shall seek the advice and approval of the Conference Executive Board for action.

94. In a community where there is a need of a church school, one may be organized with the written consent of the district superintendent. The church school when organized shall be under the direction of the Committee on Christian Education

organizing it, or, if organized independent of a local church, it shall be under the direct supervision of the district superintendent.

95. 1. The Committee on Christian Education shall provide locally for promotion and support of the interest of higher education and campus ministry, in accordance with the policies of the Conference Board of Christian Education. It shall initiate and supervise plans to implement the concerns of the congregation:

- (a) For its university, college, polytechnic and seminary students;
- (b) For contacts with and support of the colleges and seminaries of the Church;
- (c) For the observance of relevant special days and events;
- (d) For the participation of its students in approved campus Christian movements as these may be developed locally and within the boundaries of the Conference.

2. The Committee may appoint a subcommittee on higher education and campus ministry to carry out the responsibilities described above.

96. 1. The *Committee on Missions*: There may be organized in each local church a Committee on Missions, under the direction of the Executive Committee composed of not fewer than three and as many more members elected as the Local Conference may determine, and in addition the following ex-officio and representative members: the chairman, the minister or ministers, the associate minister or ministers, the church lay leader or associate lay leader, the church school superintendent, a representative from the Methodist Men, The Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, the Boys' Brigade, and the Girls' Brigade, two youth members, one of whom shall be the chairman of Christian outreach of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, the secretary of missions of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee, and the representatives of other committees, provided that in small local churches these provisions may be modified. The Committee on Missions shall be auxiliary to the Conference Board of Missions and shall co-operate with it in its plans and programs for missionary education and cultivation. At the beginning of each conference year the chairman shall call together the members for organization.

2. The Committee shall elect a vice-chairman, secretary and such officers and subcommittees as it may determine.

97. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Missions as the central planning group for missionary education and cultivation:

- 1. To provide for the diffusion of missionary information, the distribution of missionary literature, and the use of missionary audio-visual materials in the local church.
- 2. To plan for a church-wide school of missions for children, youth and adults in cooperation with the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the other committees and agencies.

3. To co-operate through the Program Committee with other agencies in the survey and study of the needs of the community, and to recommend plans whereby the local church may undertake mission projects in its own community.
4. To study the program of the Conference Board of Missions and recommend to the Program Committee approved projects, district, conference, area and world-wide, to be supported by the Local Church.
5. To inform the Local Church of the qualifications and current needs for missionary personnel and to present the challenge of missionary service to the people.

98. The Committee on Missions shall with the cooperation of Program Committee promote missionary education and cultivation in the local church, making use of the guidance materials and program manuals of the Methodist Church.

99. 1. The *Committee on Christian Social Concerns* may be constituted under the direction of the Executive Committee by the Local Conference. Its membership shall comprise four or more members elected by the Local conference. In addition the minister or ministers, associate minister or ministers, church lay leader, or associate lay leader, secretary of Christian Social Concerns of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, a representative each from the Methodist Men, the Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, the Boys' Brigade, the Girls' Brigade, the chairman of Christian Citizenship of the Methodist Youth Fellowship and the chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee shall be ex-officio members (preferably no one of these shall serve as chairman); provided, however, that in small Local Churches these provisions may be modified.

2. In addition to the chairman elected by the Local Conference, the Committee shall elect a vice-chairman, a secretary and such other officers as may be deemed necessary.

3. The Committee shall develop and promote programs and studies and action projects in area of Christian social concern.

4. The Committee shall with the cooperation of the Program Committee promote study and action in Christian Social Concerns in the local church, using such materials as are approved by the Conference Board of Christian Social Concerns.

100.1. The *Committee on Stewardship and Finance*: There may be organized in each Local Church a Committee on Stewardship and Finance, which shall under the direction of the Executive Committee, promote and cultivate Christian Stewardship including the organization and direction of an effective every member visitation program each year. It shall be auxiliary to the Conference Board and District Commission of the Laity. The Committee shall receive from the Program Committee recommendations for inclusion in the budget annually. The budget shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for review and final adoption.

2. The Committee shall make provision for an annual audit of the records of the financial officers of the local church and all its organizations, and shall report to the Local Conference.

3. The Committee shall be composed of the chairman, the minister or ministers, the chairman of the Executive Committee, the church lay leader, the financial secretary or church business manager, the church treasurer or treasurers, chairman of the Program Committee, one representative each from the Methodist Men, the Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the Methodist Youth Fellowship, the Boys' Brigade, the Girls' Brigade, the chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee and not fewer than three and as many more members at large elected as the Local Conference shall determine, provided that in small churches these provisions may be modified.

4. At the beginning of each conference year the chairman shall call together the members for organization. The Committee may elect such officers as it may determine.

5. The Committee shall with the cooperation of the Program Committee promote the program of stewardship in the local church, using such materials published by the Methodist Church.

101. 1. A *Committee on Worship and Music* may be constituted in the local church by the Local Conference, which shall be auxiliary to the Conference Board of Worship and Music. In such case the work of the committee of the Local Conference and the Executive Committee concerned with any part of the worship services of the Local Church, such as the communion stewards, ushers, and others, shall be consolidated under the Committee on Worship and Music which shall work under the direction of the Executive Committee.

2. The Committee shall be composed of three or more members elected by the Local Conference, who shall be persons by interest, training and competence, to serve the local church in the field of worship, and in addition the minister who may be chairman, and the church lay leader, provided that in a small local church these provisions may be modified. The chairman or representative of any committee whose work has direct relationship to the place and conduct of public worship may, by vote of the Executive Committee, be added as ex-officio members.

3. The duties of the Committee on Worship and Music shall be :

1. To aid the interpreting the meaning, purpose and practice of worship, and to promote the highest standards for the conduct of worship, by encouraging: (a) the widest possible participation in the worship services of the church, (b) the study by individuals and groups of manuals and other helps in the art of worship, and (c) the use of hymnals approved by The Methodist Church for use in public worship, and devotional materials in the church and in the home.
2. To encourage the use of suitable music in public worship and at weddings, funerals, and all other occasions; to advise the Executive Committee in providing proper leadership in music and the fine arts, provided that if the responsibility of the music leader is to direct the total music program of

the Local Church, including youth and children's choirs and assistance in the church school, the selection shall be as indicated in paragraph 91.2, to provide for the maintenance and care of musical instruments, music libraries, and related equipment.

3. To arrange for the care of all furnishing and appointments for the conduct of worship, and under the direction of the minister and the communion steward, to prepare the Lord's Table for Holy Communion.
4. To recruit a sufficient number of persons to serve as ushers, and to encourage the training of ushers, so that, in carrying out the function of this office, they will contribute to creating an appropriate setting for worship and to maintaining an atmosphere of reverence within the sanctuary.
5. To promote, in co-operation with the Executive Committee and others concerned, a policy regarding the securing of memorial gifts to the Local Church, and to supervise the placing of proper memorials within the church building: to provide a suitable book in which the names of donors, the ones memorialized and the memorial gifts may be recorded.

## **Section XVII Task Groups**

102. Within the Local Church there may be groups of members formed for the purpose of accomplishing specific and particular goals of the church's mission to the world. These groups shall be oriented to immediate tasks. They shall prepare for their tasks by the study of the Scriptures' mandates in the light of the community's immediate needs. They shall meet regularly for study and for planning their strategy in mission. They shall be disciplined to individual and corporate action. They shall be formed, and their leaders appointed, by the Local conference upon recommendation of the minister. They shall be amenable to the Local Conference.

## **Section XVIII Lay Activities in the Local Church**

103. The Executive Committee, through the Program Committee in cooperation with the minister, shall be responsible for the program of lay activities in the Local Church as outlined under the direction of the Conference Board and District Commission of the Laity. In the program of lay activities, the minister is, as in all the work of the Local Church, the preacher in-charge, and is responsible for the total program of the Local Church. Nothing in this plan is to be construed as interfering with his general authority and responsibility.
104. The program of lay activities in the Local Church shall include the interests and causes that have been committed to the Conference Board of Laity by the Discipline.
  1. There shall be a church lay leader in each Local Church, elected by the Local Conference, who shall take leadership in promoting in cooperation with the minister and the chairman of the Executive Committee the

program of lay work of the Methodist Church. He shall be responsible for:

- (a) Becoming acquainted with the total program of The Methodist Church in order that he may counsel and work with the minister in the execution of the program.
- (b) Presenting the program of lay activities to the Executive Committee, through the local church Program Committee, for the correlation of plans to carry on the program.
- (c) Working with the minister in presenting all financial needs to the congregation.
- (d) Working with the minister in developing a program of training for the Executive Committee.
- (e) Organizing a Methodist Men if no organization exists: co-operating with the officers of the Methodist Men.
- (f) Reporting to each regular session of the Executive Committee.
- (g) Participating in the Program of the District Commission and the Conference Board of the Laity.

- 2. There may be elected by the Local Conference one or more associate lay leaders, if desired.

105. The minister of a circuit, with the consent of the Executive Committee of the charge, may organize a Local Conference **Committee of the Laity**.

- 106. (a) The Local Church may organize a fellowship of Methodist Men in accordance with the Constitution prescribed in Schedule II to the Discipline.
- (b) The Local Church may organize a Methodist Seniors Fellowship in accordance with the Rules and Regulations prescribed in Schedule IV as contained in the MD.

## **Section XIX Congregational Meeting**

107. With the concurrence of the district superintendent, a Congregational Meeting may be authorized by the Local Conference to review the work of the year and to receive the reports of officers, committees, and organizations of the church. The Congregational Meeting may also, when such authority has been specifically granted it by the Local Conference, elect such officers of the local church as would otherwise be elected by the Local Conference. The district superintendent or his appointee shall be chairman of the Congregational Meeting. Voting members shall be full members who are 18 years of age and above. Notice shall be given as in paragraph 120.5.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Conferences

#### Section I. The Mission/Annual Conference.

##### 111. **Composition and Character:**

1. The composition and character of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference are set forth in the Constitution.
2. The following shall be seated in the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference, and be given the privilege of the floor without voting rights: all ministers on trial, lay missionaries, both men and women, regularly appointed by the Board of Missions and deaconesses serving within the bounds of the Conference, the two associate conference lay Leaders, district lay leaders, the conference director of adults work, and the Methodist representatives from the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade. Executive secretaries and chairmen of Conference Board may be seated without the right to vote. Members of the Conference Executive Board including the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall have the privilege of the floor with right to vote and to hold elected office.
3. The lay member or alternate, whoever was last seated in the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference, shall be seated in a special session of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference when convened; provided that no Local Conference shall be deprived of its lay member due to death, serious illness, or cessation of membership. Under such circumstances, another lay member may be elected by the Local Conference.
4. The lay members of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall participate in all deliberations and vote upon all measures, except in the granting or validations of license, ordination, reception into full conference membership, or any question concerning the character and official conduct of ministers. Lay members shall serve on all boards except on ministerial relations and for the trial of ministers.
5. When at any time a lay member is excused by the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference from further attendance during the session, the alternate lay member may be seated in his stead. The lay member, or alternate, whoever was seated in the last session of the Conference, shall be the lay member of the Mission /Provisional/Annual Conference and it shall be his duty to report to the Local Conference actions of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference. All ex-officio members of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference unable to be seated may be replaced by alternates.
6. It is the duty of every member, and all probationers and approved supply pastors, of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference to attend its sessions and to furnish such reports and in such a form the Discipline may require. Any such people unable to attend shall report by letter to the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference Secretary, setting forth the reason for his absence. Should any minister in active service absent himself from the

session of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference without a satisfactory reason for his absence, the matter shall be referred by the Conference Secretary to the Board on the Ministry.

7. The President of the Methodist Women's Fellowship shall be seated in the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference with the right to vote; if she is absent, the vice-president shall take her place with the same right to vote.
8. The Conference lay leader shall be seated in the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference with the right to vote; if he/ she is unable to be present the Conference Associate Lay Leader shall take the seat with the same right to vote.
9. The Mission Conference may elect a Vice-Superintendent who shall be a layman and a citizen or PR in Australia and who shall be seated in the Mission Conference with the right to vote. He shall serve for two years and be eligible for one consecutive re-election. He is not eligible for re-election on reaching the age of 65 during the term for which he is to be considered. He shall assist the Superintendent in the performance of his administrative functions and in the absence of the Superintendent shall deputize for him in the same administrative functions.
10. The President of the Conference Methodist Youth Fellowship shall be seated in the Conference with the same right to vote; if he/she be absent, the vice-president shall take his/her place with the same right to vote.

112. **Organization:**

1. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop in consultation with the Executive Board of the Conference shall appoint the time for the holding of the annual session of the Conference.
2. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference or its Executive Board shall elect the place for holding the annual conference; but should it become necessary for any reason to change the place of meeting, a majority of the Executive Board together with the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop may change the place.
3. A Special Session of the Annual Conference may be held in such a time and in such place as shall be decided by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop and the Executive Board with a three-quarters vote of concurrence. A special session of the Annual Conference shall have only such power as are stated in the call.
4. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall preside over the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference. In case of his inability, the Conference shall by ballot, without nomination or debate, elect a chairman *pro tempore* from among the traveling elders.

113. **Powers and Duties:**

1. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference for its own government may adopt rules and regulations not in conflict with the Discipline of the Methodist Church.
2. A Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference cannot financially obligate The Methodist Church or an organizational unit thereof except the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference itself.
3. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference may admit into membership only those who have met all the Disciplinary requirements for membership and only in the manner prescribed in the Discipline.
4. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall have power to make inquiry into the moral and official conduct of its ministerial members. Subject only to the provisions under Judicial Administration the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall have power to hear complaints against its ministerial members and may try, reprove, suspend, deprive of ministerial office and credentials, expel, or acquit any against whom charges may have been preferred. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall have power to locate a ministerial member for unacceptability or inefficiency.
5. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall have power to make inquiry into the financial status of the churches, and where there is a deficit of finances may require the minister and the lay member to appear before the appropriate committee and make explanation.
6. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall have the power to make inquiry into the membership status of the churches, and where no member have been received on confession of faith during the year may require the minister and the lay member to appear before the Executive Board and make an explanation.
7. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall give recognition to new churches that have been organized during the year. A Certificate of Organization, duly signed by the Bishop, the District Superintendent, and the Conference Secretary, shall be presented to the newly constituted local church.

114. **Business of the Conference:**

1. The session shall open with a period of devotions, followed by a call of the roll, including the roll of the approved pastors.
2. The Mission/Provisional/ Annual Conference, to expedite the transaction of its business, may adopt an agenda as a basis of its procedure. Such agenda shall be prepared by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, the district superintendents, and such others as the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference may name, and be submitted to the Conference for adoption.
3. Members of all boards of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall be elected in such a manner as the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference may

determine or as the Discipline may specifically require. For the purpose of adjusting tenure a certain number of members may be elected or appointed for particular terms. Members shall hold office until their successors are elected.

4. The business of the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall include the receiving and the acting upon of the reports from the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, the district superintendents, the officers, the standing and special boards and societies, and also the making of such inquiries as the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall recommend by the provision of a supplemental guide.
5. The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall make inquiry into the moral and official conduct of its ministers. In response to the inquiry whether all ministerial members of the Conference are blameless in their life and official administration, the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop may answer for all the preachers in one answer or the Board on the Ministry may make inquiry of Superintendent/ President/ Bishop about each man and make one report to the Conference in open session; provided that the Conference or the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop may order an executive session of the ministerial members to consider questions relating to matters of ordination, character and conference membership.
6. At the conclusion of the examination of the standing of the ministers in the Conference or at such later times as the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop may designate, the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop may call to the bar of the Conference the class to be admitted into full connection, and receive them into conference membership after asking questions to be found in the Discipline. This examination of ministers, and the passing of their character, may be the business of one session.

115. **Records and Archives:**

1. The Conference shall keep an exact record of its proceedings. If there be no archives of the Conference, then the Conference Secretary shall keep the bound copy or copies to be handed on to his successor in office.
2. Each Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall keep printed or written copies of its annual journal signed by its Superintendent/ President/Bishop and Conference Secretary.
3. The Conference Journal shall include the following divisions, preferably in the following order:
  - I. Officers of Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference
  - II. Boards, Rolls of Conference Members
  - III. Daily Proceedings
  - IV. Disciplinary Questions
  - V. Appointments
  - VI. Reports as ordered by the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference
  - VII. Memoirs as ordered by the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference
  - VIII. Rolls of Retired and Deceased Ministerial Members
  - IX. Historical

- X. Miscellaneous
- XI. Pastoral Records (including the reports of accepted supply pastors in such a manner as the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference may determine)
- XII. Statistics
- XI. Index

## DISCIPLINARY QUESTIONS

### 116. I. **Organization and General Business**

1. Who are elected for two/three/four years:  
Superintendent/President/Bishop?  
Secretary?  
Statistician?  
Treasurer?
2. Is the Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference incorporated?
3. (a) What officers handling funds of the Conference have been bonded, and in what amounts?  
(b) Have the books of said officers or persons been audited?
4. Have the Conference board and committee been appointed or elected?
5. Have the secretaries, treasurers, and statisticians kept their respective records?
6. What is the report of:  
The Conference Statistician?  
The Conference Treasurer?
7. What are the reports of the district superintendents, Superintendent/President/ Bishop as to the status of work within his districts?
8. What is the schedule of the minimum salaries for pastors?
9. What is the plan and what is the approved claims for the support of the district superintendents, Superintendent/ President/Bishop for the ensuing year?
10. What amount has been apportioned to the pastoral charges within the Conference to be raised for the support of Conference claimants?
11. What are the apportionments for this Conference:  
(a) For the general administration fund?  
(b) For general agencies fund?  
(c) For the Episcopal Fund?
12. What is the percentage division between Conference Commitments and Undertaking budget for the current year?
13. What are the reports, recommendations, and plans for the Conference agencies?
14. What Methodist institutions or organizations are approved by the conference annuity responsibility?
15. (a) Who is the Conference lay leader?  
(b) What is his report?  
(c) Who are the District and Associate District Lay Leaders?
16. What churches have been:  
Organized?  
Merged?  
Discontinued?

Relocated, and to what address?  
Transferred into this conference and with what membership?

## II. Pertaining to Ministerial Relations

17. Are all ministerial members of the Conference blameless in their life and official administration?
18. Who constitute the Conference Board of Investigation for the forthcoming year?
19. Who are:  
Student pastors?  
Full time pastors?  
Part time pastors?
20. What pastors or church (religious) workers are credited with annuity claim on account of full-time service during the past year? (Prior consultation between Conference Board of Pensions and Superintendent/ President/ Bishop required before answering this question).
21. What preachers, coming from other evangelical churches, have had their orders recognized:  
As deacons?  
As elders?
22. Who have been admitted from other evangelical churches as traveling preachers?
  - (a) As members on trial:  
Deacons?  
Elders?
  - (b) As members in full connection:  
Deacons?  
Elders?
23. Who have been admitted on trial:
  - (a) With degrees/diplomas from approved theological schools?
  - (b) After completion of two full years of ministerial course of study under the supervision of the Board on the Ministry?
  - (c) With partial college credit, completion of the four-year course of study, and six years service as a pastor?
  - (d) With degrees from colleges and completion of the introductory studies for the ministry and the first two years of the course study?
24. Who are continued on trial, and what progress have they made in their ministerial studies:
  - (a) As students in approved theological schools?
  - (b) As graduates in theological studies?
  - (c) In the three or four-year course of ministerial studies?
  - (d) In the three or four-year graduate course of study?
25. Who on trial is disconnected?
26. Who are admitted into full connection?
27. Who have been elected deacons:
  - (a) Theological students?
  - (b) Members on trial in the course of studies?
  - (c) Pastors?
  - (d) Missionaries?

- (e) Chaplains?
- 28. Who have been ordained deacons?
- 29. Who Have been elected elders:
  - (a) Theological graduate?
  - (b) Course of study graduates?
  - (c) Missionaries?
  - (d) Chaplains?
- 30. Who have been ordained elders?
- 31. Who are readmitted:
  - As deacons?
  - As elders?
- 32. What retired members have been made effective?
- 33. Who have been received by transfer?
- 34. Who have been transferred out?
- 35. Who have had their Conference membership terminated:
  - (a) By voluntary location?
  - (b) By involuntary location?
  - (c) By withdrawal?
  - (d) By judicial procedure (expelled)?
- 36. (a) What ministerial members have died during the year:
  - While in effective relation?
  - While in active retirement or otherwise?
 (b) What pastors have died during the year?
- 37. Who are the supernumerary ministers, and for what number of years consecutively has each held this relation?
- 38. Who are granted sabbatical leave?
- 39. What ministerial members have been retired:
  - This year?
  - Previously?
- 40. What pastors have been retired:
  - This year?
  - Previously?
- 41. Who are appointed to attend school:
  - (a) Members on trial?
  - (b) Members in full connection?
- 42. (a) What is the number:
  - Of pastoral charges?
  - Received on trial?
  - Received into full connection?
  - Transferred in?
  - Transferred out?
  - Received from other evangelical churches?
  - What is the number:
    - Readmitted?
    - Discontinued?
    - Withdrawn?
    - Expelled?
    - Located?
    - Deceased?
    - Of lay preachers?
    - Of woman under appointment?
    - Of retired ministers made effective?

- Of retired ministers serving as supply pastors?
- Of district parsonages, with their total value and indebtedness thereon?
- (b) What is the number of ministers:
  - (I) On trial:
    - As pastors?
    - Under special appointment?
    - To attend school?
    - Total?
  - (II) In full connection:
    - As pastors and District Superintendents?
    - Under special appointment?
    - Appointed to attend school?
    - On sabbatical leave?
    - On furlough?
    - As heads of Methodist institutions?
    - As pastor and head of a Methodist institution?
    - Total effective?
    - Supernumerary?
  - (III) Diaconal Ministers:
    - On probation?
    - Commissioned?
  - (IV) Total of all ministers?
- 43. What other personal notations should be made?

### III. Concluding Business

- 44. What are the detailed objectives of this Conference for the coming year?
- 45. Where shall the next session of the Conference be held?
- 46. Is there any other business?
- 47. What changes have been made since the last Conference session?
- 48. Where are the preachers stationed for the ensuing year?
  - (a) Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall include in its journal a list of missionaries, ministerial and lay, active and retired, who have gone from the Conference into service of the Church in mission fields.
  - (b) The Secretary of the Conference shall keep a service record of all ministerial members of the Conference, together with the date of marriage and the birth dates of the member, his wife (or her husband) and children.
  - (c) All records of secretaries, statisticians and treasurers shall be kept.
  - (d) In the Conference there shall be a Historical Society, to be appointed or elected in whatever manner the Conference may decide, whose duties it shall be to preserve the records of the Conference, gather all data referring to its organization, its past history, its former members, and to collect all data of interest and preserve theses for future generations, together with a record of current items of importance, and to keep before the minds of our people the glorious deeds of heroes of the past.

117. **Conference Agencies:**

1. (a) The Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference shall elect the following two/three/four-year boards as are required by the Mission/ Provisional/ Annual Conference, or the Discipline:

1. Executive Board
2. Board of Nominations
3. Board of Appointments
4. Board on the Ministry
5. Board of Finance
6. Board of Missions
7. Board of Christian Education
8. Board on Evangelism
9. Board of Christian Social Concerns
10. Board of Laity
11. Board on Worship and Music
12. Board on Investigation
13. Discipline Review Committee
14. Any other Board as the Conference may so require

The powers and duties of these agencies shall be prescribed by the Conference authorizing them or as defined by the Discipline.

- (b) The Mission/Provisional/ Annual Conference may appoint additional agencies for the purpose of promoting the work of the Methodist Church within the bounds of the said Mission/Provisional/ Annual Conference and may prescribe their membership and their powers and duties.
- (c) In the appointment or election of Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference boards the provisions of the Discipline concerning membership shall be held to the minimum requirements; each Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference may make its agencies of such size as its work may need. Full-time approved supply pastors serving charges are eligible for election or appointment to such agencies, except those dealing with qualifications, orders and status of ministers and pastors.
- (d) The Chairman of the respective District Commissions shall be a member of the corresponding Board of the Conference respectively.
2. A **Board of Nominations** shall be elected from the floor of the annual conference to serve a term of two/three/four years, composed of a chairmen and four or six members with equal lay and ministerial representation. The duties of the Board shall be:
- (a) Once every two/three/four years its shall nominate suitable persons to serve on various boards of the Conference as provided for in the Discipline or as required by the Conference.

- (b) It shall nominate persons to fill such vacancies annually as may occur on any of these boards during the period.

The Board of Nominations shall submit its nominations for the boards to the Conference, provided that nominations from the floor are not denied.

3. **Mission/Provisional/Annual Conference Executive Board:** The Conference Executive Board shall executive the decisions of the annual conference and co-ordinate the work of the various boards and agencies. The term of office shall be two/three/four years and in case of vacancies the Conference shall elect new members to make up the total number as decided by the Conference.
  - (a) The Executive Board shall consist of the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop and an equal number of ministerial and lay members with a total membership of no less than seven (7) voting members and not more than fifteen (15) voting members. It shall include the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop as chairman, the vice-superintendent (if any), the conference lay leader, the conference secretary, and the chairman of the Conference Board of Finance, the conference president of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, and ministers and lay members at large. There shall be alternates for the following members of the Executive Board: the conference lay leader, the conference secretary, the president of the Methodist Women's Fellowship and the chairman of the Conference Board of Finance.
  - (b) The Executive Board shall elect a vice-chairman and a recording secretary who shall keep a permanent record of its meetings and of any decision reached. Certified copies of the minutes shall be filed with the Conference Secretary and with the Board of Finance.
  - (c) It shall convene at least once a year and at such other times as are necessary on call of the chairman or on request of one-fifth of the members. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.
  - (d) All decisions shall require a majority vote of the entire membership.
  - (e) It may incur expense necessary to the performance of its function, subject to such budgetary control as may be specified by the Conference. Its annual expense shall be budgeted for by the Board of Finance.
4. The Conference shall have a **Board of Appointments** comprising the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop as chairman, the vice-superintendent (if any), district superintendents, the conference lay leader, and the chairman of the conference Board on Finance. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall consult the Board of Appointments when making appointments of ministers to charges and conference worker to other fields.
5. (i) (a) The **Board on the Ministry** shall be elected from the floor of the annual conference to serve for a term of two/three/four years and shall consist of no fewer than three nor more than twelve ministers in full connection in the Conference, nominated by the Superintendent/

President/ Bishop after consultation with the chairman of the Board of the previous Board or with a committee of the Board, and with the Conference Executive Board. Vacancies shall be filled by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop after consultation with the chairman of the Board.

- (b) The Board shall organize itself by electing from its membership a chairman, a registrar and such other officers as it may deem necessary.
  - (c) The Board shall convene at the seat and time of the Conference, preferably the day before the session opens, to review and complete the work of the past year and to plan for the future, and at such other times during the conference year as its work may require.
  - (d) The Board shall elect for each of the District Commissions on the Ministry an official representative, who need not reside within the districts, to serve as a member of the Commission.
- (ii) The **duties** of the Board on the Ministry shall be:
- (a) To study problem of ministerial supply in the Conference and to cooperate with the ministers of the Conference, in every effort to enlist suitable persons for the Christian ministry, to list all persons who have declared their purpose to prepare for the Christian ministry as ministerial students, and to provide contact with and counsel for all ministerial students while in preparation for the ministry.
  - (b) To urge and encourage in every practical way all ministerial students to attend theological schools on the Methodist Church, to complete the course leading to the bachelor of theology or equivalent degree, and to guide and counsel them in this course.
  - (c) To receive annual reports on the progress made by each ministerial student enrolled in a theological school and to record credit for work satisfactorily completed.
  - (d) To guide the ministerial candidate who is not enrolled in a theological school and who is pursuing a course of study.
  - (e) To administer the program of recruiting and training, and in maintaining its standards of the ministry
  - (f) To inquire into the education and spiritual qualifications of each candidate for the ministry.
  - (g) To examine each candidate to be advanced to membership in the Conference and to orders, and each minister from another Church seeking admission into our fellowship, according to the provisions of the Discipline, and report its recommendation to the Conference.

- (h) To cooperate with the Conference agencies in providing guidance in the continuing education of the ministers.
- (iii) (a) The registrar of the Board shall keep a full personal record, including transcript of academic credit, for all ministerial candidates within the bounds of the Conference.  
  
(b) He shall keep a permanent record of the standing of the students in the course of study, and report to the Conference when required. This record shall include the credits allowed students for work done in accredited schools of theology, in approved schools, in approved courses of study and by correspondence.  
  
(c) The registrar or some other designated officer of the Board shall keep a record of the educational history and interests of each minister serving in the Conference. This material will be furnished to the Board by the active ministers. Such records are the property of the Conference and shall be carefully preserved.
- (iv) The Board on the Ministry shall be directly amendable to the Conference for its actions.
- (v) The Board on the Ministry shall cooperate and be amenable to the Conference in all matters relating to the development and promotion of programs for local churches. It shall cooperate with the Conference Executive Board in order that its program emphasis may be integrated into the total unified program of the Board. It shall promote the total program of the church or aspects of it which are particularly related to the Board as it may be directed by the Conference Executive Board. Field work plans which relate to the promotion of program in the Conference or the Local Church shall be cleared through the Conference Executive Board.
- (vi) The District Commission on the Ministry.
  - (a) There shall be a District Commission on the Ministry, composed of the District Superintendent as Chairman, three other elders of the district nominated annually by him and approved by the Conference, and one representative from and appointed by the Board on the Ministry. Interim vacancies may be filled by the Chairman.
  - (b) The Commission shall examine each person who applies in writing for a license to preach, or for a renewal of such license. Where there is evidence that his gifts, graces and usefulness warrant, and that he is qualified under Para 137.2 on recommendation of his Local Conference (Para 121.6), the Commission may recommend to the District Conference to issue or renew his license to preach; provided, however, that where no District Conference exists, final action may be taken by the Board and provided further, that before the ballot for licensing a

person to preach is taken, he shall have agreed to the condition set forth in Para 136.7.

- (c) The Commission shall recommend to the Board on the Ministry of the Conference suitable candidates for acceptance or continuance as pastors for admission on probation, and for restoration of credentials.
- (d) The vote of the Commission in all such matters shall be by individual written ballot, and a three-fourths majority vote of the Commission shall be required for licenses for approval.
- (e) The Commission shall report its work to the District Conference for approval where such Conference exists.
- (f) The Chairman and another representative of the Commission shall meet annually with the Chairman of the Board, either separately or with representatives of all districts.
- (g) The Commission shall designate an official spokesperson, other than the Chairman, to confer with the Board, when so requested, about any candidate recommended to it by the Commission.

## 6. **Board of Laity**

1. **Objective.** The basic objective of the Board shall be the promotion of all persons' awareness of and in their growth in all persons in their understanding of God, especially of His redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ, and their response in faith and love to the end that:
  - (a) they may know who they are and what their human situation means;
  - (b) they may increasingly identify themselves as children of God and members of the Christian community;
  - (c) they may live in the spirit of God in every relationship;
  - (d) they may fulfill their common discipleship in the world; and
  - (e) they may abide in Christian hope.
2. **Functions of the Board.** The Board shall implement the above objective in coordination and cooperation with the other Boards and Agencies of the Conference. The functions of the Board shall be:-
  - (a) To support all members of the Conference as they seek to lead persons to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
  - (b) To engage in research, consultation, and experimentation in the search for an understanding of what it means to be Christian, to love the world, to identify with its needs, to go into the world to meet God at work there, to live in redemptive fellowship in the world, and to be on mission in the world.
  - (c) To develop settings for dialogue, interaction and partnership between the laity and the clergy, so as to better understand the

common ministry of all Christians, who are bound together in Christ and are committed to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed to the community.

(d) To plan and organize for the education of the laity at the Conference, District and Local Church levels, in :-

- (i) lay mission, lay witness and service,
- (ii) leadership responsibilities in church, and
- (iii) stewardship of their God-given resources of time, talent and wealth for the church's ministries.

(e) To develop and provide resources for the lay ministry through field work, publication and program resource materials.

3. **Membership of the Board.** The Board shall compose of the Conference Lay Leader (who shall be the Chairman), Associate Conference Lay Leader(s), District Lay Leaders, the Conference President of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the Conference President of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, Conference President of the Methodist Adults / Young Adults Fellowship, Conference Director of program activities, Directors of adults, youth, and children's work.

The Conference Lay Leader and the Associate Conference Lay Leader(s) shall be elected every two/three/four-year by the Conference on nominations by the Board of Laity and the Conference in session. They shall be eligible for two successive re-elections.

The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop and the District Superintendent(s) shall be ex-officio members.

## 7. **Board of Evangelism**

- (a) The aim of evangelism is to bring all men to living, active fellowship with God through Jesus Christ as divine Savior and Lord and through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit; to gather them into fellowship of the church; and to lead them to express their Christian discipleship in every area of human life that the kingdom of God shall be realized.
- (b) Evangelism is the winning of the lost to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord through the agency of the Holy Spirit. It is an attitude, a spirit, and a living faith which find expression in the continuous cooperative effort on the part of the Holy Spirit and man to bring the individual into vital relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ His son. It results in a definite personal experience of salvation and a progressive building of Christ-like character. It seeks to bring man into complete harmony with the Will of God and into the fellowship of the church. It helps him to grow spiritually through the means of grace and to serve God in daily living.

- (c) Evangelism is the task of the whole church. Every minister, department, agency, local church, and member of the Methodist Church is responsible for its accomplishment.
- (d) The Conference shall elect every two/three/four-year a Board of Evangelism, which shall plan and promote the program of evangelism throughout the Conference. It shall create an intelligent conception of, interest in, and passion for evangelism, and promote all types, phases, and methods of evangelism throughout the Conference. It shall seek to enlist the cooperation of ministers and laymen throughout the Conference in promoting the work of evangelism. It shall develop and promote a conference program for evangelism, which shall include the training of ministers and laymen in that program, the distribution of promotional literature, and the encouragement of Local Church participation in the year-round program of evangelism. It shall foster prayer, private devotions, and family worship, and encourage attendance upon and participation in the prayer and worship services of the Local Church. It shall give guidance to the Commission on Evangelism and to Local Church Committee on Membership and Evangelism in carrying out their purposes as outlined in the Discipline.
- (e) The Board shall consist of a chairman and three to six other members who shall be elected by the Conference, and the chairman of the Commissions on Evangelism. The Board shall meet at such time and place as it may designate.
- (f) The Board shall elect its own recording secretary. The retiring Board shall complete its business and make its reports and recommendations to the Conference.
- (g) The Chairman shall not be the director of evangelism. His duties shall be to preside over all Board meetings, to present the report of the Board to the Conference, and to support the evangelistic causes and program of the Conference. In cooperation with the director he shall annually present the budget of the Board to the Board of Finance.
- (h) The Board of Appointments may appoint, on recommendation by the Board of Evangelism, a director of evangelism. He shall promote the policies and programs of the Board. It shall be his duty to lead in program planning, to implement and execute plans and programs adopted.
- (i) The Board shall administer the funds of the Board, faithfully adhering to the program and financial policies.
- (j) Each district of the Conference shall organize a Commission on Evangelism, which shall promote the program of evangelism as outlined by the Board of Evangelism.
- (k) The Commission shall include in its membership a Commission chairperson who is elected at the District Conference and all the chairpersons of the Committees of Evangelism and Membership within its district.

## 8. **Board of Missions**

(a) Definition: “Missions” as used below shall be understood as the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deeds in areas where there are no established Christian Congregations to the end that men and women may repent of their sins, be baptized by water and the Holy Spirit and become established in Christian maturity.

(b) Duties and Responsibilities of Board: It shall be the duty of the Board to oversee missionary education and cultivation.

A. Missions Resources: To have available for distribution and loan to local churches missions information and literature, and missions audio-visual material.

B. Mission Personnel: From time to time, the Board shall contact and make available suitable individuals well-versed in local or universal missionary needs to local churches to stimulate missions awareness.

C. Missions Awareness: It shall keep abreast of current missionary needs in the Church world-wide and locally, in order to encourage and oversee church planting in pioneering situations. In this, the Board shall work together with other agencies for maximum cooperation.

D. Mission Conference and Seminars: When necessary, the Board shall arrange for such conferences and seminars at the local, district or conference levels to cultivate the above.

E. Development and Cultivation of Personnel: When the Board becomes aware of individuals who are interested in missions as a calling, it shall keep in touch with the person concerned to encourage and prepare the person for future work.

F. Selection of Missions Personnel:

### 1. Ordained Ministers

(a) In the event that ordained ministers apply for work in missions areas or another missionary agency, the Board shall act as vetting body. Permission for the minister to be seconded to such work is the prerogative of the Board on the Ministry and Board of Appointments.

(b) However, in situations where the Board deems it necessary that an ordained person is required in a new “missions area” it shall make this need known to the Board on the Ministry and Board of Appointments for the making available of such a person.

### 2. Others

(a) General Qualifications:

- (i) Due to the rigors and difficulties of work in pioneering areas, no candidate shall be accepted by the Board unless the person has demonstrated that he / she possesses the gifts for such work. Clear fruits of ministry like the ability to communicate the Gospel, effective follow-up of new believers and the ability to teach are expected of all candidates.
- (ii) For those going into cross-cultural situations, the candidate must demonstrate the willingness to be sensitive to varying cultural norms.
- (iii) Except for the academic requirements, a missionary candidate shall possess the same requirements as expected of our ordained ministry.
- (iv) Each candidate shall submit a personal statement of faith to the Board.
- (b) Commissioning: When the Board is satisfied that the prospective candidate is suitably prepared and qualified, it shall present the candidate to the Conference. A commissioning service shall be carried out indicating the full support of the Conference spiritually, morally and financially.

G. Finance and other commitments

1. Fully self-supported Missionaries

- (a) Where a person is self-supporting in a 'tent-making' ministry, the Board shall have no financial obligations to the missionary.
- (b) In the event that the financial circumstances of the candidate changes, he \ she shall duly inform the Board; and the Board is morally responsible to help in every possible way.

2. Partially self-supported Ministries

- (a) Where a candidate is not receiving sufficient remuneration from his secondment or his 'tent-making' ministry to meet his \her financial needs, the Board shall be responsible to inform the Conference and to raise the funds accordingly. However, such arrangements should be clearly spelt out before the candidate is sent.
- (b) In the event of changing circumstances, 1.(b) above shall apply.

### 3. Fully-supported Missionaries

- (a) In case of a candidate starting in a pioneering situation without the support of any other agency, the Board shall be responsible to work with the Conference to allocate the finances.
- (b) The financial allocation in such cases shall be the equivalent for our ordained ministers.

### H. Discipline

- 1. In cases where a missionary is not performing to expectation, or where there are moral indiscretions, it shall be the duty of the board to make the necessary investigations.
- 2. If the evidence of accrued justifies it, The Board of Investigation shall be informed and take over the case. The same procedure shall be followed for ordained ministers.

(c) The Board shall consist of a chairman and six other members who shall be elected biennially by the Conference, and the chairmen of the Commission on Missions. Vacancies in the Board may be filled by the Executive Board subject to ratification by vote of the next session of the Annual Conference.

(d) The Board shall elect its own recording secretary. The outgoing Board shall complete its business and make its report and recommendations to the Conference.

## 9. Board on Christian Education

### (a) Philosophy and Mission of the Board

- (i) *Purpose.* "Christian Education" is established in the church for the nurture of believers and their children until they reach maturity in Christ and conform to his image. It is Christ, the personal Word of God and the central motivational force of this enterprise, who defines the "Christian" in Christian Education.
- (ii) *Foundation.* We believe that the Bible is the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 2:20-21). Only this Word can inform us accurately about Christ. Only this Word is sufficient for our faith and practice. The Bible, God's written and living Word, is therefore the basis for every area of the Church School Curriculum, whether written or understood. We aim for the Word to infuse and to provide the guidelines for all areas of our Curriculum. The teaching of the Word should not simply be a separate subject on a purely intellectual basis (Romans 10:2-3, I Corinthians 2:10-16).
- (i) *Mission.* The mission of the Board on Christian Education is to proclaim Jesus Christ in all aspects of the *educational* life of the church, emphasizing academic excellence and Biblical Christian standards in all

areas of Christian living. As Christ came proclaiming the Kingdom of God, so evangelism is also an expected fruit of discipleship as evidenced by student and staff reaching out to others with the Gospel.

- (iii) *Principle of Prevenient Grace.* We acknowledge that mankind's greatest need is have a right relationship with God. However, man being a sinner by nature and choice and fallen in intellect cannot, of himself, know God or please Him. We believe that God in His great love and prevenient grace has enabled people to choose to accept the free gift of salvation by submission to the Lordship of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 6:40).
- (iv) *Principle of Human Responsibility.* God's grace places on us the responsibility to cooperate with Him that we might bear the fruits of salvation. While He works through His Spirit to transform believers through the renewing of their minds (Rom. 12:2), it is the elects' responsibility to work out their salvation "with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12-13). The aim of Christian Education is to provide the educational bases and guidelines for such an endeavour. As Christian Education recognizes that faith without works is dead, it therefore seeks to encourage all Christians to love and good works, till men shall see their good works and glorify the Father who is in heaven.
- (v) *Concern for Family.* We further believe that God has instituted the family for the teaching of children. We therefore seek to provide a message to students that is consistent with that given in the Christian home. In this way, we hope to aid believing families in the nurture of their young. Recognizing that God has appointed parents to teach and instruct their young, Christian Education seeks to partner with parents and the church to disciple their children so that they may grow up to be godly young men and women with Christian Biblical values and impact their world for Christ.
- (vi) We do not seek to replace parental authority but to assist them only (Ephesians 6:1-2). Therefore, in the Christian education of the young, we covet the close cooperation of believing parents in every phase of the development of the students within the framework of our stated purposes (c.f. CMCA Discipline, para 157.17).

**(b) Aims, Responsibilities and Functions of the Board**

- (i) *Aim.* It shall be the aim of this Board to provide a quality education curriculum that is thoroughly Christian and Biblical in nature, direction, process, content and methodology, and that is comprehensive and systematic as to cover all areas and stages of the Christian life.
- (ii) *Policy.* It shall also be the aim of this Board to maintain the standard of excellence in Curriculum, Teachers' Training and Church School organization and operations through regular communication and consultation with the local churches. In the conduct of these responsibilities, as in all areas of the life of the church, it is recognized that the minister is the minister of Word, sacraments and order. Nothing in this proviso shall be construed as denying the ordained minister his authority

as the minister in charge of Christian Education of the congregation under his charge.

(iii) *Responsibilities.* It shall be the responsibility of the Board on Christian Education to:

1. Ensure that the philosophy and aims of Christian Education are upheld in all Church Schools through a system of general guidelines and communication, establishing a network of all the Christian Education Committees and Commissions within the Annual Conference.
2. Assist the Christian Education Committees of local churches in the interpretation of the philosophy and tasks of Christian Education in the context of the Methodist Church.
3. Facilitate the Christian Education Committees of Local Conferences in their functions by providing support such as church school teachers training and Christian Education curriculum resources.
4. Coordinate church school activities of the local churches at the national level through church school teachers' and Christian educators' forums such as seminars, conventions and so on.
5. Consult with other Conference Boards in the choice and recommendation of teaching resources in their respective ministry areas.

(iv) *Curriculum.* The Christian Education curriculum provided by the Board shall include a systematic presentation of the Biblical Christian faith understood from a Methodist perspective. It shall also be the responsibility of this Board to consult with the Discipline Review Committee and the Board on the Ministry to develop and establish a systematic understanding of the Methodist Church in terms of its history, structure, polity, mission, ministry and the meaning and requirements of membership.

(v) *Literature and Publications.* All intended literature and publications to be recommended by this Board for use in our Local Churches shall be first reviewed and approved by the Discipline Review Committee and the Board on the Ministry before publication and distribution.

(vi) *Personnel.* To facilitate its work, the Board may, with the concurrence of the Executive Board, employ a Director of Christians Education, or it may request that the Bishop appoint a Minister of Christian Education who shall be wholly attached to the Board for his ministry. The Board shall decide the terms of employment duty for either of them and in consultation with them.

### (c) **Composition of the Board**

(i) *Membership.* The Board on Christian Education shall comprise the Chairmen of the District Commissions on Christian Education and at least

five and not more than ten members elected by the Conference. The Conference shall ensure that those nominated to the Board shall be persons of sound doctrinal understanding, with proven competence and interest in educational matters, and with at least five years membership in a Methodist Church. The Chairman of the Board shall be elected by the Conference from among the elders of not less than five years in full connection.

- (ii) *Ex-officios*. The Chairmen of the Boards on the Ministry, Evangelism, Missions and the Conference Layleader shall be ex-officio members with voting rights.
- (iii) *Organization*. The Board shall organize itself by electing its own deputy chairman, secretary, and other officers required for the prosecution of its work.

**(d) Quorum and Decision Making**

- (i) The quorum for Board meetings shall be at least three quarters of the total voting membership of the Board.
- (ii) All decisions shall be carried by a simple majority of the total voting membership, except in the case of approving the curriculum which shall require at least three quarters of the total voting membership of the Board.

**10. Board on Christian Social Concerns**

- (a) **Definition** Christian Social Concerns are the concerns of the believer of Christ for the welfare and good of his neighbors in the society in which the believer finds himself.

**(b) Philosophy and Mission of the Board**

- (i) *Purpose*. Christian Social Concerns is for the glory of God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ who came to reveal to us the love of the Father in his own concern for the people.
- (ii) *Our Doctrinal Stand*. Article X of our 25 Articles of Religion states:

**Of Good Works**

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

- (iii) *Scriptural Mandate and our Methodist Heritage*. The Lord Jesus Christ "went about doing good" (Acts 10:13). In our historic position we have sought to follow Christ in bringing the whole of life, with its activities, possessions, and relationships into conformity with the will

of God. Christ also taught his disciples to glorify the Father through good works (Matthew 5:16).

The interest of The Methodist Church in social welfare springs from the gospel, and from the labors of John Wesley, who ministered to the physical, intellectual, and social needs of the people to whom he preached the gospel of personal redemption. Wesley insisted that "Christianity is essentially a social religion, and that to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it."

True holiness is to love God and to love one's neighbor by doing good. Wesley makes it clear that a loyal Methodist "does good unto all men- unto neighbors, and strangers, friends, and enemies."

- (iv) *Mission.* The mission of the Board on Christian Social Concerns is to help believers follow Christ and glorify the heavenly Father through their concerns for the welfare of the people (c.f., Jeremiah 29:7).
- (v) *Principle of Love for God.* We acknowledge that true service to God springs from a wholehearted love of God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; Joshua 22:5).
- (vi) *Principle of Prevenient Grace.* We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). We understand that we cannot love truly except that the Holy Spirit pours the love of God into our hearts (Romans 5:5).
- (vii) *Principle of Human Responsibility.* We acknowledge that we have been created in Christ for good works (Ephesians 2:10). In Christian Social Concerns, we seek to testify to our Master through our love for one another and for our neighbors (John 13:34&35; Matthew 22:39).

(c) **Composition of the Board**

- (i) *Membership.* The Board on Christian Social Concerns shall comprise the Chairmen of the District Commissions on Christian Social Concerns and at least three and not more than five members elected by the Conference for a quadrennium. The Conference shall ensure that those nominated to the Board shall be persons of sound doctrinal understanding and social awareness, and with at least three years membership in a Methodist Church. At least one elective member shall be a minister. The Chairman of the Board shall be elected by the Conference.
- (ii) *Ex-officios.* The District Superintendents, the Conference Layleader and the President of the Conference Women's Fellowship shall be ex-officio members.
- (iii) *Organization.* The Board shall organize itself by electing its own deputy chairman, secretary, and other officers required for the prosecution of its work.

(d) **Quorum and Decision Making**

- (i) The quorum for Board meetings shall be at least three quarters of the total voting membership of the Board.
- (ii) All decisions shall be carried by a simple majority of the total voting membership.

(e) **Policy, Standards and Responsibilities of the Board**

- (i) *Policy.* It shall be the aim of this Board to maintain the focus of on the glorification of God through Christian Social Concerns based on the study of scripture, and the principles of Christian love, righteousness and godly order which shall be emphasized at all times.
- (ii) *Standards.* In all expressions of social concerns, the aim shall be to witness to the love, the righteousness and the holiness of God. Social Concerns that do not agree with the revelation of scripture or the standards of godliness shall not be affirmed nor pursued by the Church.
- (iii) *Responsibilities of the Board.* It shall be the responsibility of the Board on Christian Social Concerns:
  1. To study and to make known our Methodist heritage of social holiness;
  2. To study and interpret the Methodist Social Principles and to help bring awareness of current matters of Christian social concerns to Local Churches;
  3. To prepare resource materials and manuals in the doctrine, mandate and avenues of Christian social concerns for study by individuals and groups;
  4. To aid Local Churches in knowing and interpreting the meaning, purpose, and practice of Methodist social concerns, and to encourage members and Local Churches to take an active and involved role in showing such concerns through the publication of suitable relevant literature and through forums and seminars;
  5. To provide courses of training in Christian social action for members ;
  6. To promote and organize, in co-operation with the Executive Board and others concerned, Conference wide appeals for aid to disaster victims or support for Christian causes related to social concerns.
- (iv) *Personnel.* To facilitate its work, the Board may, with the concurrence of the Executive Board, employ a Director of Christian Social Concerns who shall be wholly attached to the Board for his ministry. The Board shall decide the terms of employment duty for either of them and in consultation with them.

11. **Board on Worship and Music**

(a) **Philosophy and Mission of the Board**

- (i) *Purpose.* Christian Worship is for the glory of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Risen Son of God. It is Christian because its understanding of worship is based on the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- (ii) *Foundation.* We believe that the Bible is the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 2:20-21). Only this Word is sufficient for our faith and practice, including worship and music. We believe that man is made for the glory of God, and worship is therefore a fundamental component of doxology. We believe that worship is ultimate, not ministry, because God is ultimate, not man (Revelations 22:3). Therefore the first priority of worship is to glorify God, not to please men.
- (iii) *Mission.* The mission of the Board on Worship and Music is to help believers glorify Jesus Christ as Lord in worship through the Holy Spirit (Philippians 3:3), emphasizing holiness, excellence and Biblical Christian standards and principles in all areas of worship.
- (iv) *Principle of Love for God.* We acknowledge that true service to God springs from a wholehearted love of God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; Joshua 22:5).
- (v) *Principle of Prevenient Grace.* We understand that the problem of sin keeps men separated from God. In worship, we seek the presence of God. We acknowledge that we are able now to enter into the holy place and come before God only “by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh” (Hebrews 10:19&20).
- (vi) *Principle of Human Responsibility.* God’s grace places on us the responsibility to “strive .... for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

**(b) Composition of the Board**

- (i) *Membership.* The Board on Worship and Music shall comprise the Chairmen of the District Commissions on Worship and Music and at least three and not more than five members elected by the Conference. The Conference shall ensure that those nominated to the Board shall be persons of sound doctrinal understanding, with proven interest and competence in worship and music, and with at least five years membership in a Methodist Church. The Chairman of the Board shall be elected by the Conference from among the elders of not less than three years in full connection.
- (ii) *Ex-officios.* The Chairmen of the Board on the Ministry and the Board on Christian Education together with the Conference Layleader shall be ex-officio members with voting rights.
- (iii) *Organization.* The Board shall organize itself by electing its own deputy chairman, secretary, and other officers required for the prosecution of its work.

(c) **Quorum and Decision Making**

- (i) The quorum for Board meetings shall be at least three quarters of the total voting membership of the Board.
- (ii) All decisions shall be carried by a simple majority of the total voting membership.

(d) **Policy, Standards and Responsibilities of the Board**

- (i) *Policy.* It shall also be the aim of this Board to maintain the focus of worship on the glorification of God based on the study of scripture, and the principles of decency, order and excellence in worship and music shall be emphasized at all times.
- (ii) *Standards.* True worship conforms to God's regulations (Hebrews 9:1). We believe that there are ways and elements of worship that are acceptable to God (Hebrews 12:28) and there are ways and elements that are not acceptable to God (Deuteronomy 12). We acknowledge that we have the responsibility to search the scriptures and conform our worship to the ways and elements that are acceptable to God, such as worshipping God exclusively (Matthew 4:10), worshipping Him in true spirit (John 4:24), worshipping decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40) and in holiness (Psalm 29:2).
- (iii) *Responsibilities.* It shall be the responsibility of the Board on Worship and Music:
  1. To study and interpret the Methodist concept of and approach to worship and sacred music in cooperation with the Board on Christian Education and the Board on the Ministry;
  2. To aid Local Churches in knowing and interpreting the meaning, purpose, locus and practice of Methodist worship, and to promote the highest standards for the conduct of worship and music;
  3. To prepare resource materials and manuals in the doctrine and art of worship for study by individuals and groups;
  4. To encourage the use of hymnals approved by The Methodist Church in public worship, and devotional materials in the church and in the home;
  5. To provide a repertoire of suitable music in public worship and at weddings, funerals, and all other occasions;
  6. To provide a guideline for the maintenance and care of musical instruments, music libraries, and related equipment in Local Churches, and for the care of all furnishing and appointments for the conduct of worship, and under the direction of the minister and the communion steward, to prepare the Lord's Table for Holy Communion.
  7. To provide courses of training for worship enablers;

8. To promote, in co-operation with the Executive Board and others concerned, a policy regarding the securing of memorial gifts to the Local Church, and to provide a suitable book in which the names of donors, the ones memorialized and the memorial gifts may be recorded.

(iv) *Personnel.* To facilitate its work, the Board may, with the concurrence of the Executive Board, employ a Director of Worship and Music, or it may request that the Bishop appoint a Minister of Worship and Music who shall be wholly attached to the Board for his ministry. The Board shall decide the terms of employment duty for either of them and in consultation with them.

(e) **Limits.** All decisions made by the Board on Worship and Music shall first be vetted by the Board on the Ministry. The Board on Worship and Music shall recognize that the ordained pastor of a Local Church is the minister of word, sacrament and order. The Board shall not make any decision nor implement any program which interferes with the authority of the pastor given by the Discipline.

## 12. Board on Investigation

### (a) Composition of the Board

(i) *Membership.* The Board on Investigation shall comprise three or five elders who have proven knowledge of the organization and Discipline and sound judgment in the affairs of the Methodist Church, four of whom shall be elected biennially by the Annual Conference upon nomination of the Bishop. The Board shall organize itself upon the call of the respective District Superintendent who shall preside over the Board of that respective call.

### (b) Quorum and Decision Making

(i) The quorum of the Board meetings shall be at least three quarters of the total voting membership of the Board.

(ii) All decisions shall be carried by a simple majority of the total voting membership.

### (c) Policy and Responsibilities of the Board

(i) *Policy.* It shall be the aim of the Board to maintain impartiality, fairness, and honesty in the spirit of Christian brotherhood. As in all Boards, the focus of this Board is on the glorification of God. The principles of Christian love, righteousness and godly order shall be emphasized at all times.

(ii) *Responsibilities of the Board.*

1. When an accusation against a travelling elder based on any of the offences enumerated in para 256.1 (a) – (e) is preferred, it shall be referred by the Bishop of the Conference Board on Investigation.

2. The District Superintendent of the respective District in which the accused elder has his appointment shall then call the Board of Investigation to inquire into the case according to the provisions laid down in the section on Judicial Administration of the Book of Discipline.
3. If the accused is the District Superintendent, the Bishop shall summon the Board on Investigation and appoint another District Superintendent to preside at the Investigation.
- 4.1. If in the judgment of a majority of the Board of Investigation, there is reasonable ground for such accusation, they shall prepare and sign the proper charges and specifications and send a copy to the accused and to the Bishop and the Secretary of the Annual Conference. On recommendation of the Board on Investigation, the Bishop may suspend the accused from all material appointments pending the trial.
- 4.2. If in the judgment of a majority of the Board of Investigation, there is no reasonable ground for such accusation, they shall immediately prepare and sign the proper discharge and acquittal certificate and send a copy to the acquitted, and to the Bishop and the Secretary of the Annual Conference. The Bishop shall then restore to the acquitted person all appointments made before the investigation.
- 4.3. If in the judgment of a majority of the Board of Investigation, there is reasonable ground to believe that the accuser has acted slanderously and maliciously, they shall prepare and sign the proper charges and specifications and send a copy to the Bishop and the Secretary of the Annual Conference. On recommendation of the Board on Investigation, the Bishop may order a trial for the false accuser.

- (d) **Limits of the Board.** The members of the Board on Investigation shall not be members of the trial or Appeals Court.

### 13. Discipline Review Committee

- (a) **Philosophy of the Board.** We, the people called Methodists, are a people governed by law, and who readily submit to the rules for a decent and orderly Christian life, both corporate and individual. We believe that the law is for the people and not the people for the law. In its work of reviewing the Methodist Discipline and making recommendations for changes to it, the Board recognizes that the Church, the Body of Christ, is established on the principles of faith in Christ and fidelity to the Word of God, and is built up in mutual love and trust, and in righteousness and holiness. As sound Methodists, the Board is motivated in its work by a wholehearted love of God that admits no place to sin and evil.
- (b) **Aim of the Board.** The aim of the Board is to ensure that the Book of Discipline will clearly reflect all the best and loftiest ideals of Methodist Christianity.
- (c) **Composition of the Board.**

- (i) There shall be at least five and not more than nine members including the Chairman and Secretary, elected on a simple majority of the roll of the Annual Conference delegates. Members of the Board shall be elected from the members at large of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia, upon the nomination of the various District Conferences, each of which will nominate at least one and not more than two names. In nominating names to the Board, care shall be taken to ensure that the nominees are persons of sound Christian judgment and legal interest, and who have at least five years membership in a Methodist Church and two years' experience in the Local Church Executive Committee.
  - (ii) If elected to the Board, the Bishop may not exercise his Episcopal powers in his function as a member of the Board. Any reference to his Episcopal office and powers during the Board meetings shall be on a consultative level only.
  - (iii) The Discipline Review Board may:
    1. co-opt additional members without voting rights, provided that consent from the Board of Executives or the Annual Conference shall first have been obtained before such additional members have been invited;
    2. consult relevant persons as and when deemed necessary or expedient by the Board.
- (d) **Duties and Powers of the Board.** While it may consult with the various other Boards and agencies in the prosecution of its task, this Board shall be directly amenable, and shall report its work, to the legislative body of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia. The Annual Conference shall allocate a reasonable annual allowance to this Board for its due operations. It shall be the duty of this Board to:
- (i) Review and recommend to the legislative body changes to the existing Discipline of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia including provisions related to:
    1. the Structure of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia
    2. the Place and Role of the Episcopacy;
    3. the Rules of Organization of the Age Level Fellowships
    4. the Rules of Organization of the Men's and Women's Fellowships
  - (ii) invite and consider petitions from duly authorized bodies and agencies of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia and, if deemed necessary, recommend to the legislative body changes to the Discipline arising from such petitions;
  - (iii) edit the existing Discipline and all amendments made to it with a view to making it internally coherent, systematic, teachable and user-friendly, and ensuring consistency and simplicity of language throughout the Book of Discipline.

- (e) **Limits of the Board.** The Board shall not have any legislative power of its own, this power being reserved for the Annual Conference which is the sole legislative body of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia.
- (i) Any change or amendment recommended by the Discipline Review Board shall first be canvassed in writing to the Annual Conference, and shall be effective only after the relevant and necessary Conference procedures for amendments to the Discipline have been met.
  - (ii) In discharging its functions under subparagraph 4 above, the Board shall generally recommend changes to streamline and clarify the administrative structures of the Church. It shall seek to ensure that any such change shall always be in conformity with scripture and with the fundamental character and heritage of Methodism, particularly with respect to Part II of the Discipline relating to Doctrinal Statements and General Rules, the connectional system and the reasonable representation of the lay and the ministry.

## **Section II District Conference**

118. A District Conference may, if directed by the Conference of which it is a part, be held upon the call of the district superintendent, which call shall specify the time and place.
119. 1. A District Conference shall be composed of all preachers, traveling (including retired and supernumerary) and local, and supply pastors, the deaconesses, the church lay leaders, church school superintendents, and a representative of the district organization of Methodist Men, the district president of the Methodist Adult \Young Adult Fellowship, the district president of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, the president of the district Methodist Women's Fellowship, the district stewards, the district BCPM members, the district lay leader and associate district lay leader(s), the district secretary, district treasurer and the district statistician, the lay members of the Conference and the first reserve from each local church, a representative of the Boy's Brigade and the Girl's Brigade in the district, the district directors of children's, youth, adults/young adults, and general church school work, and such other persons as the Conference may determine.
2. The District Conference may choose its own order of business. The secretary duly elected shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and submit it to the Conference for examination and adoption for the record. A District Treasurer may be elected to keep the financial account of the District Conference.
3. The District Conference shall vote on issuing or renewing licenses to preach, on recommendation of the District Commission on the Ministry, and shall consider for approval the reports of its committees.
4. The District Conference shall be responsible to develop and adopt a plan and set goals for the next year's work.

5. The chairman of the District Commission on Evangelism, Christian Education, Missions, and Christian Social Concerns shall be elected by the District Conference. The other members of these Commissions shall be respectively the chairman or the representative of each local church committee on Evangelism, Christian Education, Missions, and Christian Social Concerns.
6. All officers of the District Conference shall be elected once in two years; they shall be eligible for re-election.
7. The District Lay Leader and Associate District Lay Leader(s) shall be eligible for two successive re-elections.
8. The District Lay Leader is elected leader of the laity in the district. He shall work with the District Superintendent and all other lay leaders of the local churches to facilitate training and ministry of the laity within the District. In the absence of the District Lay Leader, the Associate Lay Leader shall deputize.
9. Each District within an Annual Conference may organize a District Commission of Laity. The membership of the Commission shall consist of the following: District Superintendent, District Lay Leader, Associate District Lay Leader(s), and Local Church Lay Leaders. The District Commission of Laity shall work with the Board of Laity to fulfill the goals of the said Board as provided within para 117.6.2 at the district level.
10. There may be organized at the District Conference level such bodies as the Methodist Women, Methodist Men, Methodist Youth Fellowship, Methodist Senior Fellowship, Methodist Adult Fellowship, in accordance with the respective schedules to the Methodist Discipline, and any such bodies as may be approved by the Conference.

### **Section III The Local Conference**

#### **120. General Provision:**

1. The Local Conference is the basic body uniting it to connectional Methodism. The Local Conference shall therefore be organized as provided in the Constitution and provided that there are thirty (30) members who are not less than eighteen years of age. In the event that the membership shall decline to less than fifteen (15) members it shall revert to its former sponsoring Local Conference or such other local church as may be assigned by the Conference.
2. The membership of the Local Conference shall consist of the following:
  - i. the pastor and associate pastor or pastors;
  - ii. retired ministers residing in that place who elect to hold membership therein;
  - iii traveling preachers who are assigned to special work and are amenable to the local conference;

- iv. local preachers, ordained or un-ordained, provided always that a person may at any one time be a member of one local conference only;
- v. deaconesses;
- vi. the lay member or members and first reserve of Annual Conference;
- vii. the lay leader;
- viii. the chairman of the trustees of the church or churches in the Local conference;
- ix. the church business manager;
- x. the church treasurers;
- xi. the financial secretary;
- xii. the director of Christian Education or educational assistant;
- xiii. the church school superintendent;
- xiv. the chairmen of Committees on Stewardship & Finance, Christian Education, Christian Social Concerns, Membership and Evangelism, Missions, Worship & Music, Pastor-Parish Relations, and Church Property Development.
- xv. the President of the Methodist Women's Fellowship;
- xvi. the President of Methodist Men;
- xvii. the membership secretary;
- xviii. the President of the Methodist Adults Fellowship;
- xix. the President of the Methodist Youth Fellowship;
- xx. Captains of the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade;
- xxi. the President of the Youth Coordinating Committee;
- xxii. the Chairman of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship or his designated nominee;
- xxiii. the President of the Methodist Young Adults Fellowship;
- xxiv. the Coordinator of Small Groups
- xxv. not fewer than three or more than thirty-five stewards, exclusive of ex-officio and honorary stewards provided that in churches of more than five hundred members one additional steward may be elected for each thirty additional members.
- xxvi. the three to five elective stewards.

3. (a) A Local Conference shall be convened at least twice a year: the first meeting within *four (4)* months after the Annual Conference (hereinafter called the First Local Conference) and the second meeting within *four (4)* months before the Annual Conference (hereinafter called the Second Local Conference).

(b) Every Local Conference of the local church other than the First and Second Local Conference shall be called Special Session of the Local Conference.

4. A Special session of the Local Conference shall be convened whenever a requisition in writing is made by any of the following to the honorable Secretary:

- the pastor of the local church in consultation with the District Superintendent of that District; or

- the District Superintendent of that District in consultation with the pastor of that local church; or
  - A simple majority of the members of the Local Church Executive Committee.
5. (a) Ten (10) clear days notice shall be given of any Local Conference to be convened. The notice shall specify the place, day and hour of meeting and in the case of the Special Session of the Local Conference the general nature of such business.
- (b) The notice shall in each case be given in the following manner:
- Ordinary post or dispatch by hand; OR
  - two prior pulpit announcements.
6. The District Superintendent or an elder appointed by him shall preside. However, if the District Superintendent is also the pastor-in-charge, Para 176.5 shall apply.
7. The members present at any duly arranged meeting shall constitute a quorum.
8. The Local Conference after a period of worship, shall transact the business committed to it by the Discipline. The District Superintendent or his designee is required to keep his record of each Local Conference. It shall also be his duty to see that other Local Conference and church records and reports are kept.

**121. Power and duties:**

1. To elect a recording secretary who shall keep an accurate and permanent record of the proceedings and shall be the custodian of all the records and reports, and who with the presiding officer shall sign the minutes.
2. To have general oversight of the Local Church Executive Committee, which is the administrative body of the Local Conference in each local church.
3. To receive reports from the pastor(s), church officers, and the committees and societies of the church or churches as the Local Conference may require.
4. To elect officers of the church or churches constituting the Local Conference, unless otherwise provided in harmony with the provisions of the Constitution of The Methodist Church, and to constitute the committees of each local church as may be determined by the Local Conference, designating the chairman of the committees on Stewardship and Finance, Christian Education, Christian Social Concerns, Membership and Evangelism, Missions, and Worship and Music.
5. In cases where the Discipline permits more than one course of action in the administration and work of a local conference, to determine what course shall be taken.
6. On application for issuance or renewal of a license to preach by a proper person, whose membership is within the local church, recommend such person

to the District Commission on the Ministry/ Conference Board on the Ministry, if in the judgment of the Local Conference his gifts, graces, and potential usefulness warrant such action. Such person shall conform with all provisions of Discipline. The vote to recommend shall be taken by written secret ballot, and the recommendation shall be signed by the presiding officer.

7. To fit the salary and other remuneration of the pastor, or pastors, after the following procedure: At the session of the Local Conference next preceding regular annual session of the Conference, on recommendation of the Executive Committee or Committees and after consultation with the pastor, the Conference shall set the salary of the pastor for the ensuing conference year and make satisfactory provisions for the payment of the same. In the Local Conference of more than one church the amount apportioned to each church shall be recorded in the minutes of the Local Conference. The pastor's salary thus agreed upon shall not include the traveling and removal expenses of a new appointee to the church. These expenses, when provided for, shall be classified as current expenses and so reported in the pastor's report to the Conference.
8. To determine the amount accepted annually for the church for all purposes by the following procedure: As soon as practicable after the session of the Conference, each district superintendent shall notify each Local Conference in his district what amounts have been apportioned to it by the Board of Finance. It shall be the responsibility of the pastor and the respective church lay leaders to present to a meeting of each local church a statement of the apportionment for all purposes other than local expenses, explaining the causes supported by each of these funds, and their place in the total program of the church. Such presentation to each local church shall be made before the Local Conference sets the amounts of its acceptances. The Local Conference shall determine annually the amount accepted by the church for conference boards and agencies. Should the amount contributed during the year for conference boards and agencies exceed the church's acceptance, the entire amount so contributed shall be remitted in regular order to the Conference treasurer before the end of the conference year. The district superintendent shall also notify each Local Conference of all other amounts properly apportioned to it. The apportionments to the Local Conference for the conference claimants and ministerial pensions and for the salary fund are not subject to change or alteration by the Local Conference.
9. To recommend candidates for the ministry who have been members of the local church in good standing for at least once a year, having met the educational requirements and having satisfactorily answered the questions before of the Local Conference as provided for in the Discipline.
10. Such other duties and responsibilities as the Conference may duly commit it to.
122. Elections:

The Local Conference shall elect annually/biennially to serve from the beginning of the ensuing conference year, except as specified below, the

following officers for the church on nomination from the Committee on Nominations, or on nomination of the pastor if there is no such committee, unless otherwise provided in the Discipline; provided that in no case shall the privilege of making nominations from the floor be denied:

1. The elective stewards of the church or churches of the Local Conference.
  2. The church lay leader or leaders and associate lay leader or leaders if desired.
  3. The district steward and reserve district steward; provided that the Committee on Nominations or the pastor shall confer with the district superintendent before any nomination is made.
  4. The lay member or members of the Conference and one or more alternate, who shall continue in these relationships until their successors are elected. If the Local Conference lay representative to the Conference shall cease to be a member of the local church or shall for any reason fail to serve, a reserve member in the order of his election shall serve in his place. At the option of the Conference, the lay member or members thus elected shall serve beginning with the next session of the Conference following election.
  5. Both the lay members and the alternates shall be at least eighteen years of age, and shall have been members in good standing.
  6. The church treasurer or treasurers.
  7. Counsellors to the Methodist Youth Fellowship, Methodist Adults/Young Adults Fellowship, Captains of the Boy's and Girl's Brigade.
123. There shall be a **Committee on Nominations**, of which the pastor-in-charge shall be chairman, which shall nominate to the Local Conference such officers and members of the Local Conference committees as the law of the church requires or as the Local Conference may determine as necessary to its work; provided that all of the elective members of the Committee on Nominations shall be nominated from the floor; and provided, further, that to secure experience and stability the membership may be divided into three classes, one of which shall be elected each year for a three-year term.
124. 1. There shall be a **Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations** of no less than three or more than seven lay men and women, one of whom shall be a lay member of the Conference. Members shall be elected annually by the Local Conference. The minister-in-charge may appoint one as a committee member. Where there is more than one congregation on a Local Conference, there shall be but one Pastor-Parish Relations Committee with at least one representative from each congregation.
2. Following the election of the members of the committee, the minister-in-charge shall convene the committee within ten days. It shall elect its

own chairman and secretary. It shall meet periodically with the district superintendent or with the minister, at the request of either the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, district superintendent, the pastor, or the chairman of the committee.

3. Its primary function is to aid the pastor in making his ministry effective by being available for counsel, keeping him advised concerning conditions within the congregation as they affect relations between pastor and people, and keeping the people informed concerning the nature and function of the pastoral office.
4. It shall survey the pastor-parish relationship, provide opportunities for counseling on matters pertaining to the pastor's relationship with the congregation including the supervision of pulpit supply, proposals for his salary, travel expenses, entertainment allowance, vacation, refresher courses, housing and other matters related to effectiveness, comfort and well-being of the pastor and his family. It may arrange with the Local Church Executive Committee or Committees for the necessary time and financial assistance for his attendance at such schools or institutions as may serve his intellectual and spiritual growth.
5. Since a responsibility of the Committee is to be at all times sensitive to the relationship between pastor and people, should it become evident to the Committee that the best interests of the church and pastor will be served by a change of pastors, it shall confer with the pastor and furnish him with this information. It shall cooperate with the pastor, the district superintendent and Superintendent/ President/ Bishop in securing pastoral leadership and its relationship to the district superintendent and Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall be advisory only.
6. After consultation with the pastor the Committee shall recommend to the Local Church Executive Committee personnel for other professional and lay staff positions created by the Executive Committee, but not subject to the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop's appointment.
7. It shall meet only with the knowledge of the minister and \or the district superintendent. It may meet with the district superintendent without the minister being present, but in such case, the minister shall be informed of such meetings and later be brought into consultation either by the Committee or the district superintendent. In the event that only one congregation on a Local Conference comprising more than one church has concerns which it wishes to share, its representatives on the Committee may meet separately with the minister or the District Superintendent or both. It shall be a conferring and counseling Committee, and shall not assume responsibility as a nominating or legislative committee. It shall be amenable to the Local Conference. Its relationship to the district superintendent and Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall be advisory only.

125. **Disciplinary Questions:**

At the Local Conference, the District Superintendent or the presiding officer shall ask the following questions:

1. How many persons have been received into the fellowship of the church on this pastoral charge during the past conference year?
2. In what way will the church minister to the particular spiritual needs of its area of work this conference year?
3. What program has been adopted for assimilating new members into the life of the church, and training them in Christian living and activity?
4. What special donations have been assumed by the church or churches of this Local Conference and in what amount?
5. What amounts have been collected on them during this conference year, and what amounts have been remitted to the Conference Treasurer?

And the following questions, the answers to which shall be transmitted to the executive secretary of the Conference Board of Christian Education, or, if there is no executive secretary, to the chairman thereof:

6. Who are the young people now in colleges, universities and schools of nursing? What is being done by the local church to and maintain its ministry to them? Who of these are recruits for life service in a church vocation, and in what educational institutions are they enrolled?
7. What young people from this pastoral charge are in the armed services, and what is being done to extend and maintain the church's ministry to them?

**Section IV. Miscellany**

126. All councils, boards, commissions and committees established by the Conference or other Conference, shall meet and organize themselves as promptly as feasible, following the Conference in question. Unless otherwise specified in the Discipline, every council, board, commission and committee shall continue in responsibility until its successor council, board, commission, or committee is organized.

127. The terms for the agencies or other bodies used in this Discipline refer to the level of organization as follows:

Council / Board -	Mission / Provisional Annual / Annual Conference
Commission -	District Conference
Committee -	Local Conference

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Ministry

#### **Section I. The Nature of Ministry**

128. Ministry in the Christian Church is derived from the ministry of Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Father through the Incarnate Son by the Holy Spirit. It is a ministry bestowed upon and required of the church. All Christians are called to ministry and theirs is a ministry of the people of God within the community of faith and in the world. Members of The Methodist Church receive this gift of ministry in company with all Christians and sincerely hope to continue and extend it in the world for which Christ lived, died, and lives again. The Methodist Church believes that Baptism, confirmation and responsive membership in the church are visible signs of this ministry.

#### **Section II. The Ordained Ministry**

129. There are persons, with the ministry of the baptized, who are called of God and set apart by the Church for the specialized ministry of word and Sacraments.
130. It is the conviction of The Methodist Church that God calls persons to this ministry and bestows upon them the gifts, graces and fruits necessary to fulfill this calling.
131. The ordained ministry of The Methodist Church cherishes its origins in the Christian tradition and in the Wesleyan tradition from which it has come. It seeks obedience to the Holy Spirit through cooperative efforts to perfect a ministry for the whole church. It faces the future eager to share new understandings and forms of the ministry which may be revealed.

The ordained ministers are ministers of Word, Sacrament and Order, and thereby participate in the ministry of Christ in sharing a royal priesthood which has apostolic roots in such scriptural passages as 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Peter 5:2-3; John 21: 15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3: 1-7; Titus 1: 7-9.

132. In order that we may try those persons who profess to be moved by the Holy Spirit to become ministers, let the following questions be asked :
1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?
  2. Have they gifts, as well as grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?
  3. Have they produced fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their preaching?

As long as these marks concur in anyone, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the Holy Spirit.

133. The Methodist Church seeks assurance in these matters, for only persons of genuine Christian experience and character, whose conduct before men is above reproach, and who are free from harmful practices that would mar their influence or compromise their witness, can receive the approval of The Methodist Church as ministers of Word and Sacraments.

### **Section III. Ministerial Orders**

134. The ordained ministry of The Methodist Church consists of the deacon and the elder.
  1. A Deacon is a local preacher who has progressed sufficiently in preparation for the ministry to be received by the Conference as Member on Trial and has been ordained deacon in accordance with the order and the Discipline of The Methodist Church by the laying on of hands of a bishop.
  2. An Elder is a deacon who has completed his formal preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and has been ordained elder in accordance with the order and Discipline of The Methodist Church by the laying on of hands of a bishop and of elders.
  3. When there is need, qualified laity may be authorized to exercise certain pastoral functions and shall be known as local preachers. Local preachers may be ordained local deacons and local elders. Upon recommendation of the Board on the Ministry, they may be approved by the Conference for appointment as pastors of charges.

### **Section IV The Local Ministry**

135. The Local Ministry is the system of The Methodist Church by which local preachers, ordained or unordained, are appointed to fields of labor in local churches in places where the local preachers reside. A local preacher is a lay member of The Methodist Church who has been granted a license to preach or who has been ordained, according to the Discipline of the Church. He continues to be a lay member of a local church and is permitted to exercise his ministry in the charge that the Conference authorizes him to preach.
136. **Qualifications:** A local preacher must possess a license to preach. A license may be granted to a member of the Methodist Church after he has qualified in the following ways:
  1. He has been a member of good standing of the Methodist Church.

2. He has completed his secondary school education or equivalent, or attained the age of 21. The Board on the Ministry may make recommendations in particular cases.
3. He has completed the course of study prescribed by his Conference for the license to preach including study of the Discipline.
4. He has secured the recommendation of his Local Conference at its meeting where pastor-in-charge, in the presence of the District Superintendent, announced his application for the license to preach, and his ability and qualifications satisfied the requirements for such a license. The recommendation must have a two-thirds majority vote by secret ballot of the members of the Local Conference present and voting at the Local Conference.
5. He has made an application in writing to his District Superintendent.
6. He has prepared a written statement describing his age, health, Christian experience with emphasis upon his experience in the church, call to preach, purpose in seeking a license to preach, certified educational plans, which together with the certificate of his commendation from his Local Conference shall be presented to the District Commission on the Ministry or Board on the Ministry of the Conference.
7. He has appeared before the District Commission or the Conference Board on the Ministry, held himself amenable to any psychological and aptitude tests it may require and provide, and supplied such other information as it may require for determining his gifts, graces and potential usefulness.
8. He has agreed, for the sake of a disciplined example, to make a complete dedication of himself to the highest ideals of the Christian Ministry with respect to purity of life in body, in mind and in spirit, and to bear witness thereto by abstinence from all indulgences, including alcoholic beverages and tobacco which may injure his influence.
9. He has been examined publicly as indicated in paragraph 137.1.

137. 1. **Examination for the License to Preach:** The candidate for a license to preach shall be examined by the District Commission on the Ministry or the Board on the Ministry. He shall be asked the following questions:
- a) Do you believe yourself to be divinely called to preach the Gospel?
  - b) Have you obtained the pardon of your sins and found peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ; and is the Spirit of God bearing witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?
  - c) Is it your sincere purpose to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness?

- d) Are you acquainted with the Doctrines and Discipline of The Methodist Church?
  - e) Do you understand the Doctrines and the Discipline of The Methodist Church, and will you defend and follow them?
2. **Validation of License:** A license to preach shall be valid for one year. It may be renewed, as provided in the Discipline, on recommendation of the person's Local Conference, and on evidence of his gifts, graces and usefulness continue to be satisfactory and that he is making regular progress in the required studies, as follows:
- a) A local preacher who is enrolled as a pre-theological or theological student in a school, college, university or seminary accredited or approved by The Methodist Church, preparing to become a deacon shall present annually to the Board on the Ministry a statement of his academic progress of any formal examination, provided his academic progress and character are satisfactory.
  - b) A local preacher who is not a student as defined in (a) shall pursue study under the direction of the Board on the Ministry of the Conference.
  - c) A local preacher who is not a student as defined in (a) and (b) shall give a statement of his private study including the number of theological books read during the year.
  - d) When a licence to preach has lapsed, it may be reinstated only at the discretion of the Board on the Ministry, when or if the candidate has completed satisfactorily the current studies for the licence to preach.
  - e) A local preacher shall be required to complete further prescribed reading under the direction of the Board on the Ministry. Satisfactory completion of this requirement should be stated at the time when the District Commission on the Ministry considers the renewal of his licence.

### **138. Duties of a Local Preacher**

- 1. A local preacher has the authority to preach and to conduct divine worship.
- 2. A local preacher not serving a church may assist his minister, at the request and under the supervision of the minister, subject to the requirements of the Discipline.
- 3. A local preacher may serve a church either by temporary appointment or by becoming an approved supply pastor.
- 4. A local preacher who is not serving a church shall be a member of, and amenable to, the Local Conference where he resides, except as hereinafter stated when he changes his residence, he shall procure from

his minister or district superintendent or the Superintendent / President/ Bishop of the Conference a certificate of his official standing and dismissal and shall present it to the minister of the charge to which he has moved. If he neglects to do this, he shall not be recognized or use his office as a local preacher in the church to which he has moved; and he shall continue to be amenable to the Local Conference from which he has moved.

5. A local preacher who is serving as a student supply pastor while attending a college or seminary accredited or approved by The Methodist Church may retain his membership in his home church and Local Conference, but in the discharge of his ministerial functions he shall be amenable to the District Superintendent or the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Conference for whom he serves.
6. A local preacher, other than a student defined in clause 5 above, who is appointed to serve under a district superintendent as supply pastor shall procure from his minister or district superintendent, or the Superintendent / President / Bishop of the Conference, a certificate of his official standing and dismissal, and shall present it to the Local Conference to which he is appointed at its next session. His church membership shall be in that church to which he is appointed; and he shall be a member of, and amenable to, its Local Conference, subject to the jurisdiction of the Conference.
7. Whenever a local preacher severs his relationship with The Methodist Church, the District Superintendent shall require his license and credentials of him, and shall file them with the secretary of the Conference and inform the Registrar of the Board on the Ministry.
8. A local preacher not serving a church shall make to the Local Conference the District Commission on the Ministry, and to the District Conference upon its request, a report of his labor as follows:
  - a) number of sermons preached;
  - b) number of funerals conducted, with the names of deceased;
  - c) evangelistic, education and missionary work done in cooperation with and under the direction of his minister;
  - d) progress made in academic work or in the prescribed course of study;
  - e) miscellaneous items.

A copy of this report shall be filed with the Registrar of the Board on the Ministry.

## **Section V. Appointment of the Local Preacher and Deacons**

139. 1. An approved supply pastor is a local preacher or deacon who on recommendation of the Board on the Ministry has been approved by the Conference as eligible for appointment during the ensuing year as supply pastor of a church. The approval shall be based on compliance with paragraph: 136-137 and shall expire unless renewed on the same

basis at the next regular conference session. It does not guarantee an appointment, but merely certifies the eligibility.

2. A local preacher or deacon desiring to become or to continue as approved supply pastor must have his character, fitness, training and effectiveness passed by a two-thirds majority of the Board on the Ministry, and by the Conference after reference to and recommendation by its Board on the Ministry.
3. Those eligible to be appointed as part-time pastors. A part-time pastor is one who does not devote his entire service to the church to which he is appointed.
4. An approved supply pastor, ordained or unordained, who is in full charge of a pastoral appointment shall attend sessions of the Conference. He shall have the right to vote in the Conference on all matters except matters of ordination, character and conference relations on ministers.

## **Section VI The Itinerant Ministry**

140. 1. The first step to the traveling ministry of The Methodist Church is to gain admission into the Conference as a trial member. A trial member is on probation as to his character, his preaching and his competency as a pastor. During this period the Church determines whether he is worthy of becoming a full member of the Conference. A person on trial may be discontinued without any reflection on his character.

2. A person on trial is a member of the Conference on trial. He or she ceases to be a member of the local church and his/her name shall be removed from the record with the relevant notation.
3. A person on trial when discontinued on trial will become a member of the local church if he/she chooses, and his/her membership will be in a church of his/her choice.

141. A candidate for the traveling ministry may be admitted on trial by a two-thirds majority vote of the ministerial members of the Conference on recommendation by the Board on the Ministry after meeting the following conditions:

1. He must have licence to preach or have been an ordained local preacher.
2. He must have been recommended in writing on the basis of a two-thirds majority vote of the District Conference or the District Commission on the Ministry.
3. He must have met the educational requirements set by the Conference.
4. He must present a certificate of good health from a physician approved by the Board on the Ministry. The Conference may require psychological tests to provide additional information on the candidate's fitness for the ministry.

5. He must file with the Board on the Ministry satisfactory answers to such questions as the Board may ask concerning his age, family, religious and church experience, call to the ministry, educational record, and plans for service in the Church. The following questions shall be included;
  - a. Are you convinced that you should enter the ministry of the Church?
  - b. Are you willing to face any sacrifices that may be involved?
  - c. Are you in debt so as to interfere with your ministry, or have you any obligations to others which will make it difficult to live on the salary you are to receive?
  - d. If you are married, is your wife or husband in sympathy with your ministerial calling and willing to share in the sacrifices of your vocation?
  - e. Are you willing to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian ministry with respect to the purity of life in body, in mind and in spirit, and to bear witness thereto by abstinence from all indulgences including alcoholic beverages and tobacco which may injure your influence?
  - f. Will you keep before you as the one great objective of your life the advancement of God's Kingdom ?
  
- 142 The Conference shall set the requirements in theological training necessary for the traveling ministry and shall indicate what requirements a local preacher shall complete before he can be considered for admission as a member on trial.
  
- 143 While a member is on trial, the Conference alone has jurisdiction over his authority to preach. His continuance on trial shall be equivalent to the renewal of his licence to preach. If he discontinues, he becomes a local preacher.
  
- 144 An unordained member on trial who is regularly appointed to a pastoral charge without an ordained colleague is subject to the provisions of Section VI.
  
- 145 A member on trial may be admitted into full connection with the Conference in accordance with the requirements hereinabove provided.

## **Section VII. Deacon**

146. **Qualifications:** A preacher may be elected to the office of deacon and certified as such, after he has qualified in the following ways:
  1. He must have a valid license to preach.  
(examined in the manner set form of under 137.1)
  
  2. He must have: (a) graduated from a theological seminary approved by The Methodist Church. The Board on the Ministry shall require transcripts from the candidate before recognizing any of his educational claims. And (b) serve for three consecutive years as a pastor or an approved supply pastor.

3. He must have been recommended by his Local Church in writing to the District Commission on the Ministry on the basis of a two-thirds majority vote. He must then be recommended by the District Commission on the Ministry to the Board on the Ministry on the basis of a two-thirds majority vote.
4. He must satisfy the Board on the Ministry as to his physical, mental and emotional health and if necessary, he shall subject himself to such tests as may be required.
5. While a deacon, the Conference alone has jurisdiction over his authority to preach. His continuance shall be equivalent to the renewal of his license to preach.

147. **Duties:** A deacon has authority:

- a) to preach to conduct divine worship,
- b) to perform the marriage ceremony if the laws of the state permit,
- c) to administer Baptism,
- d) to assist an elder in administering the Lord's Supper,
- e) to receive persons into membership in the church,
- f) to bury the dead;

provided that while serving as a full-time appointed pastor of a church he shall be authorized to administer the Lord's Supper by the Superintendent / President / Bishop of the Conference with consultation with the Board on the Ministry; and provided further that a local preacher who is ordained deacon shall be authorized to exercise ministerial functions only in the charge to which he is appointed or in which he resides.

148. **Miscellaneous Provisions:**

1. The Conference may designate a bachelor of theology or equivalent degree from a school of theology accredited or approved by The Methodist Church as the minimum educational requirement for the office of deacon; provided that any candidate whose transcript does not show that he has satisfactorily completed studies in the following fields, Methodist Discipline, Methodist History, polity and doctrine, shall be required to pass an examination on these subjects, administered by the Board on the Ministry.
2. A preacher who discontinues his theological education may request that the Board on the Ministry evaluate his theological work for credit in the ministerial course of study. He shall be exempted from any portion of the course for which he has already completed equivalent work in a school of theology accredited or approved by The Methodist Church, provided the Board shall have examined an official transcript thereof and certified its equivalent.
3. A deacon in a special appointment shall be supervised by the district superintendent in the area. The district superintendent shall report annually on him the Board on the Ministry.

4. The educational standards and other requirements for admission shall be set by the Conference.
5. To be continued as a deacon, the candidate shall make regular progress in his ministerial studies. In case of failure or delay, the Board on the Ministry shall investigate the circumstances and judge whether to extend the time, within the following limits for completing the entire course of study. In a case clearly recognized as exceptional the Board by a two-thirds vote may recommend as extension beyond these limits, which may be approved by a three-fourths vote of the Conference; provided, however, that no candidate shall be continued on trial beyond the eighth regular conference session following his admission to the office of deacon.

### **Section VIII. The Elders**

149. The Itinerant Ministry is the system of The Methodist Church by which ministers are appointed to fields of labor. All ministers and all fields of labor shall accept and abide by these appointments.
150. Only ministers in full connection shall be called itinerant ministers and have the right to vote or hold office in the Conference. Every ministerial member who is in good standing with the Conference shall receive an annual appointment by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop.
151. An itinerant minister in full connection with the Conference by virtue of his election and ordination is bound in a special covenant with all the ordained ministers of the Conference. In the keeping of this covenant he performs the ministerial duties and maintains the ministerial standards established by those in the covenant. He offers himself without reserve to be appointed and to serve as his superiors in office may determine. He lives with his fellow ministers in mutual trust and concern and seeks with them the sanctification of the fellowship.
152. Should the credentials of any elder be destroyed or lost, the bishop who ordained him, or the Bishop in whose territory he resides, upon ascertaining the facts, may issue duplicate credentials.
153. Preachers of the following categories are eligible for election to the office of elder:
  - (a) Theological graduates who have been deacons for at least two years and have been received into full connection after having met the requirements of the Discipline.
  - (b) Deacons who have completed the required course of study who have been deacons in a fulltime pastoral appointment for at least two years and have been received into full connection after having met the requirements of the discipline.

- (c) Missionaries who have served under appointments as deacons for two full years, have been admitted into full connection, and are to be appointed by a Bishop to a foreign mission, or to a pastorate of a church in a foreign country outside his Conference.
  - (d) Chaplains who have served under appointment as deacon for two full years, have been admitted into full connection and in time of urgent need are to be appointed to serve on full-time duty with the Armed forces.
154. When a deacon has fulfilled the requirements of ordination as elder and has been elected to the office of elder, but fails to receive his ordination through the absence of the bishop, his eligibility to the office of elders shall count from the time of his election to the office of elder.
155. No person shall be elected to the office of elder except such as are of unquestionable moral character and genuine piety, sound in the fundamental doctrine of Christianity and faithful in the discharge of their duties

#### **Section XIX. Election into Full Connection**

156. A deacon may be elected an itinerant member in full connection with the Conference and ordained as an elder and certified as such, after he has qualified in the following ways:
1. He must have been a deacon in a fulltime pastoral appointment for at least two (2) years;
  2. He must have passed satisfactorily a doctrinal examination administered by the Board on the Ministry which includes the following questions:
    - (a) What are your reasons for believing in one God, Father Almighty, Maker and Sustainer of all things visible and invisible?
    - (b) What reasons have you for belief that the Holy Bible reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation?
    - (c) What evidence do you give that man is in need of divine salvation? How do your own experiences verify such needs
    - (d) What do you believe concerning the person of Jesus Christ and the divine atonement through him?
    - (e) What is your conception of the office and work of the Holy Spirit?
    - (f) What is your conception of repentance, faith, justification, regeneration and sanctification?

- (g) What is the nature and function of the church?
  - (h) What is the significance of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper?
  - (i) What is your conception of man's immortality and future state?
  - (j) What do you understand by 'evangelism'?
  - (k) What do you believe to be the place of Christian Social action in the program of the Kingdom of God?
  - (l) What is your dominant motive as a Christian minister?
3. He must have passed satisfactorily an examination of his intention provided and administered by the Board on the Ministry. The following questions shall be included:
- (a) Are you convinced you should enter the ministry of the Church?
  - (b) Are you willing to face any sacrifice that might be involved?
  - (c) Are you in debt so as to interfere with your ministry, or have you any obligations to others which will make it difficult to live on the salary you are to receive?
  - (d) If you are married, is your wife or husband in sympathy with your ministerial callings and willing to share in the sacrifices in your vocation?
  - (e) Are you willing to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian ministry with respect to the purity of life in body, in mind and in spirit, and to bear witness thereto by abstinence from all indulgences including alcoholic beverages and tobacco which may injure your influence?
  - (f) Will you keep before you one great objective of your life the advancement of God's kingdom?
4. A candidate for admission into full connection must present a certificate of good health from a physician approved by the Board on the Ministry. The Conference may require a psychological test to provide additional information on the candidate's fitness for the ministry.
5. He must have been recommended for the office of elder by the Board on the Ministry of his Mission/Provisional Annual /Annual Conference.
6. He must have received a two-thirds majority vote of the ministerial members of his Mission/Provisional Annual/Annual Conference admitting him to full connection and granting him the office of elder.

7. He must have received ordination by the laying of hands of a bishop and of such elders as the bishop may determine.
8. He must possess certification of his ordination.
9. The bishop as chief pastor shall engage those seeking to be admitted into full connection in a serious self-searching and prayer to prepare them for their examination before the Mission/Provisional Annual/Annual Conference. At the time of the examination he shall also explain to the Conference the historic nature of these questions and seek to interpret their spirit and intent. The questions are these and any others which may be thought necessary. (The questions which follow are those which every Methodist preacher from the beginning has been required to answer upon becoming a full member of a Mission /Provisional Annual/ an Annual Conference. These questions were formulated by John Wesley and have been little changed throughout the years.)
  - (a) Have you faith in Christ?
  - (b) Are you going on to perfection?
  - (c) Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life?
  - (d) Are you earnestly striving after it?
  - (e) Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and his work?
  - (f) Do you know the General Rules of our Church?
  - (g) Will you keep them?
  - (h) Have you studied the doctrine of The Methodist Church?
  - (i) After full examination do you believe that our doctrines are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures?
  - (j) Will you preach and maintain them?
  - (k) Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity?
  - (l) Do you approve our church government and polity?
  - (m) Will you support and maintain them?
  - (n) Will you diligently instruct the children in every place?
  - (p) Will you recommend fasting or abstinence, both by precept and example?
  - (q) Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God?
  - (r) Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in work?
  - (s) Will you observe the following directions?
    - (i) *Be diligent.* Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend more time in one place than is strictly necessary.
    - (ii) *Be punctual.* Do everything exactly on time. And do not amend our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience's sake.

157. **Duties of A Pastor:** A preacher who by appointment of the Superintendent, President or Bishop is the pastor in charge of a station or circuit is responsible for ministering the needs of his community in its totality, to the needs of his people and especially for equipping them to fulfill their ministry to one

another and to the world to which they are sent as servants under the Lordship of Christ. His duties are:

1. To preach the gospel.
2. To administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, if he be qualified, to perform the marriage ceremony if the laws of the land permit, and to bury the dead.
3. To visit from house to house in order to give pastoral guidance and oversight to the members of the church and others in need of a pastor's help.
4. To instruct candidates for membership into the church in doctrines, rules and regulations of the church; to receive persons into membership, to receive and dismiss members by certificate.
5. To form classes of children, youths and adults for instruction in the Word of God, and to perform the duties prescribed for the training of children.
6. To instruct youths and children in Christian ideals for the marriage and family living.
7. To organize and maintain church schools, Youth Fellowships, Adult \Young Adult Fellowships, the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the Boys' Brigade, the Girls' Brigade and Methodist Men.
8. To hold or appoint prayer meetings, love feasts and watch night meetings, wherever feasible.
9. To have the oversight of the other preachers in his pastoral charge; and to arrange the meetings wherever practical, so as to give the local preachers regular employment on the Lord's day.
10. To see that the class leaders are chosen, and to change them when necessary, and to examine each of them concerning his method of leading a class.
11. To administer all the provisions of the Discipline in his pastoral charge.
12. To see that the ordinance and regulations of the church are duly observed and the General Rules are read and explained once a year in each congregation.
13. In the absence of the Superintendent or President or Bishop, to control the appointment of all services to be held in churches in his charge.
14. To hold local conferences at the request of the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, and to serve as chairman of the Local Church

Executive Committee, unless a chairman has been elected by the Committee.

15. To explain the meaning and importance of contributions to the Conference and benevolences and to urge their support by all the people of his charge.
16. To preach on the subject of missions and to nominate at the Local Conference in case such nomination is not made by the Committee of Nominations, a Committee on Missions and a chairman thereof for each congregation.
17. To preach on the subject of Christian education, and to urge upon parents the importance of educating their children, advising them to patronize the institutions of learning of our church.
18. To see that the people in the bounds of his charge are supplied with our church literature, including books, church-school literature and periodicals.
19. To teach and preach on Christian stewardship, temperance and world peace, and to promote these causes within the bounds of his charge.
20. (a) To preach on the meaning of Christian vocation and the call and challenge of the ministry and other types of full-time church work, and to advise youth, students and young adults about their educational and vocational plan.  
  
(b) To search out from among his membership and constituency young people for the ministry, to help them interpret the meaning of the call of God, to challenge them the opportunities of the Christian ministry, to advise and assist them when they commit themselves thereof, to counsel them and watch over them as their pastor through the course of their preparation, and to keep a careful record of all such decisions, reporting to the Conference the number of such students enrolled in schools of theology accredited or approved by The Methodist Church.
21. To preach on the subject of the Bible and its circulation.
22. To make a written report to each Local Conference on the following items:
  - (a) The general state of the church in his charge.
  - (b) The names of all who have been received into the church, with the method of reception indicated, and of all who have died, removed, withdrawn or been expelled during the preceding period.
  - (c) Number and condition of church school, including Sunday school meetings, weekday meetings of children, meetings of young people, fellowship meetings of adults, and vacation schools.
  - (d) Number of sermons preached to children.

- (e) Other religious instruction conducted with children and adults, including training classes.
  - (f) Number of pastoral visits and the use of church school roll in pastoral visitation.
  - (g) Subscribers to church periodicals.
  - (h) Collections to Conference Commitments / Benevolences.
  - (i) Contributions to the Conference.
  - (j) Plans for future work.
  - (k) Missions, including Women's Fellowship, church extension and missionary education in the church school.
  - (l) Lay activities, including financial system, lay preaching, training of the members of the executive Committee, Christian stewardship and Methodist Men.
  - (m) Other items worthy of record.
23. To keep a separate membership record for each local church in his charge in which shall be noted the name with the time and manner of reception and disposal of every member of the church, including the name of the preparatory members in a separate list.
24. To enter in the permanent official records of the church accurate information concerning all baptisms and marriages.
25. To keep and transmit to his successor two directories, the one in which the residences of all the members shall be recorded, and the other a constituency roll with live information.
26. To furnish to every person uniting with the church on profession faith or from preparatory membership a certificate of membership.
27. To leave to his successor an account of his church, including a list of persons who support the church financially and subscribers to our periodicals.
28. To make report to the Conference of all items required for the statistics of the Conference, and to deliver to the Conference treasurer all financial commitments, or satisfactory vouchers for the same.

## **Section IX Termination of Mission/Annual Conference Membership**

158. Termination of the Conference Membership may be accomplished in the following ways upon the recommendation of the Board on the Ministry:
- (a) Voluntary Location at the request of a pastor;
  - (b) Involuntary Location by action of the Conference.
159. **Voluntary Location:** The Conference may grant a member a certificate of location at his own request; provided that it shall first have examined his character at the Conference session when the request is made and found him in good standing; and provided further, that his relation shall be granted only to

one who avowedly intends to discontinue regular ministerial or evangelistic work. This relation shall be certified by the Superintendent/ President /Bishop of the Conference. He shall report to the Local Conference and the pastor all marriages performed, baptisms administered and funerals conducted; and shall be held amenable for his conduct and the continuance of his ordination rights to the Conference.

160. 1. A minister that has been on voluntary location may be readmitted by the Conference, at its discretion, upon presentation of his certificate of location and the recommendation of his Board on the Ministry of the Conference from which he located.
2. A minister who has been on voluntary location for four years from the date of approval of location shall at the request of the Conference or its authorized agency forthwith return the credentials to the Conference and cease from using the credentials or title.

161. **Involuntary Location:**

1. Whenever it is determined by the Board on the Ministry that, in their judgment, a member of the Conference is unacceptable, inefficient or indifferent in the work of the ministry, or that his conduct is such as to impair seriously his usefulness as a minister, or that his engagement in secular business, except as required by the ill health of himself or of his family, disqualifies him from pastoral work, they shall notify him in writing, and ask him to request location at the next session of the Conference.. If he refuses or neglects to locate as requested the Conference may, by count vote, on recommendation of the Board on the Ministry, locate him without his consent. In the case of involuntary location the authority to exercise the ministerial office shall cease, and the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall require from him his credentials to be deposited with the secretary of the Conference.
2. Upon such notification being given to such member by the Board on the Ministry, the Board of Appointments may interdict him from the exercise of his ministerial office from the date of such notification, and  
  
such member shall, unless and until he is located, be allowed to receive only such portion of the emoluments of his office not being less than one-half as the Board of Appointments may deem fit.

162. **Surrender of Ministerial Office:** Any member of the Conference in good standing who desires to surrender his ministerial office and withdraw from the Conference may be allowed to do so by the conference at its session, in which case his credentials shall be filed with the official records of the Conference of which he was a member, and his membership in the church shall be recorded in the church where he resides at the time of such surrender.

163. **Withdrawals:** When a minister in good standing withdraws to unite with another denomination, his credentials shall be surrendered to the Mission/Annual Conference, and if he shall desire it, they may be returned to him with the following inscription written plainly across their face, namely:

A.B. has this day been honorably discharged by the \_\_\_\_\_  
Mission/ Provisional/ Annual Conference from the ministry of the  
Methodist Church.

\_\_\_\_\_Superintendent/ President/ Bishop

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary

### **Section X. Superannuated Ministers**

164. A retired minister is one who at his own request, or by action of the Conference, on recommendation of the Board on the Ministry, has been placed in the retired relation.
165. Every ministerial member of the Conference whose sixty-fifth birthday precedes the first day of the regular session of the Conference shall automatically be retired from the active ministry at the said conference session.
166. If any member of the Conference who has attained age of fifty-five or has completed twenty-five years of full-time approved service, so requests, prior to the date of the opening session of the conference, the Conference may place him in the retired relation with the privilege of making an annuity claim in accordance with the Ministerial Pension Scheme or the Ministerial Retirement Insurance Benefits Scheme provided that there is such a scheme in the Conference.
167. Every retired minister who is not appointed as pastor of a church shall have a seat in the Local Conference, and all the privileges of membership in the church where he resides, except as set forth in the Discipline. He shall report to the Local Conference and to the pastor all marriages performed and baptism administered. If he resides outside the bounds of the Conference he shall forward annually to the Conference a certificate of his Christian and ministerial conduct, together with an account of the number and the circumstances of his family, signed by the pastor of the charge within the bounds of which he resides. Without this certificate the Conference may after due notice (30 days) locate him without his consent.

### **Section XI General Provisions**

168.
  1. A member of The Methodist Church authorized to preach shall possess a valid license stating how far he is empowered by the Conference in his official functions, which license shall be signed by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop.
  2. Both men and women are included in all provisions of the Discipline which refer to the ministry.

3. A ministerial student in The Methodist Church is a person who has formally declared his purpose to enter the Christian ministry and has been officially recognized as such by the Conference and is in the process of pursuing theological education, but is not yet a member on trial of the Conference. A person so committed and classified shall immediately seek, with the assistance of his minister, the guidance of the Board on the Ministry with reference to subsequent and his continuing educational program.
4. A member on trial is a local preacher who desires to become a member of the Conference and has been accepted as a trial member. He shall have similar qualifications to those required of a deacon. A Trial Member of the Conference may request discontinuation of this relationship or may be discontinued by the Conference on recommendation of the Board on the Ministry without any reflection upon his character.
5. Matters relating to the engagement of speakers (upon recommendation from the Local Conference, or Local Church Executive Committee meeting) should only be carried out after the consultation with the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Conference.

## **Section XII Ministers from other Churches**

169. Ministers coming from other evangelical churches, provided they present suitable testimonials of good standing through the Board on the Ministry, and give assurance of their faith, Christian experience and other qualifications, and give evidence of their agreement with us in doctrine and discipline, and present a certificate of good health from a physician approved by the Board on the Ministry, and meet the educational requirements, may be received into our ministry in the following manner: -
  1. The District Conference or District Commission on the Ministry may receive them as local preachers or deacons not entitled to administer the Sacraments, pending the recognition of their ordination by the Conference.
  2. The Conference may recognize their ordination as local deacons and elders, provided their qualifications meet the educational and other requirements of the Discipline, including knowledge of Methodist history, polity and doctrine.
  3. On recommendation of the Board on the Ministry, the Conference may recognize their ordination and admit them into membership of the Conference in full connection, provided that their qualifications meet the educational and other requirements of the Discipline, including knowledge of Methodist history, polity and doctrine.
  4. Ministers from other churches who can meet the educational standards required of the Methodist ministers may apply through the Board on the Ministry to the Conference, which may recognize their credentials and receive them on trial or into full membership of the Conference; provided that

candidates for admission under this or the preceding clause shall be required to answer satisfactorily the questions in 137.1 or 141.5 and provided further that those from other than Methodist Churches must take upon themselves our ordination vows, without the re-imposition of hands.

5. The Conference on recommendation of the Board on the Ministry, may also receive in equal standing preachers who are on trial in the ministry of another Methodist church, using however, special care that before they are admitted into full membership, they shall meet all the educational and other requirements.
170. The Board on the Ministry of the Conference is required to ascertain from a minister seeking admission into its membership on credentials from another denomination whether or not membership in the effective relation was previously held in an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church, or one of its legal predecessors, and if so, when and under what circumstances his connection with such Annual Conference was severed.
171. A minister seeking admission into the Conference on credentials from another denomination who has previously withdrawn from membership in the effective relation in an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church, or one of its legal predecessors shall not be admitted or readmitted without the consent of the Annual Conference from which he withdrew, or its legal successor, or the Annual Conference of which the major portion of his former conference is a part.
172. Whenever the ordination of a minister is recognized according to the foregoing provisions, he shall be furnished with a certificate signed by the bishop.
173. When the orders of a minister of another church shall have been duly recognised, his certificate of ordination by the said church shall be returned to him with the following inscription written plainly across its face, namely:

*Accredited by the ..... Mission/ Provisional /Annual  
Conference of The Methodist Church, this ..... day of ..... 19 .....,  
as the basis of new credentials.*

.....*Bishop*

.....*Secretary*

## **Section XI. District Superintendent**

174. District Superintendents are to be chosen and appointed by the Superintendent / President / Bishop after consultation with the Conference's Executive Board.
175. Qualification:  
An ordained elder having the experience of taking pastoral charge for three (3) years and also in full connection with the Conference for the same period is eligible for the appointment as a District Superintendent.

176. The duties of a district superintendent are:

1. To travel through his district in order to preach and to oversee the temporal affairs of the church.
2. In the absence of a superintendent/bishop to have charge of all traveling and local preachers in his district.
3. To change, receive or appoint preachers during the intervals between conferences and in the absence of the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, as the Discipline shall direct; provided that he shall not appoint any preacher who has been rejected as an applicant, or who has been discontinued or located, except at his own request, unless the conference at the time of such rejection, discontinuance or location shall grant such authority; and he shall not appoint a minister that has previously been expelled from the ministry, or has surrendered his credentials to the Conference, unless the conference to which he surrendered his credentials, or from which he was expelled, restores his credentials, or recommends him; and he shall not appoint any local preacher who is not listed as an approved supply pastor, except between sessions of the Conference, and then only until its next session.
4. To issue and renew licenses for local preachers in accordance with the actions of the District Conference; and to furnish certified lists of persons licensed and their addresses to the Conference Board on the Ministry and to the secretary of the Conference for publication in the conference journal.
5. To preside or designate any elder to preside at any Local Conference and to preside at District Conferences provided that in the Local Conference where the District Superintendent is also the pastor in charge, he shall request the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop or the District Superintendent of another district to preside at the Local Conference.
6. To take care that every part of the Discipline is observed in his district.
7. To see that all charters, deeds and other conveyances of church property in his district conform to the Discipline and to the laws, usages and forms of the district, state, territory, or country within which such property is situated.
8. To counsel with the pastors in his district in regard to their pastoral responsibilities and other matters affecting their ministry including their relationship with officials of the local church.
9. To advise and encourage local preachers, candidates for the ministry, and the ministerial students and conference candidate in their studies.
10. To report the name and addresses of the church lay leaders in his district to the secretary of the Conference for publication in the conference journal; to report the names and addresses of all candidates

for the ministry to the Conference Board on the Ministry and to report the names and addresses of commission and committee chairman, church school superintendent and church lay leaders elected by each Local Conference in his district as may be requested by any agencies supplying report forms therefor.

11. To prepare and deliver to his successor and to the Conference Secretary, to be permanently recorded by him: (a) a list of all abandoned church properties and cemeteries within the bounds of his district; (b) a list of all church properties being permissively used by other religious organisations with the names of the local trustees thereof; (c) a list of all endowments, annuities, trust funds, investments and unpaid legacies of which he has knowledge, belonging to any pastoral charge or organisation connected therewith in his district.
12. To report annually to the Conference an accurate record of all financial transactions pertaining to abandoned properties.
13. To procure statistics from every church and to report them to the Conference, in case the pastor should fail to make report, and to have the records of his District Conference at the Conference for examination.
14. To decide all questions of law which may arise in the business of the Local or District Conference, when submitted to him in writing, subject to appeal to the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop at the next annual session of the Conference.
15. To promote all the interests of the church within the bounds of his district in cooperation with the pastors and the Local Conference, giving particular attention to the following:
  - (a) The cultivation of personal religion and the sharing of spiritual experience.
  - (b) Evangelistic interests and activity among the churches and on behalf of the unevangelized.
  - (c) Establishment of new preaching places and organization of new congregations wherever needed.
  - (d) Missionary and social services, interests and activities, including the Women's Fellowship, hospitals, homes and orphanages.
  - (e) Christian education, including church school, Youth Fellowships, Adult/ Young Adult Fellowships, Boy's Brigade, Girl's Brigade, church related schools, and all other educational institutions and work. It shall be the duty of the district superintendent to bring the subject of Christian education before the Local Conference of each pastoral charge. At least once a year he shall inquire into the character and effectiveness of the program of Christian education of every charge within his district. He shall cooperate with the Conference Board of Christian Education and its executive secretary in promoting in all the churches of his district the plan of organization, the

standards and the literature provided or recommended by the Conference Board of Christian Education. He shall secure the names and addressees of the church school superintendent of each charge and transmit them to the executive secretary of the Conference Board of Christian Education.

- (f) Christian literature, especially the circulation of our church periodicals and the distribution of literature and books.
  - (g) Lay activities, including personal evangelism, Christian stewardship, proper financial systems, temperance, social and economic justice, world peace, benevolences, Conference contribution and Christian life service.
  - (h) Administration of the Ordinances and the Sacraments.
  - (i) Formation of group ministries, larger parishes or parish area plans to expedite the work of the church in larger areas.
16. To perform such other duties as the Discipline and the Conference may direct.
17. A district superintendent may, with prior written approval from his Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, engage as a speaker/preacher, a person who is not---
- (a) a regular member of the Conference;
  - (b) an approved supply pastor;
  - (c) a local preacher in good standing in The Methodist Church;

## **Section XII. Diaconal Ministers**

177. 1. The General Ministry and the Diaconal Ministry.  
Within the total Church community there are persons who may be commissioned to diaconal ministries of love, justice, and service. This commissioning is the Church's recognition of God's call, the individual's response to that call, and the certification of such persons designated service and mission. Persons to be commissioned as diaconal ministers are recommended to the Conference for commissioning through its Board after they have met the qualifications required. Requirements are the same as those for the Ordained Ministry - Deacons and Elders.
2. The Diaconal Minister  
Diaconal Ministers are called to specialized ministries of Service, Justice and Love within local congregations and in the wider world. Servant Ministry must always involve a concern For justice as well as a love for persons. Diaconal Ministries focus their services through the following ministries such as lay theological teachers, directors of Christian education, education, evangelism, women's work, and youth work. Christ's services to mankind and the Church's responsibility for continuing that service in the world are symbolized and enable especially, but not exclusively in diaconal ministry. Diaconal ministry exists to intensify and make more effective the self-understanding of the whole people of God as servants in Christ's name.

3. **Commissioning**

This commissioning is the church's recognition of God's call, the individual's response to that call, and the authorization of such persons for designated service and ministry through the Office of Diaconal Ministers in the Methodist Church. The service of Commissioning should take place at the Conference to enhance the significance of the relationship being established between the person and the Conference. Whenever possible, the services of Commissioning and Service of Ordination should be combined to further visualize and support the two offices of professional ministry - ordained and commissioned.
4. **Relation to The Conference**

The Diaconal Ministry holds a relationship with the Conference, not a membership in the same manner as the Ordained Minister. Only Ordained Ministers hold full and continuing membership in the Conference. Lay members are elected to conference membership annually, biennially, or quadrennially as the Conference directs. The Diaconal Minister's relationship provides full preparations in all the workings of the Conference, has the right to vote, serve on Boards.
5. **Certificate and Record**

At the time of commissioning into Office of Diaconal Minister, the Superintendent / President / Bishop and the Secretary of the Conference will present a certificate of commissioning to the Diaconal Minister. The Conference will keep a permanent personal and service record of each Diaconal Minister in the Conference in the same way the Conference maintains records of the Ordained Minister. The Conference's Journal will carry each year a listing of the Diaconal Ministers serving in the Conference and their current places of service.
6. **Appointments**

The Conference does not assume responsibility for providing an appointment or employment for the Diaconal Minister in the same way it assumes this responsibility for the Ordained Minister. The Ordained Minister has an appointive/appointment relationship to the Conference. The Diaconal Minister has an elective/appointment to the Conference. The initiation for the appointment of an Ordained Minister is with the Annual Conference through the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, District Superintendent, local church or agency. Initiation for the appointment of a Diaconal Minister is with the individual or the local church or agency seeking the services of the Diaconal Minister. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, or District Superintendent may initiate the appointment. Applications shall be made to the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop who shall consult the Board on the Ministry. The Board of Ministry shall then make the necessary recommendation to the Board of Appointment for the appointment of diaconal ministers. The annual appointment of the Diaconal Minister will be read at the annual conference by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop in the manner of all appointments to be made by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Conference. The reading of the appointment of the Diaconal Minister by the Superintendent/

President/ Bishop provides a visible recognition of the relationship, accountability, and support that exists between the Diaconal Minister and the Conference.

7. **Transfer**  
The Diaconal Minister is not transferred from one Annual Conference to another since he/she is not in an appointive position or membership, but the individual Diaconal Minister's relationship is transferred so that he/she can be related properly to the Annual conference to which he/she is going. The Conference Boards on the Ministry shall take the initiative for the transfer of the Diaconal Minister's credentials and the approval of the Annual Conferences involved.
8. **Termination**  
The termination of a Diaconal Minister's relationship may be for such reasons as incompetency, failure to maintain standards, or a personal request to relinquish the Diaconal Minister relationship with the Conference.
9. **Retirement**  
The Diaconal Minister's retired relationship to the Conference means that the individual is no longer actively engaged in diaconal ministry within the Conference, but retains an identity with the Conference and a listing in the retired relationship as recognition of the services performed in prior years.
10. **Relationship to Local Conference**  
The Diaconal Minister maintains an active membership in a local congregation of the Methodist Church in the community where his/her employment is located and is a full voting member of the Local Conference.
11. **Relationship to Employing Agency**  
The Conference Board on the Ministry works cooperatively with the employing agency to ensure the rights and best conditions of employment for the Diaconal Minister based upon the Diaconal Minister's training, ability and experience. The Board has responsibility to see that entrance into employment and departure from employment are open and fair for all persons involved; that hours of work and basic salary, compensation are equitable and just; that continuing education, participation in professional groups, and vacation opportunities are provided; and that pensions, insurance and social security program are made available.

### **Section XIII The Presidency**

178. The general plan for the presidency is set forth in the Constitution.
179. The president of Provisional Annual Conference (PAC) shall be elected by secret ballot without nominations with a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

180. The term of the presidency shall be three (3) years and shall not be elected for more than two successive terms. A person who has served as President for two terms shall thereafter be ineligible for the post of President of the PAC.
181. The president to be elected shall preferably be a citizen of Australia, otherwise must be a permanent resident of Australia, and an elder having seven (7) years membership in full connection with Methodist Church recognized by the Conference and has served at least three (3) years in full connection with the Methodist Church in Australia already; provided that in the event that there be less than two persons with the requisite years of membership the minimum number of years of membership shall be fixed by the Conference to provide for at least two candidates for that particular election. However the Conference shall exercise caution not to reduce the number of years of membership to such an extent as to defeat the purpose of the membership provision.
182. The president elected by the PAC shall be installed at the session of the conference at which the election took place, or at an adjourned session thereof, or at a time and place designated by the conference. He shall be installed by the Bishop with the assistance of elders.
183. If a vacancy occurs in the presidency before the expiration of the term, the Executive Board shall have the power to elect an acting president until the next session of the PAC at which time the new president shall be elected. The years served by a president elected to fill a vacancy shall not be counted against his eligibility to serve the two (2) terms as provided in paragraph 180.
184. If one third or more of the members of the Executive Board have reason to believe that because of health impairment, a president is no longer able to perform full work or render effective service, and the president does not wish to resign, the Board shall convene to consider the matter. If by majority vote of those present and voting, it decides that it is in the best interests of the Church the president resign, he shall be so informed. If the president objects to this recommendation, he may request an examination by a panel of three doctors, not including his own physician, selected by the Board. If he declines to take an examination, or if the doctors after such an examination recommend his resignation, he shall be removed from office. The president involved shall not be eligible to vote on any of the provisions in this paragraph.
185. The annual budget for the office of the presidency and the place of residence shall be determined by the PAC.
186. **Duties, Powers and limitations of President:** The duties of a president are:-
1. To oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of his annual conference.
  2. To preside at his annual conference and to exercise executive authority over all affairs of the conference.
  3. To form the districts after consultation with the Executive Board and after the number of districts has been determined by vote of the annual conference.
  4. To fix the appointments of the preachers and workers of the PAC after consultation with the Board of Appointments.

5. To fix the Local Conference membership of all ministers who are appointed to attend theological schools.
6. To permit or authorize the transfer of a ministerial member or worker in his annual conference to another conference when this has been agreed upon by all concerned.
7. To travel throughout his annual conference.
8. To discharge such other duties as the Discipline may direct.
9. To serve as ex-officio member in all Boards and Agencies of the PAC.

187. The following provisions and limitations shall be observed when fixing the appointments:

1. He shall appoint preachers to pastoral charges annually after consultation with Board of Appointments, provided that before the official declaration of the assignment of preachers he shall announce openly to the Board his appointments; and provided further that before the final announcement of appointments is made the district superintendents shall consult the pastors concerning their specific appointments except when the pastors involved have left the seat of the annual conference without the permission of the annual conference.
2. He may make or change the appointments of preachers in the interval between sessions of the annual conference as necessity may require, after consultation with the Board of Appointments.
3. He shall appoint the District Superintendents annually after consultation with the Executive Board, but he shall not appoint any itinerant minister a district superintendent for more than six (6) years in any consecutive eight years.
4. On the recommendation of the Board of Evangelism, confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference, he may appoint an effective member of the Conference as conference evangelist; provided that the appointee shall meet the standards set by the Board of Evangelism for conference evangelism.
5. He may appoint a member of the annual conference who desires to attend school to any college or school of theology accredited or approved by the Methodist Church.
6. He shall not appoint any preacher who has been rejected as an applicant, or who has been discontinued or located, except at his own request, unless the annual conference, at the time of such rejection, discontinuance or location, shall give such liberty; and he shall not appoint as a supply pastor any preacher who has previously been expelled from the ministry or has surrendered his credentials, or from which he was expelled, restores his credentials or recommends it.
7. Every traveling preacher, unless retired, supernumerary, on sabbatical leave, or under arrest of character, must receive an appointment.
8. When a president judges it necessary, he may, after consultation with the Executive Board, subdivide a circuit, station or mission and appoint the

pastors thereto; and he may unite two or more circuits or stations and appoint one pastor for the united congregations.

## **Section XIV The Episcopacy**

188. **General Provisions:** The general plan of episcopacy is set forth in the Constitution.
189. The Bishop shall be elected at the Annual Conference(AC) by secret ballot with a two-thirds majority of the present and voting, from among the eligible traveling elders who are citizens of Australia and have at least ten (10) years membership in full connection with Methodist Church recognized by the Conference and shall have a minimum of three (3) in full connection with the Methodist Church in Australia already.
190. The term of the episcopacy shall be a quadrennium with one (1) re-election, provided that during the quadrennium for which a bishop is to be elected or re-elected his sixty-fifth birthday does not fall within it.
191. 1. If a bishop under the age of sixty-five is not re-elected then at the expiry of the episcopal term he shall be returned to membership as traveling elder in the Conference. His term of office shall expire at the close of the Annual Conference at which his successor is elected, and he shall therefore be entitled to participate as a bishop in the consecration of his successor.
2. A retiring bishop may be conferred the title of Bishop Emeritus subject to the following provisos:
- (a) The Nature of the Bishop Emeritus:
- i. Bishop Emeritus is a life-long honorary position unless it is rescinded by action of the Annual Conference.
  - ii. He is a retired or outgoing Bishop of the Annual Conference.
  - iii. Bishop Emeritus shall not be appointed to serve in a local church.
- (b) The Functions of the Bishop Emeritus:
- i. The primary role of the Bishop Emeritus is ceremonial in nature.
  - ii. He or she may participate in the consecration of his/her successor.
  - iii. He or she may serve as an advisor to the Presiding Bishop.
- (c) The Selection Criteria and Protocol:
- i. There shall not be more than two Bishop Emeritus at any one time.
  - ii. The candidate must be a retired or outgoing Bishop who has served two terms consecutively.
  - iii. The title “Bishop Emeritus” shall be conferred to a successful candidate by action of the Annual Conference with a two-thirds majority vote.

192. The bishop shall be consecrated at the session of the Annual Conference at which the election takes place, or at an adjourned session thereof, or at a time and place designated by the Conference. At the consecration service at least one bishop within the Methodist tradition shall be present.
193. If a vacancy occurs in the episcopacy before the regular session of the AC, the Executive Board of the AC shall have the power to call a special session of the AC to elect a Bishop. The years served by a Bishop elected to fill a vacancy shall not be counted against his eligibility to serve the full two terms as provided in paragraph 190.
194. If one-third or more of the members of the Executive Board of the AC have reason to believe that, because of the health impairment, a bishop is no longer able to perform full work or render effective service, and the Bishop does not wish to resign, the Executive Board shall convene to consider the matter. If by majority of those present and voting it is decided that it is in the best interests of the Church the bishop resign, he shall be so informed. If the bishop objects to this recommendation, he may request an examination by a panel of three doctors, not including his own physician, selected by the Executive Board. If he declines to take an examination, or if the doctors, after such an examination recommend his resignation he shall be removed from office. The bishop involved shall not be eligible to vote on any of the provisions in this paragraph.
195. The residence and office of the Bishop shall be determined by the AC in consultation with the incumbent of the post.
196. **Duties, Powers, Limitations of the Bishop:** The duties of the Bishop are:
1. To oversee the spiritual and connectional affairs of the Church;
  2. To preside at the Annual Conference;
  3. To serve as Chairman of the Executive Board, and as a member of the AC Agencies;
  4. To organize such missions as shall have been authorized by AC;
  5. To make connectional appointments and extra-Methodist Church appointments after consultation with the Conference Executive Board;
  6. To consecrate bishops, to install presidents and superintendents, to ordain elders and deacons and to commission deaconesses and diaconal ministers and to see that the names of the persons ordained and consecrated by him be entered in the journals of the AC, and that proper credentials be furnished to these persons;
  7. To travel throughout the connection at large;
  8. To represent the Methodist Church in all matters related to other church bodies or government, after consultation with the Conference Executive Board;
  9. *In consultation with the Executive Board may initiate or participate in dialogue with other related Methodist Churches with a view to closer cooperation and perhaps joining our Conference whenever appropriate and expedient.*
  10. To discharge such other duties as the Discipline may direct.

11. In the event that no President has been elected, to discharge all duties and to assume all powers and privileges pertaining to the Presidency subject to all limitations of the same.
197. The following provisions and limitation shall be observed when fixing appointments:
  1. On the request on each case of an appropriate Methodist official agency or institution, and after consultation with the Conference Executive Board, the bishop may make appointments for specific periods of time to positions in or through Methodist and Methodist related agencies.
  2. On the request in each case of an appropriate official, agency, or institution, and after consultation with the Conference Executive Board, he may make appointments for specified periods of time to positions in non-Methodist agencies, provided that in each case he has the confirmation by two-thirds majority vote of the AC in which the appointee is a member, and further provided that in no such case shall the Methodist Church incur any financial responsibility.

## **Section XV - The Superintendency**

198. The general plan for the superintendency is set forth in the Constitution.
199. The Superintendent shall be elected at the Mission Conference (MC) by secret ballot without nominations and with a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, from among the eligible traveling elders who have at least five (5) years membership in full connection with a Methodist Church recognized by the Conference and had served for at least three (3) years in full connection with the Methodist Church in Australia.
200. The term of the superintendency shall be two (2) years and he shall not be elected for more than two (2) successive terms; provided that during the period for which a superintendent is elected or re-elected his sixty-fifth birthday does not fall within it.
201. If a superintendent under the age of sixty-five is not re-elected, then at the expiry of the term he shall be returned to membership as traveling elder in the MC. His term of office shall expire at the close of the annual session of the Conference at which his successor is elected, and he shall therefore be entitled to participate as a superintendent in the consecration of his successor.
202. If a vacancy occurs in the superintendency before the regular session of the MC, the Conference Executive Board shall have the power to call a special session of the MC to elect a superintendent. The years served by a superintendent elected to fill a vacancy shall not be counted against his eligibility to serve the full two terms as provided in paragraph 200.
203. If one-third or more of the members of the Conference Executive Board have reason to believe that, because of the health impairment, a Superintendent is no longer able to perform full work or render effective service, and the

Superintendent does not wish to resign, the Executive Board shall convene to consider the matter. If by majority of those present and voting it is decided that it is in the best interests of the Church the Superintendent resign, he shall be so informed. If the Superintendent objects to this recommendation, he may request an examination by a panel of three doctors, not including his own physician, selected by the Board. If he declines to take an examination, or if the doctors, after such an examination recommend his resignation he shall be removed from office. The Superintendent involved shall not be eligible to vote on any of the provisions in this paragraph.

204. The residence and office of the Superintendent shall be fixed by the MC in consultation with the incumbent of the post.

205. **Duties, Powers, Limitations of the Superintendent** : The duties of the Superintendent are :-

1. To oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the MC;
2. To preside at Mission Conference;
3. To serve as Chairman of the Executive Board, and as member of the MC Agencies;
4. To organize such missions as shall have been authorized by MC;
5. To travel throughout the connection at large;
6. To represent the Methodist Church in all matters related to other church bodies or government, after consultation with the Executive Board;
7. To discharge such other duties as the Discipline may direct.

206. The following provisions and limitation shall be observed when fixing appointments :-

1. On the request on each case of an appropriate Methodist official agency or institution, and after consultation with the Executive Board, the Superintendent may make appointments for specific periods of time to positions in or through Methodist and Methodist related agencies; provided that in such each case he has the concurrence of the President of the Annual Conference in which the appointee is a member.

## **Section XVI Schools of Theology**

207. 1. The schools/seminaries of theology which the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia shall recognize are: the Methodist Theological School in Sibu, Sarawak; Seminari Theoloji Malaysia in Seremban, Malaysia; Trinity Theological College in Singapore; Alliance Bible Seminary, Hong Kong; The China Evangelical Seminary, Taipei, Taiwan; and those accredited theological schools/seminaries in Australia (such as Kingsley College & Ridley College in Melbourne, and Moore College, Trinity Theological College, Sydney Missionary and Bible College in Sydney, and Brisbane School of Theology) and such other theological schools as may be approved by the Conference from time to time.

2. No school of theology shall be established without first submitting its proposed organization and clarification to the Conference Executive Board for prior approval and without securing ratification of the Conference.
- 208.
1. Our schools of theology, in addition to preparing their students for full-time ministry in the Church, shall provide in their curricula courses in Methodist history, polity and discipline.
  2. An overseas school of theology may be accepted by the MC/AC as an approved school of theology for training for the traveling ministry provided the school is recognized by its own national Methodist Church and provided further that our ministerial candidates receive training in Methodist history, polity and discipline.
209. The Methodist and Methodist -related schools of theology share with the Board of Ministry the responsibility for the selection and education of young people for admission to the Conference.
1. It is recommended therefore that these schools, before admitting a candidate for the Methodist ministry as an theological student, shall (a) inquire into his personal character and promise of usefulness in the ministry; (b) require satisfactory evidence of his having been licensed to preach, and (c) require a letter of recommendation from the Board of Ministry of his MC/AC.
  2. It is further recommended that when such a candidate has been admitted the school shall give careful attention to his progress in studies and his personal and religious development to determine whether he should be continued in his preparation for the ministry. When a candidate's progress is adjudged to be unsatisfactory, he should not be permitted to continue. Notification of the termination of relation in the school shall be given by the school to the registrar of the Board on the Ministry of his MCAC.

[This page intentionally left blank]

## CHAPTER FOUR

### TRUSTEES AND CHURCH PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

#### **Section I All Titles – In Trust**

- 220.1 The Methodist Church in Australia (hereafter cited as MCA) is organized as a connectional structure. Title deeds to all real properties of the Annual, Mission, District or Local Conferences, local churches, agencies or institutions of The MCA shall be held in trust and subject to the provisions of its Discipline.
- 220.2 All persons holding trust funds, securities, properties or money of any kind belong to or held by Conference shall be required to furnish a bond of sufficient sum or any acceptable securities or be adequately covered by an appropriate insurance policy.
- 220.3 The accounts of the Conference or organization or agency or committee shall be subject to such audit by a recognized public or certified accountant in such a manner as the Conference may require. All reports containing financial statements shall not be approved by any relevant authority or body until audit is made and financial statements are shown to be correct.
- 220.4 The word, “Methodist” shall not be used as, or as part of, a trade name or trademark, or as part of, the name of any business firm or organization, except by corporation or other business units created for the administration of work undertaken by The Methodist Church.

#### **Section II Holding Body**

- 221.1 All title deeds of the real property of the Methodist Church in Australia shall be held in the name of the Board of Trustees of MCA.
- 221.2 The letter for registration of the Secretary and other representatives of the Board under Section IV.2 shall be communicated by the Chairman of Conference Executive Board to the appropriate government authority.

#### **Section III The National Laws**

- 222.1 All provisions of the MCA relating to the formation and operation of any corporation, and relating to real property, are conditional upon their being in conformity with each respective state’s laws or the laws of the Commonwealth of Australia. In the event of conflict therewith, the laws of the Commonwealth of Australia shall prevail; provided, however, that this requirement shall not be construed to give the consent of MCA to deprivation of the property without the process of law, or the regulation of its affairs by statutes where such regulation violated the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion; and provide further that the services of

worship of every church shall be open to all persons without regard to race, creed and nationality.

#### **Section IV Board of Trustees**

- 223.1 There shall be a Board known as the Board of Trustees of the MCA.
- 223.2 The membership of the Board of Trustees shall be:
- a) The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop;
  - b) The Secretary of Trustees;
  - c) The Chairman of Board of Finance;
  - d) The Conference Treasurer;
  - e) Three District Superintendents;
  - f) Two members elected by the Conference being one the minister and a lay delegate of the Conference;
  - g) The Chairman of the Board shall be elected by the Conference;
  - h) The Board shall elect its own recording secretary.

#### **Section V General Provision**

- 224.1 The Executive Board shall be empowered to re-designate a Trustee to be the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of MCA as from time to time it may consider necessary;
- 224.2 The Conference Executive Board, or its duly appointed committee shall receive, collect and hold in trust all donations, bequests and devises of any kind or character that may be given, devised, bequeathed or conveyed to the MCA as such for any benevolent, charitable or religious purpose and to administer the same and the income there from in according with the directions of the donor, trustee, or testator, and in the interests of the church, society, institution, or agency contemplated by such donors, trustees or testators, under the direction of the Conference. The Conference Executive Board or its duly appointed member shall have the power, in its discretion, and on the advice of competent investment counsel, to invest, re-invest, buy, sell, transfer, and convey any and all funds and properties which is may hold in trust, subject always to the terms of the legacy, devised or donation and in conformity with laws of the State and the laws of the Constitution of MCA.
- 224.3 The trustees shall be persons who hold the above appointments by virtue of their office and they shall be deemed to have vacated their office as members if they cease to hold such appointments *by expiry of term of office, resignation, death or exclusion from MCA* or if they are replaced by the Conference Executive Board.
- 224.4 The secretary of the Board of Trustees shall be known as the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the MCA;
- 224.5 The Board of Trustees shall be vested to the titles of the properties and the assets of MCA and shall act or perform duties pursuant to the directions of

the MCA;

- 224.6 The Board of Trustees must act in accordance to the Constitution of MCA relating to laws of properties;
- 224.7 Every appointment of the Secretary of the Board of Trustees shall be notified to the appropriate Government authority;
- 224.8 All written instruments conveying, transferring title, contracts, deeds, bills of sales, mortgage or other necessary legal documents relating to the property and assets of The Methodist Church in Australia shall be executed by affixing the seal of the Board of Trustees in the presence of the Secretary and one trustee;
- 224.9 No document shall be executed except pursuant to a duly certified resolution of the Local Conference, Executive Board and the Annual Conference following laws of the Constitution;
- 224.10 In case of a formal or legal document to be executed on behalf of a local church, proper authorization has to be sought first and the procedure has been strictly adhered;
- 224.11 The real property held by the Board of Trustees shall not be mortgaged to provide funds for any current expense of CMCA, nor shall the principal proceeds of the sale of any such property be so used;
- 224.12 Plans for the purchase, sale or transfer of property, or for the construction or remodeling of any building by a local church, shall be first passed by the Local Church Executive Committee and Local Conference with at least a three quarters majority (75%). Then a letter requesting authorization for such purchase. sale. transfer, construction or remodeling shall be sent to the Conference Executive Board whose three quarters (75%) approval is needed. The Annual Conference three quarters (75%) approval is required before it is subsequently sent to the Board of Trustees. In the case of a local church, the letter requesting authorization shall be signed by the District Superintendent, the pastor in-charge and the chairperson of the LCEC.

## **Section VI Building, Purchasing, Remodeling**

- 225.1 Any proposal for the purchase, mortgage, sale or transfer of any real estate property, or the construction, renovation or remodeling of any building (hereinafter called the proposed project) by a local church shall first be approved by the Local Church Executive Committee;
- 225.2 Subject to approval of the *proposal sale of real property by at least 75% of those present and voting at the Local Conference*, a letter requesting authorization for the proposed project shall be sent to the Conference Executive Board or its duly authorized agency for approval.
- 225.3 The letter requesting authorization for the proposed project shall be signed by the pastor in charge and the chairman of the Local Church Executive

Committee of that local church.

- 225.4 Upon approval of the proposed project by the Conference or its duly authorized agency, the Conference Executive Board or its duly authorized agency shall execute the necessary documentation relating to the proposal.
- 225.5 Any proposal for sale, purchase or transfer of any real property (hereinafter called the proposed project) or the construction, renovation or remodeling or leasing of any immovable property by any agency originating from the Conference level shall be presented to its Executive Board for approval.
- 225.6 No local church or any agency of The Methodist Church in Australia shall carry out the proposed project which has not been duly approved in accordance with the Discipline of The Methodist Church in Australia.
- 225.7 The financial responsibilities of the proposed project rests with the Local Church Executive Committee if the proposed project originated from the Local Church Executive Committee. However, the Conference shall endeavor to help raise the financial needs when required.
- 225.8 The financial responsibility rests with the Conference if the proposed project originated from the Conference.
- 225.9 All proceeds from sale of real property *shall be disposed off at the mutual agreement from at least 75% of those present and voting at the Local Conference and at least 75% of those present and voting at the Conference in regards to the purpose of the use of the proceeds after sale of the local church real property.*

## **Section VII Church Location and Building**

- 226.1 The Conference Executive Board of The Methodist Church of Australia or its duly appointed body shall investigate all proposed local building sites, ascertain that such sites are properly located for the community to be served and adequate in size to provide space for future expansion and growth and to investigate new projects, ensuring that they are consistent with the policy and interests of The Methodist Church in Australia.
- 226.2 In the event local churches for reasons of additional requirement of space, expiry of tenancy or any reasons whatsoever, wish to relocate their regular place of worship services and other activities, the Superintendent or President or Bishop of the Mission or Provisional Annual or Annual Conference should be consulted and his written consent obtained.

## **Section VIII Property Management**

- 227.1 The upkeep and repairs of the church are the responsibilities of the local purchasing church. The said local church shall be responsible for all the land tax, council rate, telephone charge, insurance premiums of all kind including public liability and any other statutory charges.

227.2 In each local church there shall be a **Committee on Property Management**.

1. The committee shall consist of no less than three nor more than five members, each of whom shall be a member of that local church.
2. Its members shall be elected at the Local Conference and any vacancy may be filled by the Local Church Executive Committee for the unexpired term.
3. It shall report and be accountable to the Local Church Executive Committee.
4. The Committee shall be responsible for the managing, repairing and maintaining of any and all properties of The Methodist Church in Australia in which the local church is located, and which are assigned to its care by the Conference Executive Board.
5. The Committee shall have supervision, oversight and care of all real property including the furniture and equipment therein, in which local church is located, provided that the Committee shall not prevent or interfere with the appointed pastor in the use of the said property for religious church services or other proper church purposes.

### **Section IX Episcopal Residence**

228.1 Until such time when an Annual Conference has been fully established consideration may be made to acquire for its Bishop an episcopal residence, or it may designate any suitable property it possesses as an episcopal residence.

### **Section X Institutions and Programs**

229.1 The board of management of institutions or programs under the control of The Methodist Church shall act as committee on property management for the control and management of real property in which such institutions and programs are located, or which are entrusted to such institutions by the Conference.

[This page intentionally left blank]

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Administrative Agencies

#### **Section I      General Provisions**

- 230.1      The Administration of The Methodist Church in Australia shall be defined, authorized and structured by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/Annual Conference. The General Administrative Agency of the Conference is the Executive Board which shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to the finances of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference and for the work of the various agencies of The Church.
- 230.2      The various agencies of The Methodist Church are the regularly established boards and committees which have been constituted by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference.
- 230.3      The Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference, District Conference and the Local Conference shall require that the rules, regulations, by-laws and amendments thereof, of whatever organization, such as boards and committees under their respective authority be submitted for approval by the said conferences. The rules, regulations and by-laws and amendments thereof, shall only come into effect after approval from the Conference has been given.
- 230.4      Membership of an agency may be determined in part by the size of the church membership of the said conference, the basis of which shall be determined by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference.
- 230.5      A member of any agency is eligible to serve provided his or her 70th birthday does not fall within the term of his or her service. Any person over 70 years old, previously served with distinction may be retained as non-voting honorary member.
- 230.6      Any person resign from or cease to be the member of a local Methodist church shall automatically cease to be the member of any agency of any of the conference of The Methodist Church.
- 230.7      Any agency publishing or proposing to publish and circulate any magazine or periodical for promotional purposes shall secure the approval of the Local Church Executive Committee or the Executive Board of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference as the case may be.
- 230.8      The board and committee authorized or provided by the Mission/Annual Conference may employ such persons with such qualifications as they may deem fit to execute their decisions and programs provided that the necessary budgetary provisions have been made by the relevant authorities. In like token, they may by majority vote remove or dismiss any officer or employee.

## 230.9 Use of Technology:

### (a) Authorization:

- i. In compliance with State or Territory and Commonwealth government's declaration of "the state of emergency, or state of disaster", or announcement of human movement restrictions due to emergency or disaster, the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop could, upon consulting the Executive Board to change & alter the mode, style and means of a scheduled physical meeting to the use of relevant digital platform so decided.
- ii. Under normal circumstances, written consent must be sought from the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop or the Executive Board to use online platform for official meetings and decision making. This shall be limited to no more than one-third of the number of scheduled meetings in a Conference year.

### (b) Participation in Meetings:

- i. A member not physically present at a scheduled board, commission, committee and general meeting may be permitted to participate in the meeting by the use of technology that allows that member and other members present at the meeting to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other.
- ii. For the purposes of this Part, a member participating in a board, commission, committee and general meeting as permitted under para 230.9.b.i is taken to be present at the meeting and, if the member votes at the meeting, is taken to have voted in person.

## Section II Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference Boards

231.1 The Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference shall organize the following Boards in order to fulfill its work.

1. CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE BOARD.
2. BOARD OF FINANCE.
3. BOARD ON THE MINISTRY.
4. BOARD OF APPOINTMENTS.
5. BOARD OF EVANGELISM.
6. BOARD OF MISSION.
7. BOARD OF NOMINATIONS.

8. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.
9. BOARD OF LAITY.
10. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CONCERNS
11. AND ANY OTHER BOARDS AS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE CONFERENCE.

231.2. The Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference shall determine the membership of each Board. Each Board shall organize itself, elect its own officers and establish its own rules and by-laws subject to the provisions of paragraph 230.3. It shall meet at least once a year.

231.3. Each Board may appoint staff to execute its decisions and programs.

231.4. Subject to approval of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference, the work of the Boards shall be financed by appropriations from the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference budget and sources of income compatible with the Boards.

231.5. The Boards shall promote their work at all levels of the Church.

[This page intentionally left blank]

## CHAPTER SIX

### Judicial Administration

#### **Section I. The Judicial Council**

240. 1. The Judicial Council shall consist of nine members as follows:
- (a) At least four members shall be ministers, other than superintendent/ president/ bishop.
  - (b) At least four members shall be lay persons.
2. Every member of the Methodist Church of Australia is eligible to be a member, provided that he is no less than thirty years of age and not more than sixty-five years of age.
3. The term of office of a member of the Judicial Council shall be a maximum of eight years.
4. The first Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference may elect members of the Judicial Council and determine the length of term for each member.
5. At the first Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference nomination to the Judicial Council may be made by the Board of Nominations.
6. The procedures for the election of the Judicial Council shall be made by the Board of Nominations.
- (a) At each session of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference, the Executive Board may nominate by majority vote two times the number of ministers and lay persons to be elected.
  - (b) When the nomination refers to in (a) above are announced, further nominations from the floor may be made. The numbers nominated from the floor shall not exceed the numbers nominated the Executive Board.
  - (c) From the nominations referred to in (a) and (b) above, the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference shall without discussion elect by secret ballot and by majority vote the necessary numbers of ministerial and lay members.
241. 1. If a vacancy in the membership of the Judicial Council occurs at the conclusion of the Conference because of a required retirement because of age, such vacancy shall be filled by Conference election of a minister to fill a ministerial vacancy and a lay member to fill a lay

vacancy, such election to be held in the manner hereinbefore provided in this section; and the person elected shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member whom he succeeds.

2. If a vacancy in the membership of Council occurs during the interim between sessions of the Conference, a ministerial vacancy shall be filled by the first elected ministerial alternate and a lay vacancy by the first elected lay alternate. The alternate would hold office as a member of the Judicial Council for the unexpired term of the member whom he succeeds. In the event of any vacancy, it shall be the duty of the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop and the secretary of the Judicial Council to notify the Alternate entitled to fill it.
  3. In the event of the enforced absence of one or more members of the Council at or during the session of the Conference, such temporary vacancy may be filled for that session of the Conference, or the remainder thereof, as provided in this article; provided, however that nothing in this provision shall affect the validity of any action of the Council so long as the quorum is present.
  4. Any permanent vacancy among the alternates shall be filled by election at the next session of the Conference of a minister to fill a ministerial vacancy and a lay member to fill a lay vacancy, and the person or persons so elected shall hold office during the unexpired term of the alternate whom each respectively succeeds.
  5. If vacancies occur after exhaustion of the list of alternates, the Executive Board is authorized to fill such vacancies for the remainder of the quadrennium.
242. The term of office of the members of the Council and the alternates shall expire upon the adjournment of the Conference at which their successors are elected.
243. During the consideration of any matter before the Judicial Council involving any AC, DC, LC, conference agency or any matter of administrative service, to which a member of the Council is related by virtue of the office he holds, that member shall not be eligible to serve on the Council while that matter is under consideration, but an alternate shall be asked to serve in his stead.
244. 1. The Judicial Council shall provide its own method of organization and procedure, both in respect to hearings on appeals and petitions for declaratory decisions. All parties are entitled to submit written arguments and produce such evidence under such rules as the Council may adopt from time to time.
2. The Council shall meet at the time and place of the meeting of the Conference and shall continue in session until the adjournment of that body, and at such time as it may deem appropriate, and at such place as it may select from time to time.
  3. Seven members shall constitute a quorum.

4. (a) An affirmative vote of at least five members shall be required to declare any act of the Conference unconstitutional.
  - (b) On other matters a majority vote of the entire Council shall be sufficient.
  5. The Council may decline to entertain an appeal or a petition for a declaratory decision in any instance in which it determines it does not have the jurisdiction to decide the matter.
245. 1. The Judicial Council shall determine the constitutionality of any act of the Conference upon an appeal by a majority of the Executive Board, or one-fifth of the Conference.
  2. The Judicial Council shall have the jurisdiction to determine the constitutionality of any proposed legislation when such declaratory decision is requested by the Conference or by the Executive Board.
246. The Judicial Council shall hear and determine the legality of any action taken by the Conference, Board, Commission, Committee or body on a matter affecting the Conference upon appeal by two-thirds of the members of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference present and voting.
247. The Judicial Council shall hear and determine any appeal from the superintendent/ president/ bishop's decision on a question on law made in a District or Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference when said appeal has been made by one-fifth of that conference present and voting.
248. 1. The Judicial Council shall pass upon, and affirm, vary or reverse the decisions of law made by the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent in District or Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference upon questions of law submitted to them in writing in the regular business of a session.
  2. The Bishop/ President/ Superintendent thereof shall report annually in writing to the Judicial Council all his decisions of law.
  3. No such episcopal decision shall be authoritative, except in the case pending, until it has been passed upon by the Judicial Council and thereafter it shall become the law of The Methodist Church.
249. The Judicial Council shall hear and determine an appeal of the Bishop /President/ Superintendent when taken from the decision of the trial court in his case.
250. 1. The Judicial Council, on petition as hereinafter provided, shall have jurisdiction to make a ruling in the nature of a declaratory decision as to the constitutionality, meaning, application, or the effect of the Discipline or any position thereof, or of any act or legislation of the Conference; and the decision of the Judicial Council thereon shall be as binding and effectual as a decision made by it on appeal under the

law relating to appeals to the Judicial Council.

2. When a declaratory decision is sought, all person or bodies who have or claim any interests which would be effected by the declaration shall be parties to the proceedings, and the petition shall name such parties. If the chairman of the Council determines that other parties not named by the petition would be effected by such a decision, such additional parties shall be added; and the petitioner or petitioners, upon direction of the Secretary of the Judicial Council, shall then be required to serve all parties so joined with a copy of the petition within fifteen days after such direction by the Secretary of the Judicial council. In like manner, any interested party may, on his or its own motion, intervene and answer, plead or interplead.
251. The decision of the Judicial Council shall be binding on the Methodist Church in Australia.
  252. The Judicial Council shall have such other duties and power as may be conferred upon it by the Conference.
  253. All decision of the Judicial Council shall be final. In the event that the Judicial Council declares any act of the Conference unconstitutional it shall report such decision to the Conference immediately.
  254. The decision of the Judicial Council on question of law, with a summary of the facts and of the opinion, shall be filed with the Secretary of the Conference and shall be published in the following manner:
    1. Following each session of the Judicial Council, the official publications of the Church shall publish an official summary prepared by the Secretary of the Council of the decisions arrived at during that session.
    2. The decisions of the Judicial Council rendered during each year shall be published in the Conference Journal or Minutes.

## **Section II. Trials**

255. A trial shall be regarded as a last resort after all other remedies are exhausted. Trials shall be conducted in a Christian manner by a properly constituted Court. The administration of oath shall not be required. All trials shall be held in the precincts of a Methodist Church and may be held in camera at the discretion of the Trial Court.
256.
  1. The Bishop/ President/ Superintendent, a traveling elder, or a local preacher shall be liable to be charged and tried for one or more of the following offenses:
    - (a) Immorality, crime or other unchristian conduct.
    - (b) Habitual neglect of duty as a member or officer in the church.
    - (c) Disobedience to the Order and Discipline of The Methodist

- church.
- (d) Disseminating doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion or other established standards of doctrine of the Church.
  - (e) Un-ministerial conduct or mal-administration in office.
2. A lay member of the church shall be liable to be charged and tried for one or more of the offenses set out in 256.1(a), (b), (c), and (d).
257. No charge shall be entertained for any offense committed four years immediately preceding the filing of complaint, except where there is a conviction in civil or criminal court, and in such cases the charges shall not be entertained unless they are filed within a year after the entry of the final judgment in such court.
258. 1. A charge shall not allege more than one of the offenses, set forth in Clause 256.1; several charges against the same person, however, with detailed particulars of each of them may be presented at one and the same time and may be tried together.
2. When several charges are tried at the same time, a separate verdict on each court shall be taken.
259. 1. The presiding officer may alter or add to any charge at any time before judgment is pronounced.
2. Every such alteration or addition shall be read and explained to the accused.
260. Every charge shall state the offense by its generic term as set out in 256.1(a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) thereto, and shall state in substance the facts upon which the said charges are based.
261. An accused person shall have the right to appear in person and/or be represented by counsel of his choice.
262. In a situation where the accused is not represented the presiding officer may appoint a counsel for the accused.
263. All notices required or provided for in this chapter shall be in writing and duly signed by or on behalf of the person or body giving or required to give notice, and shall be addressed to the person or body to whom it is required to be given. Such notices shall be served at least seven days in advance by delivering a copy thereof to the party or chief officer of the body to whom it is addressed in person or by registered mail and addressed to the last known residence or address of such party. The fact of the giving of the notice shall affirmatively appear over the signature of the party required to give such notice and become a part of the record of the case.
264. In all cases of investigation and trial, notice to appear shall be given to such witness as either party may name, and shall be issued in the name of the Church and be signed by the presiding officer of the Trial Court.

265. It shall be the duty of the witness to appear and testify when summoned.
266. As soon as the Court has convened, the accused shall be called upon by the presiding officer to plead to the charge, and his pleas shall be recorded. If he pleads "guilty" to the charge preferred against him no trial shall be necessary, but evidence may be taken with respect to the appropriate penalty, which shall thereupon be imposed. If he pleads "not guilty", or if he should neglect or refuse to plead, the plea of "not guilty" shall be entered for him and the trial shall proceed. The court may adjourn from time to time as convenience or necessity may require. The accused shall at all times during the trial, except as hereinafter mentioned, have the right to produce his testimony and that of his witnesses and to make his defense.
267. If the accused, after due notice, unreasonably refuse or neglects to appear at the time and place set for the hearing, the trial may proceed in his absence.
268. The Court shall be a continuing body until the final disposition of the charge. If any member of the court shall be unable to attend all the sessions, he shall not vote upon the final determination of the case, but the rest of the court shall proceed to judgment. It shall require a vote of at least three-fourths of the original membership of the court to sustain the charges.
269. All preliminary objections shall be made at the commencement of the trial and the presiding officer shall determine all such objections and make the necessary rulings.
270. All objections shall be recorded.
271. No witness shall be present during the examination of another witness if the opposing party objects; witnesses shall be examined by the party producing them, then cross-examined by the opposing party and then re-examined by the party producing them. The presiding officer shall decide as to the advisability and relevancy of evidence.
272. The presiding officer during the hearing shall leave to the court to deliberate all matters pertaining to law and/or fact. The presiding officer merely presides over the session and verifies the findings by putting his signature thereon.
273. The evidence of a witness shall be taken by a stenographer and reduced to writing and certified by the presiding officer and secretary and shall form part of the record.
274. A non-member of The Methodist Church may be called as witness.
275. The presiding officer of any court before which a case may be pending or the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent in charge shall have power, whenever the necessity of the parties or of witnesses shall require, to appoint, on the application of either party, a commissioner or commissioners, either a minister or a lay member, or both, to examine the witnesses; provided that three days' notice of the time and place of taking such testimony shall have been given to the adverse party. Counsel for both parties shall be permitted to examine and cross-examine the witness or witnesses whose testimony is thus taken. The

commissioners so appointed shall take such testimony in writing as may be offered by either party. The testimony properly certified by the signature of the commissioner or commissioners shall be transmitted to the presiding officer of the court before which the case is pending.

276. In all investigations and trials the records shall be accurate and full; they shall include the proceedings in detail and all the evidence, taken stenographically if possible, the documents admitted, together with the charges, specifications, and findings, and shall be approved and attested by the presiding officer and the secretary. In all the investigations and trials the presiding officer shall appoint a secretary to keep a record of the proceedings and the documents, of which records, when properly attested, the said presiding officer shall be the custodian. If no appeal is taken, the custodian shall deliver the entire record to the secretary of the conference concerned for record in its journal of the final disposition of the case.
277. If appeal be taken, the custodian shall deliver the entire record to the president of the proper appellate court, and after it has been used in the court it shall be returned to the Secretary of the Conference concerned for notation in its journal of the final decision of the case.
278. The Conference Secretary shall be the custodian of records of all trials occurring in their bodies (inclusive of the District and Local Conferences) respectively; and in case of appeal they shall deliver said records to the president or secretary of the proper appellate court. After the said appeal has been heard, the records shall be returned to the conference from which they came.
279. In all cases of appeal the appellant shall within thirty days give notice of appeal and at the same time shall furnish to the officer receiving such notice, and to the counsel of the church, a written statement on the grounds of his appeal, and the hearing in the appellate court shall be limited to the grounds set forth in such statement.
280. When any appellate court shall reverse, in whole or in part, the findings of the trial court, or remand the case for a new trial, or change the penalty imposed by that court, it shall return to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference or to the secretary of the Trial Court a statement of the grounds of its action.
281. An appeal shall not be allowed in any case in which the accused has failed to or refused to be present in person or by counsel at his trial. Appeals, regularly taken, shall be heard by the proper appellate court, unless it shall appear to the said court that the appellate has forfeited his right to appeal by misconduct, such as refusal to abide by the findings of the committee of investigation or of the Trial Court, or by withdrawal from the church, or by failure to appear in person or counsel to conduct the appeal; or prior to the final decision on appeal from his conviction, by resorting to suits in the civil court against the complainant or any of the parties connected with the ecclesiastical court in which he was tried.

282. The right of appeal, when once forfeited by neglect or otherwise, cannot be revived by any subsequent appellate court.
283. The right to take and to conduct an appeal shall not be effected by the death of the person entitled to such right. His heirs or legal representatives may conduct such appeal as he would be entitled to do if he were living.
284. Appeal is only confined to evidence in the records of the proceedings, and no fresh evidence can be produced.
285. In no case shall an appeal operate as suspension of sentence. The findings of the Trial Court must stand until they are modified or reversed by the proper appellate court. Pending the hearing of an appeal against the findings of the Trial Court, appropriate provision shall be made by the Trial Court, having regard to its decision, for the support of the appellant.
286.
  1. The Appeal Court may affirm, reverse, vary or set aside the findings of the Trial Court.
  2. It may reduce, increase, set aside or substitute the sentence imposed by the Trial Court.
  3. It may order a re-trial.
287. Appeals to appellate court shall only be on points of law.
288. When an appeal is taken on a question of law, written notice of the same shall be served on the Secretary of the body in which the decision has been rendered. It shall be his duty to see that an exact statement of the question submitted and the ruling of the chair thereon shall be entered into the journal. He shall then make and certify a copy of the question and ruling and transmit the same to the secretary of the body to which the appeal is taken: The secretary who thus receives a certified copy shall present the same in open conference and as soon as practicable lay it before the presiding officer for his ruling thereon; which ruling must be rendered before the final adjournment of that body, that said ruling together with the original question and ruling may be entered in the journal of that conference. The same course shall be followed in all subsequent appeals.
289. Errors of law or defects in judicial proceedings which are discovered on appeal are to be corrected by the presiding officer of the next Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference upon request in open session, and in such event, the Conference may also order just and suitable remedies, if injury has resulted from such errors.
290. The Bishop/ President/ Superintendent shall have the right to appeal to the Judicial Council in case of an adverse decision by the trial court; provided that within thirty days after his conviction he notifies the Secretary of the Conference in writing of his intention to appeal, unless such decision has been rendered within thirty days prior to the meeting of such conference, in which case notice shall be given within ten days after his conviction.
291. It shall be the duty of the Conference Secretary on receiving notice of such appeal, to notify the secretary of the Judicial Council; and the Council shall fix

The time and place for the hearing of the appeal, and shall give due notice of the same to the appellant and to the secretary of the Conference who in turn shall notify the counsel for the Church.

292. The Conference upon nomination of the Executive Board, shall elect a Court of Appeal composed of five traveling elders, who shall have been at least six years successively members of The Methodist Church and an equal number of alternates. This Court shall serve until its successors have been confirmed. This Court shall have full power to hear and determine appeals of traveling elders taken from the Mission / Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference. The Court shall elect its own president and secretary and shall adopt its own rules of procedure, and its decision shall be final, except that an appeal may be taken to the Judicial Council upon questions of law.
293. In case of conviction in a trial court, a traveling elder shall have the right to appeal to the Court of Appeals as above constituted; provided that within thirty days after his conviction he shall notify the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent in writing of his intention to appeal.
294. When notice of an appeal has been given to the president of the Trial Court, he shall give notice of the same to the secretary of the Court of Appeals and submit the documents in the case. The Court of Appeals shall give notice to the Superintendent / President/ Bishop of the conference from which the appeal is taken and to the appellant of the time and place where the appeal will be heard. Both the Conference and the appellant may be represented by counsel. The Superintendent / President/ Bishop of the Conference shall appoint counsel for the Church.
295. The Court of Appeals when acting as a court of appeals shall determine two questions only:
  1. Does the weight of the evidence sustain the charge or charges?
  2. Were there such errors of law as to vitiate the verdict?

These questions shall be determined by the records of the trial and the argument of counsel for the church and for the accused. The court shall in on case hear witnesses.

296. All necessary travel and sustenance expenses incurred by the Court of Appeals, the counsel for the church and the counsel for the defendant, in the hearing of an appeal case coming from the Mission/Annual Conference and appearing before any court of appeals, shall be paid out of the administration funds of the Conference in which the proceedings arise.
297. In case of conviction, a local preacher shall be allowed to appeal to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference; provided that within thirty days after his conviction he shall signify in writing to the District Superintendent of the District his determination to appeal.
298. The Local Conference of each charge shall elect from among the members of the church a person of sound judgment and experience in the affairs of the church as a trier for appeals for members.

299. Any member of the church against whom judgment shall have been rendered by a Trial Court may appeal to the Court of Appeals, as hereinafter constituted, by giving written notice of his desire to the District Superintendent within thirty days after judgment is rendered.
300. When thirty days' notice of appeal shall have been given, or sooner if agreed upon, the District Superintendent, having due regard to the wishes and rights of the appellant, shall convene a Court of Appeals. It shall be constituted of no fewer than five, and not more than seven triers of appeals in his district, but the trier of appeals of the charge to which the accused member belongs shall not be summoned. The District Superintendent shall give no less than ten or more than thirty days' notice to all persons concerned of the time and place at which the Court of Appeals shall assemble. The appellant shall have the right to challenge for cause of disqualification by reason of personal interests or other grounds deemed sufficient by the presiding officer, and he shall have the right of peremptory challenge of three of the panel summoned. The members of the court present and ready to proceed with the hearing shall not fall below five, which number shall constitute a quorum. The District Superintendent shall preside. The court may order a new trial as prescribed in Clause 337 or acquit the accused, or determine what other penalty may be imposed.
301. The findings of the Court of Appeals shall be certified by the District Superintendent to the pastor of the church of which the accused is a member for consistent proceedings.
302. If the District Superintendent shall find the convening of such a court inconvenient to the parties involved, he shall have the appeal heard by a Local Conference in his district other than that of the Local Church. The proceedings shall be the same as provided in the foregoing paragraph.
303. In case the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent or traveling elder shall have been deposed from the ministry without being expelled from the church, he shall be given a certificate of membership in the church signed by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop and Secretary of the Conference as the case may be.
304. In case the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent or traveling elder shall have been deposed from the ministry or expelled from the Church for teaching publicly or privately doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion of The Methodist Church or other established standards of doctrines, he shall not again be licensed to preach until, if a traveling elder, he shall have satisfied the Mission/Annual Conference from which he was deposed or expelled; or if Bishop/ President/ Superintendent he shall have satisfied the Conference from which he was elected Bishop/ President/ Superintendent, and shall have promised in writing to desist wholly from dissemination of such doctrine.
305. When a traveling deacon or elder is deprived of his credentials of ordination by expulsion or otherwise, they shall be filed with the papers of his Mission/ Provisional Annual / Annual Conference.

306. When a traveling deacon or elder desires to surrender his credentials and retain his membership in The Methodist Church, he shall be permitted to do so, and to designate the local church in which he will hold membership. The secretary of the conference to which he surrenders his credentials shall issue him a certificate of membership in the church; provided that no minister shall be permitted to take such action when charges involving his character is involved in cases where the law permits final adjustment by the surrender of credentials, this shall also be the surrender of membership in the church.
307. The Conference to which credentials were surrendered as provided in 305-306 may restore the same at its desecration if no charges or complaints against the minister were pending at the time of his surrendering the said credentials; and if at the time of his request for the restoration of the said credentials he is a member of good standing in The Methodist Church and shall present from his Local Conference a certificate of his character and a recommendation for the restoration of his credentials. In cases of surrender of credentials under situations involving the character of the minister the said credentials may be restored only after the lapse of a period of at least two years and upon the following condition:
1. That the conference holding the credentials shall be assured that there has been a complete amendment of life upon the part of the former holder of the credentials.
  2. That he shall have been readmitted on trial into the Conference from which he withdrew.
  3. That the Conference which has admitted him on trial (if another than the one from which he withdrew) or the District or Local Conference which licensed him shall present to the Conference holding his credentials a certificate of his good character and a recommendation that his credentials be restored.
308. When a deacon who is not a member on trial or a member of a Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference or elder is deprived of his credentials of ordination, by expulsion or otherwise, the superintendent/bishop shall require them of him, and file them with the Conference in the bounds of which the preacher resides.
309. Should a deacon who is not a member on trial or a member of a Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference or elder later produce to the Conference a recommendation from the District or Local Conference for the restoration of his credentials signed by its Superintendent /President/ Bishop and secretary, they may be restored to him.
310. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop is amenable for his conduct to the Mission/ Annual Conference.
311. If the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent shall be accused in writing of any offense hereinbefore mentioned in 256.1 (a)-(e) the Chairman of the Council on the Episcopacy of the Conference shall convene a meeting of the Council and shall carefully inquire into the case; and if, in the judgment of the majority

of them, there is reasonable grounds for such accusation, they shall prepare and sign the proper charges and specifications, and send a copy of the same to the accused, and to the vice-chairman of the Executive Board or the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference in which the offense took place. The said chairman shall call together at some convenient place in not less than ten nor more than fifteen days from the time he received the charges, five traveling elders and also the witnesses by whom the accusation is expected to be proved. The said chairman shall preside at the investigation, and if possible, the accused shall have the right to make a statement on his own behalf, and to interrogate witnesses, but shall not himself present any. If three or more of these traveling elders determine that a trial is justified, they shall order one and the vice-chairman of the Executive Board may suspend the Bishop/ President/ Superintendent pending the trial as hereinafter provided.

312. In case a trial be ordered, the chairman of the Executive Board (hereinafter referred to as the "superintendent"), shall within seven days from the date on which a trial is ordered fix the time and place of it, which shall be in not less than thirty nor more than sixty days from the date of such order. The Trial Court shall be constituted as follows:

1. The superintendent shall arrange for a meeting of the accused and his counsel and the counsel for the church, as early as practicable after the trial is ordered, to select the members of the Trial Court.
2. The superintendent shall nominate, as proposed members of the Trial Court, seven traveling elders from a list made up of the Board of Investigation of Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference.
3. The Church and the accused each shall have the right of peremptory challenge to the number of four and of unlimited challenge for cause.
4. For each name stricken from the list of seven through the exercise of challenge, the superintendent shall add another from the eligible group until the required number of seven is thus selected. If necessary to complete the panel, nominations may be made from other traveling elders in the area.
5. By a continuation of this same process, three alternates shall be chosen who shall be called in the order of their election to serve.

313. The court as thus constituted shall have full power to try the accused and by a vote of five or more to suspend him from the exercise of the functions of his office; to depose him from his office or the ministry or both; to expel him from the church; or, in the case of minor offenses, to fix a lesser penalty. Its findings shall be final subject to appeal to the Judicial Council as hereinafter provided, and shall be reported to the Conference for entry on its journal. The record of the trial, including the testimony, shall be signed by the president and secretary of the Trial Court and shall be placed in the custody of the secretary of the Conference, together with all the documents in the case, for preservation with the papers of the Conference, and shall be the basis of any appeal which may be taken.

314. A bishop/ president/ superintendent suspended or deposed shall have no claim upon the episcopal fund of the Conference for salary, dwelling, or any other expenses from date of such suspension or deposition; but in case he is thereafter found not guilty of the charge or charges for which he was suspended or deposed, his claim for the episcopal fund for the period during which he was deprived of the functions of his office shall be paid to him.
315. If traveling elder, whether on trial or in full connection, shall be accused of any of the offenses enumerated in 256.1 (a) - (e), his district superintendent shall call the Board of Investigation to inquire into the same, and, if possible, bring the accused and the accuser face to face. The accused shall have the right to make a statement in his own behalf, but shall not present any witnesses before the Board of Investigation. The district superintendent shall preside throughout the proceedings, and shall certify the judgment of the Board to the Mission/ Provisional Annual / Annual Conference.
316. If the accused is a district superintendent, the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference shall summon the Board of Investigation of that Mission/Annual conference to investigate the case and he shall appoint another district superintendent to preside at the investigation.
317. If the judgment of a majority of the Board of Investigation there is reasonable ground for such accusation, they shall prepare and sign the proper charges and specifications and send a copy to the accused, to the Superintendent/ President/Bishop and the secretary of the Mission/Annual Conference. On recommendation of the Board of Investigation, the Superintendent/ President /Bishop may suspend the accused from all ministerial service pending the trial.
318. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop, or the district superintendent duly appointed by him, within ten days after receipt of a copy of such charges, shall appoint counsel for the Church and notify the accused in writing to appear at a fixed time and place no less than seven days after service of such notice and within a reasonable time thereafter to select members of the Trial Court. At the appointed time in the presence of the accused and his counsel, if requested, and counsel for the church five effective elders shall be selected as a trial court. They shall be selected from a panel of ten effective elders of the Mission/Annual Conference of which the accused is a member, of the counsel for the church and the accused shall each have peremptory challenge to the number of four and challenges for cause without limit. If by any reason of challenges for cause being sustained the number is reduced below five, additional elders shall be nominated, in like manner as was the original panel, to take the places of the numbers challenged, who likewise shall be subject to challenge for cause. This procedure shall be followed until a Trial Court of five members has been selected. If the number of effective elders is not available, in an Annual Conference, the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop may in consultation with the Executive Board, determine an appropriate number of effective elders, not less than three, to constitute the Trial Court. The presiding officer shall also fix the time and place for the trial, notice of which shall be given in writing to the accused by the counsel for the Church seven days in advance of the time fixed; provided that, with the consent of the

accused, the time of the trial may be fixed for an earlier date. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall preside at the trial. The presiding officer shall appoint a secretary, who shall keep a record of the proceedings and of the testimony. The Court thus constituted shall have full power to try the accused and upon his conviction by a majority vote thereof shall have the power to suspend him from the exercise of the function of his office; to expel him from the church; or in case of conviction of minor offenses, to fix a lesser penalty. Its findings shall be final, subject to appeal to the Court of Appeal Judicial Council of the conference or the Judicial Council. It shall make a faithful report in writing of all its proceedings, signed by the president and secretary of the Court to the secretary of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference for permanent record, and deliver to him therewith the bill of charges, the evidence taken, and the decision rendered together with all documents brought into the trial.

319. When accusations against a traveling elder is preferred, it shall be referred by the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop to the Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference Board of Investigations, which board shall report to the Conference whether or not a trial is deemed necessary. The Board of Investigation when reporting a case for trial, shall formulate a bill of charge and specifications. The Superintendent/ President /Bishop shall appoint a counsel for the church.
320. The Conference may constitute a Trial Court of five effective elders to try the accused in the same manner as provided in 318. The Trial Court in the presence of the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop or of a chairman whom the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Conference shall have appointed, and the secretary of the conference shall try the case. The Trial Court shall have full power, upon conviction of the accused by a majority vote, to expel him from the ministry and membership of the Church; to depose him from the ministry of the Church; to suspend him from his office in the ministry, or, in connection with a minor offense, to fix a lesser penalty. Its findings, shall be final, subject to appeal to the Court of Appeals of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference. It shall make a faithful report in writing of all its proceedings, duly signed by the president and secretary of the Trial Court, to the secretary of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference for entry on its journal and deliver to him therewith the bill of charges and specifications, the evidence taken, and the decision rendered, with all documents brought into the trials.
321. The Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference may entertain and try charges against its ministerial members though no investigation of them has been held, or though the investigation has not resulted in suspension.
322. In all the foregoing cases, the papers, including the record, charges, evidence and findings shall be transmitted to the ensuing session of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference of which the accused is a member; on which papers, and on such other evidence as may be presented; due notice of the same having been given to the accused, the case shall be determined.
324. Any traveling elder who shall hold a religious service within the bounds of a pastoral charge not his own, when requested by the preacher in charge or by

the district superintendent not to hold such services, shall be deemed guilty of disobedience to the order and discipline of the Church; and if he shall not refrain from such conduct, he shall be liable to investigation and trial.

325. If a traveling elder is charged with disseminating publicly or privately doctrines which are contrary to the Articles of Religion of The Methodist Church or to any other existing and established standards of doctrine, and the minister so offending shall solemnly promise the Board of Investigation not to disseminate such erroneous doctrines in public or private, it may waive suspension in order that the case may be laid before the next Mission/Annual conference, which shall determine the matter.
325. When a Superintendent/ President/ Bishop or traveling elder is accused of an offense under 256.1 (a) (e) and desire to withdraw from the Church, the Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference may permit him to withdraw: in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under complaints”. If formal charges have been presented, he may be permitted to withdraw: in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under charges”. In either case, his status would be the same as if he had been expelled.
326. Each District Conference at each session, upon nomination of its district superintendent, shall elect three local preachers and two reserves of experience and sound judgment in affairs of the Church, who shall be known as the Commission of Investigation. The reserves shall serve in the absence or disqualification of the principals. Where no District Conference exists, the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference Board of Investigation shall act.
327. When a local preacher, ordained or unordained, whether or not serving as an approved supply pastor, is accused of any of the offenses enumerated in 256.1(a)-(e), the district superintendent shall meet the Commission of Investigations to meet, before which it shall be the duty of the accused to appear. If in the judgment of a majority of the Commission of Investigation there is reasonable grounds for such accusation, they shall prepare and sign the proper charges and send a copy to the accused and to the district superintendent; and the accused may be suspended from all ministerial services pending the trial. In all cases at least seven days’ notice shall be given to the accused by the district superintendent. Such notice shall contain a full statement of the charges.
328. The district superintendent within ten days after giving notice of the charges shall select a Trial Court of five members and five reserves of experience and sound judgment in the affairs of the Church, who shall be local preachers or, when necessary, lay members of the Church. The reserves shall serve in the absence or disqualification of the principals. The Church and the accused shall have three peremptory challenges and unlimited challenges for cause. The court in the presence of the district superintendent or the traveling elder appointed by him, and secretary appointed by the court, shall have full power to consider and determine the case and by a majority vote to convict the accused. They may suspend him from the functions of his office, or depose him from his office or the ministry or both; or expel him from the Church, or, for a minor offense, impose a lesser penalty. The secretary shall make a

correct report in writing of all proceedings, evidence and findings to the secretary of the District Conference and shall deliver to him all the papers in the case. Where there is no District Conference, then the Local Conference of which the accused is a member shall act.

329. In case of unchristian temper, words or actions the local preacher so offending shall be admonished by his district superintendent. Should a second transgression take place, one or two members of the church are to be taken as witnesses
330. If on due trial a local preacher is found neglectful of his duties as a local preacher or unacceptable in his ministry, he may be deprived of his ministerial office; in which case, if he is ordained, the district superintendent shall require him to surrender his credentials that they may be returned to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference.
331. A local preacher who shall hold religious services within the bounds of a pastoral charge not his own, when requested not to do so by the preacher in charge or the district superintendent, shall be deemed guilty of disobedience to the order and discipline of the Church and shall be brought to investigation on trial.
332. When a local preacher has given evidence of being so unacceptable or inefficient as to be no longer useful in the work, and the District or Local Conference for that reason refuses to pass his character, the District or Local Conference shall investigate the case; and if it appears that the complaint is well founded, and if he fails to give the Conference satisfactory assurance that he will amend, or voluntarily surrendered his credentials, the conference may depose him from the ministry. He may defend himself before the conference in person or by representative.
333. If a church member is alleged to be guilty of any of the offenses listed in 256.1 (a)-(e) he shall first be interviewed, and, if appropriate, reprovved by the pastor or church lay leader. If he shall persist in the offense complained of, he shall be brought to trial through the procedures herein set forth.
334. If charges are made in writing to the preacher in charge against a member of the church, the preacher in charge shall call a Committee of Investigation composed of five members of the church in good standing, and shall preside at the investigation. The accused and the accuser shall be brought face to face if possible, and the accused shall have the right to make a statement in his own behalf and of interrogating witnesses, but shall not have the right of presenting witnesses. If the Committee of Investigation determines that a trial is justified, it shall formulate the charges and specifications and order a trial.
335. If a member be brought to trial, it shall be before a Trial Court composed of no fewer than five nor more than seven members. They shall be chosen by the Local Conference by ballot. The accused member and the person conducting the prosecution may each challenge any one so chosen for cause of disqualification by reason of personal interest or having formed and expressed an opinion concerning the matter, and shall also have three peremptory challenges. If the pastor deems its advisable for obtaining a fair trial, the Local

Conference shall call a committee of like members from any part of the district. The same right of challenge shall be recognized. The district superintendent or a traveling elder appointed by the district superintendent shall preside at the trial.

336. If the accused shall be found guilty by a decision of a majority of the members of the Trial Court, they shall so declare, and the president of the Trial Court shall at once pronounce the member to be expelled from the church; provided; however that the Trail Court may impose a lesser penalty because of mitigating circumstances or other grounds.
337. If within sixty days after his conviction under the forgoing provisions the accused shall make application in writing to the district superintendent for a new trial on the grounds of newly discovered evidence, and shall submit therewith a written statement of the same, and if it shall appear that such evidence is material to the issue involved, the district superintendent shall grant a new trial. In no case shall a new trial be granted upon newly discovered evidence which could have been obtained for the trial by the exercise of due diligence, or which is merely cumulative in its effect.
338. An expelled member shall have no privileges of the society of the Sacraments of the church without repentance, contrition and satisfactory reformation according to the determination of the Local Conference. In such case that body may restore the member into full membership.
339. When a local preacher is accused of an offense under 256.1 (a)-(e) and desires to withdraw from the Church, the District Conference or, where there is no District Conference, the Local Conference may permit him to withdraw; in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under complaints”. If formal charges have been presented, he may be permitted to withdraw; in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under charges”. In either case the status of the person shall be the same as if expelled.
340. When a deaconess is accused of an offense and desires to withdraw from the Church, the Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference Deaconess Board may recommend to the Commission on Deaconess Work that she be permitted to withdraw; in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under complaints”. If formal charges have been presented, such deaconess may be permitted to withdraw; in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under charges”. In either case the status shall be the same as if the deaconess had been expelled.
341. When a member of the church is accused of an offense and desires to withdraw from the church, the Local Conference may permit such member to withdraw; in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under complaints”. If formal charges have been presented, such member shall be permitted to withdraw; in which case the record shall be “withdrawn under charges”. In either case the status shall be the same as if the member had been expelled.

[This page intentionally left blank]

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Financial Administration

#### Section I Board of Finance

350. The Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference shall elect a Board of Finance which will serve for two years each term. The Board of Finance shall consist of a chairperson and four other members, one of whom shall be the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Mission/ Provisional Annual Conference/ Annual Conference.
351. The Board shall prepare the annual budget for presentation to and acceptance by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference. In preparing the budget, the Board shall:
1. secure full information regarding all conference needs and causes and the chairman shall have opportunity to represent the claims of the agency before the Board, making available to the Board an audited statement of accounts and balance sheet of the previous years;
  2. recommend to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference for its action and determine the amount of percentage of the total budget which shall be apportioned to each cause included in the budget;
  3. furnish sufficient and equitable support for the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference the allowance, travel and office expenses. The Conference treasurer shall, as far as practicable, remit monthly to the Superintendent/ President/ Bishop the amounts due to him;
  4. recommend to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference for its action and determination the amount of subsidy shall be made to the Board by the churches of the Conference;
  5. recommend to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/Annual Conference the apportionment of financial contributions made by the various churches to the Mission/ Provisional Annual /Annual Conference in the year to come for acceptance by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference. The financial contributions shall be made in uniform percentage based on the various churches total incomes (excluding church building fund) of the previous year;
  6. require the Local Church treasurer to make four regular remittance in equal amounts per year to the Conference treasurer;
  7. have the power to raise funds with the approval of the Executive Board of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference.

352. The Board shall prepare a salary scale annually for the pastors of the conference churches for presentation to and acceptance by the Conference. In preparing the scale the Board shall:
1. secure full financial incomes and expenses statements of the previous year from all local churches;
  2. require each Local Church to provide an audited Statement of account and balance sheet of the previous year no later than the 31st of August each year.
353. The Conference treasurer shall be elected by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference for a two-year term. The treasurer shall:
1. work with the Board of Finance of the Mission/Provisional Annual/ Annual conference to ascertain the items for inclusion in the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference budget;
  2. receive and disburse all money contributed to the items represented in the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference budget and such other funds and contributions as the Board of Finance of the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference may determine;
  3. keep a proper record of contributions, pledges, offerings, payments and other items;
  4. prepare accounts for annual audit by auditors appointed by the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual Conference.

## **Section II Local Churches**

354. **Committee on Stewardship and Finance:** There shall be in every local church a Committee on Stewardship and Finance and shall promote Christian stewardship among members of the local church and organize its financial resources;
1. The members of the committee shall comprise the pastor or pastors, the chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee, the lay leader, the church treasurer, one representative each from the Methodist Women, Adult and Youth Fellowships and three other members determined by the Local Church Executive Committee; provided that in a small church the composition of the committee may be reduced. The chairperson of the committee shall be elected by the Local Church Executive Committee;
  2. The Committee shall promote the Christian stewardship through a program of education and visitation;
  3. The Committee shall prepare the local church annual budget, taking into consideration commitments and apportionment payable to the Mission/ Provisional Annual/ Annual conference treasurer, salaries,

allowances for pastor or pastors, office administration and church upkeep, recommendation on local church programming and outreach projects;

4. The Committee shall make provision for an annual audit of its account and the account of all local church organizations;
5. The Committee shall study the projects involving financial commitments as may be directed by the Local Church Executive Committee;

355. **Local Church Treasurer/Treasurers:** A local church may appoint one or more treasurers in order to carry out its financial commitments. The treasurer shall:

1. work with the Committee on Stewardship and Finance to ascertain the items for inclusion in the local church budget;
1. receive and disburse all money to the items represented in the local church budget and such other funds and contributions as the Local Church Executive Committee may determine;
3. keep a proper record of contributions, pledges, offerings, payments and other items;
4. prepare accounts for annual audit by auditors appointed by the Local Conference.

[This page intentionally left blank]

## **PART V**

<b>THE GENERAL SERVICES OF THE CHURCH</b>
---

### **360. THE ORDER OF WORSHIP**

#### **Brief Form**

*\*Let the people be in silent meditation and prayer upon entering the sanctuary.*

*Let the service of worship begin at the time appointed.*

*\*At the end of all prayers the people shall say Amen.*

#### **Prelude**

#### **Scripture Sentences, or Call to Worship**

*\*To be said or sung*

#### **Hymn**

*\*The people standing*

#### **Prayers**

*Here the minister may use an invocation or collect and prayers of confession and the Lord's Prayer.*

#### **Psalter or Other Act of Praise**

*\*To be read responsively or in unison, the people standing; then shall be said or sung the Gloria Patri.*

#### **Anthem**

#### **The Scripture Lessons**

#### **Affirmations of Faith**

*\*The people standing; then may be sung a doxology.*

#### **Pastoral Prayer**

#### **Offertory**

*\*Here parish notices may be given.*

*\*The minister may read the Scripture sentences before the offering is received. An anthem may be sung during the receiving of the offering. Following the presentation of*

*the offering a prayer of dedication may be said or sung.*

*\*At the discretion of the minister the offertory and prayers may follow the sermon.*

#### **Hymn**

*\*The people standing.*

#### **Benediction**

*\*The people may be seated for silent prayer.*

#### **Postlude**

## 361. THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

### Complete Form

*\*Let the people be in silent meditation and prayer upon entering the sanctuary.*

*Let the service of worship begin at the time appointed.*

*\*At the end of all prayers the people shall say Amen.*

### Prelude

#### Scripture Sentences, or Call to Worship

*\*To be said or sung.*

### Hymn

*\*The people standing.*

*\*If a processional, the hymn may precede the Scripture sentences.*

### Invocation

*\*By the minister, the people standing.*

Almighty God, from whom every good prayer cometh, and who pourest out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace and supplication: Deliver us, when we draw nigh to thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections, we may worship thee in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Call to Confession

*\*By the minister, the people standing.*

Dearly beloved, the Scriptures move us to acknowledge and confess our sins before Almighty God our heavenly Father, with a humble, lowly penitent, and obedient heart, to the end that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice, unto the throne of heavenly grace.

*\*Or the minister may say.*

Let us confess our sins to Almighty God.

### General Confession

*\*To be said by all, the people seated and bowed, or kneeling.*

**Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.**

### Prayer for Pardon or Words of Assurance

*\*By the minister.*

O Lord, we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offences, that through thy bountiful goodness, we may be delivered from the bonds of those sins which by our

frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*\*To be said by all.*

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*Minister:* O Lord, open thou our lips.

*People:* **And our mouth shall show forth thy praised.**

*Minister:* Praise ye the Lord.

*People:* **The Lord's name be praised.**

### **Psalter or Other Acts of Praise**

*\*To be read responsively or in unison, the people standing; then be said or sung.*

**Glory be to the father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

### **Anthem**

#### **The Scripture Lessons**

*\* Here shall be read two lessons, one from the Old Testament, and one from the Epistles  
or Gospels.*

### **Affirmation of Faith**

*\*The people standing; then may be sung a doxology.*

*Minister:* The Lord be with you.

*People:* **And with thy Spirit.**

*Minister:* Let us pray.

### **Collect**

*\*By the minister, or the minister and people, the people seated and bowed, or kneeling.*

O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who has safely brought us to the beginning of this day: Defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Pastoral Prayer**

#### **Offertory**

*\*Here parish notices may be given.*

*\*The minister may read Scripture sentences before the offering is received. An anthem*

*may be sung during the receiving of the offering. Following the presentation of the offering a prayer of dedication may be said or sung.*

*\*At the discretion of the minister the offertory and prayers may follow the sermon.*

### **Hymn**

*\*The people standing.*

**The Sermon**  
**Invitation to Christian Discipleship**

**Hymn**

*\*The people standing. This may be a recessional hymn.*

**Benediction**

*\*The people may be seated for silent prayer.*

**Postlude**

362. **The order for the Administration of the  
SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

*\*Our ministers are enjoined diligently to teach the people committed to their pastoral the meaning and purpose of the Baptism of children and to urge them to present their*

*children for Baptism at an early age.*

*\*When youth and adults present themselves for baptism, the minister shall take care that they have been instructed in the meaning of Christian Baptism.*

*\*This Sacrament should be administered in the church in the presence of the people in a*

*stated hour of worship. But at the minister's discretion this Sacrament may be administered at another time and place.*

*\*This Sacrament may be administered by sprinkling, pouring or immersion.*

*\*The minister shall see that the names of all baptized children are properly recorded as*

*preparatory members on the permanent records of the church, and in each instance he*

*shall deliver to the parents or sponsors a certificate of Baptism.*

*\*Children baptized in infancy shall be reported annually in the number of preparatory*

*members until they shall have been received into full membership in the church or shall have attained their adulthood.*

**1. CHILDREN**

*\*Parents or sponsors presenting a child for Baptism should be members of Christ's holy*

*Church.*

*\*The parents or sponsors, with the child to be baptized, shall stand before the minister,*

*who, addressing the people, shall say.*

Dearly beloved, Baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ through which grace we become partakers of his righteousness and heirs of life eternal. Those receiving this Sacrament are hereby marked as Christian disciples, and initiated into the fellowship of Christ's holy Church. Our Lord has expressively given to little children a place among the people of God, which holy privilege must not be denied them. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, how he said, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them, for such belongs the kingdom of God".

*\*Then the minister shall address the parents or sponsors, saying.*

Beloved, do you in presenting this child for holy Baptism confess your faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

**We do.**

Do you therefore accept as your bounden duty and privilege to live before *this child* a life that becomes the gospel, to exercise all godly care that *he* be brought up in the Christian faith, that *he* be taught the Holy Scriptures, and that *he* learn to give reverent attendance upon the private and public worship of God?

**We do.**

Will you endeavour to keep *this child* under the ministry and guidance of the Church until *he* by the power of God shall accept for *himself* the gift of salvation, and be confirmed as full and responsible member of Christ's holy Church?

**We will.**

*\*Then the minister shall take the child in his arms, and shall say to the parents or sponsors*

What name is given this child?

*\*And then, repeating the name, though not including the surname, the minister shall baptise the child saying,*

N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

*\*Then the minister may have the people stand, and addressing them, may say.*

Brethren of the household of faith, I commend to your love and care *this child* whom we this day recognize as *a member* of the family of God. Will you endeavour so to live that *he* may grow in the knowledge and love of God the Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ?

*\*Then the people shall say,*

**With God's help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ that this child, surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.**

*\*Then the minister shall say,*

Let us pray.

O God, our heavenly Father, grant *this child*, as *he* grows in years, may also grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that by the restraining and renewing influence of the Holy Spirit *he* may ever be a true *child* of thine, serving thee faithfully all *his* days.

So guide and uphold the *parents (or sponsors)* of *this child* that, by loving care, wise counsel, and holy example, they may lead *him* into that life of faith whose strength is righteousness and whose fruit is everlasting joy and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the minister may give this or another blessing:*

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit bless, preserve, and keep you now and for evermore. **Amen.**

## 2. YOUTH AND ADULTS

*\*The person or persons to be baptized shall stand before the minister, who addressing the people, shall say,*

Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and our Saviour Christ said, "Unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God," I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of this bounteous goodness he will grant that *this person* may receive the forgiveness of sins, be baptized with water and the Holy Spirit, and may be received into Christ's holy Church, and be made a living *member* of the same.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, the aid of all who need, the helper of all who call upon thee for comfort, the life of all who believe, and the resurrection of the dead: We call upon thee for *this* thy servant, that *he* coming to thy holy Baptism may receive remission of *his* sins and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Receive *him*, O Lord, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, and grant that *he* may be faithful to thee all the days of *his* life, and finally come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then, addressing the person or persons to be baptized, the minister shall say,*  
Well beloved, you come here desiring to receive holy Baptism. We have prayed that God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, would grant to receive you, release you from sin, sanctify you with the Holy Spirit, and give you the kingdom of heaven, and everlasting life.

Do you truly and earnestly repent of your sins and accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour?  
**I do.**

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life?

**I do**

Do you desire to be baptized in this faith?

**I do.**

Will you then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same all the days of your life?

**I will, by God's help.**

*\*Then the minister shall say,*

Let us pray.

O merciful God, grant that all sinful affection may die in *this thy servant*, and that all things belonging to thy Spirit may live and grow in *him*. Grant that *he* may have the power and strength to triumph over evil, may receive the fullness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and beloved children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*The minister asking the name of each person to be baptized, and then repeating the same, though not including the surname, shall baptize him saying,*

N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*\*Then the minister may have the people stand, and addressing them, may say,*

Brethren of the household of faith, I commend to your love and care *this person*, whom we this day recognize as a *member* of the family of God. Will you endeavour

so to live that *he* may grow in the knowledge and love of God the Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ?

*\*Then the people shall say,*

**With God's help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ that, surrounded by steadfast love, you may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.**

*\*Then the minister may give this or another blessing:*

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit bless, preserve, and keep you, now and for evermore. **Amen.**

363.

### **The Order for CONFIRMATION AND RECEPTION INTO THE CHURCH**

*\*This service shall be conducted in the church in the presence of the people at such a time in a stated hour of worship as the minister may determine.*

*\*All who are to be confirmed as members of Christ's holy Church shall have been baptized, and instructed in the doctrines and duties of the Christian faith.*

*\*Those to be confirmed shall stand before the minister, who, addressing the people, shall say,*

Dearly beloved, the Church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time, for the conduct of worship and the due administration of his Word and Sacraments, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers, and the conversion of the work. All, of every age and station, stand in need of the means of grace which it alone supplies.

*These persons who are to be confirmed have received the Sacrament of Baptism, have also been instructed in the teaching of the Church, and are now ready to profess publicly the faith into which they were baptized.*

*\*Then the minister, addressing those who are to be confirmed, shall say,*

Do you here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that you made, or that was made in your name, at your Baptism?

**I do.**

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour and pledge your allegiance to his kingdom?

**I do.**

Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

**I do.**

Do you promise according to the grace given you to live a Christian life and always remain a faithful member of Christ's holy Church?

**I do.**

*\*Then the candidates shall kneel, and the minister, laying his hands upon the head of each severally, shall say,*

N., the Lord defend you with his heavenly grace and by his Spirit confirm you in the faith and fellowship of all true disciples of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

*\*Those confirmed shall rise, and the minister, addressing the people, may say,*

Let those persons who are members of other communions of Christ's holy Church, and who now desire to enter into the fellowship of this congregation, present themselves to be received into the membership of the Methodist Church.

*\*Then those confirmed and those to be received from other communions shall stand before the minister; and he, addressing them, shall say,  
Will you be loyal to The Methodist Church, and uphold it by your prayers, your presence, your gifts and your service?*

**I will.**

*Then the minister may say,*

Let those who are members of other congregations of The Methodist Church, and who now desire to enter into the fellowship of this congregation, present themselves to be welcomed.

*\*Here a lay member, selected by the Local Church Executive Committee, may join with  
the minister in offering the right hand of fellowship to all those received.*

*\*Then the minister may have those who received face the congregation, and causing the  
people so stand, he shall address them, saying,*

Brethren I commend to your love and care *these persons* whom we this day receive into membership of this congregation. Do all in your power to increase *their* faith, confirm *their* hope and perfect *them* in love.

*\*Whereupon the people shall say,*

**We rejoice to recognize you as members of Christ's holy Church, and bid you welcome to this congregation of The Methodist Church. With you we renew our vows to uphold it by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, and our service.**

*\*Then the minister may say,*

Go forth in peace, and be of good courage, hold fast that which is good, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. And the blessing of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

*\*On any day when persons are to be received by transfer only, the minister will use only  
that part of the service which applies to them.*

364.

### **The Order for the Administration of the SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER OR HOLY COMMUNION**

*\*It shall be the duty of the pastor to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at regularly appointed times to the people committed to his care, remembering the charge*

*laid upon him at the time of his ordination: "Be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments."*

*\*The order for the administration of this Sacrament to the sick, to those confined to their homes, or to others in circumstances where the full service is impracticable, should include the Invitation, the General Confession, the Prayer for Pardon, the Comfortable Words, the Prayer of Consecration, the Prayer of Humble Access, the Words of Distribution, the Prayer of Thanksgiving, and the Benediction.*

*\*At the time of Holy Communion, the Lord's Table shall have been upon it a fair white*

*linen cloth. The elements of bread and wine shall be place thereon. The pure, unfermented juice of the grape shall be used.*

*\*It is our custom to deliver the elements into the hands of the people while they kneel before the Lord's Table. But at the discretion of the minister, the elements may be served to any or all the people while standing, or while seated in the pews.*

*\*Upon entering the church, the people shall bow in prayer and shall remain until the entire service is concluded.*

*\*All people who intend to lead a Christian life are invited to receive this holy Sacrament.*

*\*The service may begin with a prelude.*

*\*A hymn may be sung, the people standing.*

*\*Or the minister may begin the service with one or more of the following or other suitable sentences from the Scriptures:*

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

*Revelation 3:20*

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.

*John 6:51*

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

*1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and know God. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

*1 John 4:7,9*

Christ our Paschal Lamb is offered up for us, once for all, when he bore our sins on his body upon the cross, for he is the very Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world: Wherefore let us keep a joyful and holy feast with the Lord.

*From 1Corinthians 5:7-8; 1 Peter 2:24; John 1:29*

What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

*1 Corinthians 2:9-10*

*\*Here the minister, facing the people, shall say,*

	The Lord be with you,
<i>People:</i>	<b>And with thy Spirit.</b>
<i>Minister:</i>	Let us pray.

*\*Then, kneeling or bowed, the minister and people together shall say,*

**Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*\*Then, standing, all shall sing or say,*

**Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory: O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.**

**O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ: O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father: that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou takest away the sins of world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.**

**For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*\*The minister, facing the people while they remain standing, shall say,*

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort, and make your humble confession to almighty God.

*\*Then the minister, kneeling and facing the Lord's Table, and all the people, kneeling or bowed, shall make together this general confession:*

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father. For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*\*Then the minister shall pray, saying,*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn to thee: Have mercy on us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*\*The minister, standing and facing the people, shall say,*

Hear what comfortable words the Scriptures say to all that truly turn to the Lord:

*\*Then the minister shall say one or more of the following sentences:*

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

*Matthew 11:28*

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

*John 3:16*

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

*1 Timothy 1:15*

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*1 John 1:9*

If any one sins, we have and advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

*From 1 John 1:1-2*

*\*Here the minister may offer a pastoral prayer, or he may say,*  
Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church.

*\*Then may follow this prayer, the minister beginning, the people responding:*  
Most merciful Father, we humbly beseech thee to receive these our prayers for the universal Church, that thou wilt confirm it in the truth of thy holy faith, inspire it with unity and concord, and extend and prosper it throughout the world.

We beseech thee also, so to guide and strengthen the witness of the Church to those in authority in all nations, that they may maintain the justice and welfare of all mankind.

**Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all ministers of thy Church, that both by their life and doctrine they may set forth thy true and lively Word, and faithfully administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, that with willing heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives.

**Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to support and strengthen all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

**Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served thee in thy church on earth, who now rest from their labour (especially those most dear to us, whom we name in our hearts before thee). Keep us in fellowship with all thy saints, and bring us at length to the joy of thy heavenly kingdom.

**Grant this, O Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only mediator and advocate. Amen.**

*\*Then shall be read the lesson(s) from the Holy Scriptures. If two lessons are read, let one be the Epistle and the other the Gospel. An anthem or a hymn may be sung after the first lesson.*

*\*Here the minister and people may say the Apostle's Creed or another of the Christian affirmation of faith, the people standing.*

*\*Then shall follow the sermon.*

*\*Here parish notices may be given.*

*\*A hymn may be sung. The minister shall uncover the elements and shall proceed to receive the offering from the people. When the offering is presented, the people shall stand, and a prayer of dedication shall be said or sung.*

*\*Where custom prevails, an offering may be left by the people at the chancel when they come forward to receive the elements.*

*\*The people shall remain standing, and the minister, facing the people, shall say,*

Lift up your hearts.

*People:*           **We lift up to the Lord.**

*Minister:*       Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

*People:*           **It is meet and right so to do.**

*\*Then the minister, facing the Lord's Table, shall say,*

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

*\*Here may follow the Proper Preface, or else the minister immediately shall say, Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying:*

*\*Then shall all sing or say,*

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and earth are full of thy glory! Glory be to thee, O Lord most high! Amen.**

*\*The people shall kneel or bow; the minister, facing the Lord's Table shall offer the Prayer of Consecration:*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by the one offering of himself, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his passion, death, and resurrection, may be partakers of the divine nature through him.

Who in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread (*here the minister may take the bread in his hands*), and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper he took the cup (*here the minister may take the cup in his hands*); and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins; do this as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. **Amen.**

*\*The minister shall kneel before the Lord's Table. After a brief silence, the minister and people together shall pray, saying,*

**We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so**

**much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou are the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to partake of this Sacrament of thy Son Jesus Christ, that, we may walk in newness of life, may grow into his likeness, and may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

*\*Here may be sung or said,*

**O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.**

*\*The minister shall first receive the Holy Communion in both kinds, and then shall deliver the same to any who are assisting him. Then the minister or those assisting him shall deliver the elements in both kinds to the people.*

*\*During the distribution of the elements appropriate hymns may be sung or played.*

*\*When the bread is given, one or both of the following sentences shall be said:*

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life.

Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

*\*When the cup is given, one or both of the following sentences shall be said:*

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life.

Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

*\*When all have communed, the minister shall place upon the Lord's Table all that remains of the elements, covering the same.*

*\*Then minister, standing and facing the people, shall say,*

The peace of the Lord be with you.

*People:*           **And with thy spirit**

*Minister:*       Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

*\*Then the minister, kneeling before the Lord's Table, and the people, kneeling or bowed, shall pray, saying,*

**O Lord, our heavenly Father, we, thy humble servants, desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and thy whole Church may obtain forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.**

**And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion may be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences;**

**Through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.**

*\*Then a hymn may be sung.*

*\*Then the minister shall let the people depart with this blessing:*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*\*A postlude may follow.*

365. **Proper Prefaces for Certain Days  
To Precede the Sanctus in the Order for Holy Communion**

***Christmas***

Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born as at this time for us; who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man, and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin. Therefore, with angels, etc.

***Epiphany***

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who, in substance of our mortal flesh, manifested forth his glory, that he might bring us out of darkness into his own glorious light. Therefore, with angels, etc.

***Easter***

But chiefly are we bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. Therefore, with angels, etc.

***Pentecost***

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; according to whose most true promise, the Holy Spirit came down as at this time from heaven, lighting upon the disciples, to teach them, and to lead them into all truth, whereby we have been brought out of darkness into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore, with angels, etc.

366. **A Brief Form of the  
Order for the Administration of the  
SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER  
OR HOLY COMMUNION**

*\*This form for the administration of Holy Communion may be included in an order of worship following the sermon.*

*\*The minister shall uncover the elements, and shall proceed to receive the offering from the people. When the offering is presented, the people shall stand, and a prayer of dedication shall be said or sung.*

*\*Where the custom prevails, an offering may be left by the people at the chancel when they come forward to receive the elements.*

*\*The people standing, the minister, facing the people, shall say,*  
Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort, and make your humble confession to almighty God.

*\*Then the minister, kneeling and facing the Lord's Table, and all the people, kneeling or bowed, shall make together this general confession:*

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father. For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*\*Then the minister shall pray, saying,*  
Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn to thee: Have mercy on us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*The minister, standing and facing the people, shall say,*  
Hear what comfortable words the Scriptures say to all that truly turn to the Lord:

*\*Then the minister shall say one or more of the following sentences:*  
Come to me, all who labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

*Matthew 11:28*

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

*John 3:16*

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

*1 Timothy 1:15*

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*1 John 1:9*

If any one sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

*From 1 John 1:1-2*

*\*The people shall kneel or bow; the minister, facing the Lord's Table shall offer the Prayer of Consecration:*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by the one offering of himself, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of

the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his passion, death, and resurrection, may be partakers of the divine nature through him.

Who in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread (*here the minister may take the bread in his hands*), and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper he took the cup (*here the minister may take the cup in his hands*); and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins; do this as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. **Amen.**

*\*The minister shall kneel before the Lord's Table. After a brief silence, the minister and people together shall pray, saying,*

**We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou are the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to partake of this Sacrament of thy Son Jesus Christ, that, we may walk in newness of life, may grow into his likeness, and may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

*\*The minister shall first receive the Holy Communion in both kinds, and then shall deliver the same to any who are assisting him. Then the minister or those assisting him shall deliver the elements in both kinds to the people.*

*\*During the distribution of the elements appropriate hymns may be sung or played.*

*\*When the bread is given, one or both of the following sentences shall be said:*

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life.

Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

*\*When the cup is given, one or both of the following sentences shall be said:*

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life.

Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

*\*When all have communed, the minister shall place upon the Lord's Table all that remains of the elements, covering the same.*

*\*Then the minister, kneeling before the Lord's Table, and the people, kneeling or bowed, shall pray, saying,*

**O Lord, our heavenly Father, we, thy humble servants, desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most**

**humbly beseeching thee to grant, that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and thy whole Church may obtain forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.**

**And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion may be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences;**

**Through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.**

*\*Then a hymn may be sung.*

*\*Then the minister shall let the people depart with this blessing:*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

367.

### **The Order for the SERVICE OF MARRIAGE**

*\*The minister is enjoined diligently to instruct those requesting his offices for their prospective marriage in the Christian significance of the holy estate into which they seek to enter.*

*\*All arrangements pertaining to the service of marriage shall be made in full consultation with the minister.*

*\*This service may begin with a prelude, anthem, solo, or hymn. It may include a processional and recessional and be concluded with a postlude.*

*\*The congregation shall stand as the wedding procession begins.*

*\*The Christian names of the bride and bridegroom may be used in place of “this man and this woman” in the first, third, and fourth paragraphs.*

*\*When the Sacraments of the Lord’s Supper is requested, this service should be provided at a time other than the service of marriage.*

*\* At the time appointed, the persons to be married, having been qualified according to the laws of the state and the standards of the Church, standing together facing the minister, the man at the minister’s left hand and the woman at the right hand, the minister shall say,*

Dear beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together *this man and this woman* in holy matrimony, which is an honourable estate, instituted of God and signifying unto us the mystical union which exists between Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence in Cana of Galilee. It is therefore not to be entered into unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate these two persons come now to be joined. If any man can show just cause why they may not be lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

*\*Addressing the persons to be married, the minister shall say:*

I require and charge you both, as you stand in the presence of God before whom the secrets of all hearts are disclosed, that, having duly considered the holy covenant you are about to make, you do now declare before this company your pledge of faith, each to the other. Be well assured that if these solemn vows are kept inviolate, as God's Word demands, and if steadfastly you endeavour to do the will of your heavenly Father, God will bless your marriage, will grant you fulfilment in it, and will establish your home in peace.

*\*Then shall the minister say to the man, using his Christian name,*

N., wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour and keep her, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other keep thee only unto her so long as ye both shall live?

*\*The man shall answer.*

**I will.**

*\*Then shall the minister say to the woman, using her Christian name,*

N., wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live together in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love him, comfort him, honour him and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other keep thee only unto him so long as ye both shall live?

*\*The woman shall answer.*

**I will.**

*\*Then shall the minister say,*

Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

*\*The father of the woman, or whoever gives her in marriage shall answer.*

**I do.**

*\*Then the minister, receiving the hand of the woman from her father or other sponsor, shall cause the man with his right hand to take the woman by her right hand, and say after him,*

**I, N., take thee, N., to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith.**

*\*Then shall they loose their hands; and the woman, with her right hand taking the man*

*by his right hand, shall say after the minister,*

**I, N., take thee, N., to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith.**

*\*Then they may give to each other rings, or the man may give to the woman a ring, in his wise: the minister taking the ring or rings shall say,*

The wedding ring is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, signifying to all uniting of this man and this woman in holy matrimony, through the Church of Jesus Christ our Lord.

*\*Then the minister may say,*

Let us pray.

Bless, O Lord, the giving of these ring, that they who wear them may abide in thy peace, and continue in thy favour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Or, if there be but one ring, the minister may say,*

Bless, O Lord, the giving of this ring, that he who gives it and she who wears it may abide forever in thy peace, and continue in thy favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*\*The minister shall then deliver the proper ring to the man to put upon the third finger*

*of the woman's left hand. The man, holding the ring here, shall say after the minister,*  
**In token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love, with this ring I thee wed, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*Then if there is a second ring, the minister shall deliver it to the woman to put upon the third finger of the man's left hand; and the woman, holding the ring there, shall say after the minister,*

**In token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love, with this ring I thee wed, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*\*Then shall the minister join their right hands together and, with his hand on their united hands, shall say.*

Forasmuch as N. and N. have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have pledged their faith each to the other and have declared the same by joining hands and by giving and receiving rings; I pronounce that they are husband and wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God had joined together let not man put asunder. **Amen.**

*\*Then shall the minister say,*

Let us pray.

*\*Then shall the husband and wife kneel; the minister shall say,*

O eternal God, creator and preserver of all mankind, giver of all spiritual grace, the author of everlasting life: Send thy blessing upon this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy name; that they may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant between them made, and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws.

Look graciously upon them, that they may love, honour, and cherish each other, and so live together in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness that their home may be a haven of blessing and a place of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*\*Then the husband and wife, still kneeling, shall join with the minister and congregation in the Lord's Prayer, saying,*

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespasses against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*\*Then the minister shall give the blessing:*

God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord graciously with his favour look upon you, and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and love that you may so live together in this life that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. **Amen.**

368.

**The Order for the  
BURIAL OF THE DEAD**

*\*The death of a member of the church should be reported to the pastor as soon as possible, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with him.*

*\*The pastor shall not accept an honorarium for this service when the deceased was a member of his parish.*

*\*Funeral services of church members should be held in the sanctuary. The casket should be placed before the altar of the Lord's Table and remain closed.*

*\*In the event of cremation the service may be adapted at the discretion of the minister,*

*\*The service may begin and end with appropriate music selected in consultation with the minister.*

*\*The minister shall begin the service by reading one or more of the following sentences;  
or the minister, meeting the body, and going before it, shall say one or more of the following sentences:*

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

*John 11:25-26*

The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms.  
Deuteronomy 33:27a

The Lord is my light and my salvation; who shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?  
*Psalm 27:1*

Blessed be the Lord! For he has heard the voice of my supplications. The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts.  
*Psalm 28:6-7a*

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

*II Corinthians 5:1*

*\*Here a hymn may be sung, and then the minister shall say,  
Let us pray.*

*\*Here the minister may offer one or more of the following prayers:*

O God, the Lord of life, the conqueror of death, our help in every time of trouble, who dost not willingly grieve or afflict the children of men: Comfort us who mourn, and give us grace in the presence of death, to worship thee, that we may have sure hope of

eternal life and be enabled to put our whole trust in thy goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, our Father, from whom we come, and unto whom our spirits return: thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Thou art our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Grant us thy blessing in this hour, and enable us so to put our trust in thee that our spirits may grow calm and our hearts be comforted. Lift our eyes beyond the shadows of earth, and help us see the light of eternity. So may we find grace and strength for this and every time of need; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God our Father, creator of all mankind, giver and preserver of all life: We confess to thee our slowness to accept death as part of thy plan for life. We confess our reluctance to commit to thee those whom we love. Restore our faith that we may come to trust in thy care and providence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who in death hast gone before us: Grant us the assurance of thy presence, that we who are anxious and fearful in the face of death may confidently face the future, in the knowledge that thou hast prepared a place for all who love thee. **Amen.**

*\*Here one or more of the following psalms may be read by the minister, or by the minister and people responsively or in unison. If the people participate, they shall stand for the psalm and remain standing for the Gloria Patri.*

The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:  
he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul:  
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:  
for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.  
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:  
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:  
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*Psalm 23 KJV*

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?  
Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;  
Though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.  
One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after;  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life  
to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.  
For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble: he will set me high upon a  
rock.

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!

Wait for the Lord:

be strong, and let your heart take courage: yea, wait for the Lord.

*From Psalm 27*

Lord, thou has been our dwelling place in all generations.  
Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,  
from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.  
For a thousand years in thy sight  
are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.  
Thou dost sweep men away; they are like a dream,  
like grass which is renewed in the morning;  
in the morning it flourished and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.  
So teach us to number our days  
that we may get a heart of wisdom.  
Let thy work be manifest to thy servants,  
and thy glorious power to their children.  
Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,  
and establish thou the work of our hands upon us;  
yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

*From Psalm 90*

I lift up my eyes to the hills.  
From whence does my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth.  
he will not let your foot be moved;  
he who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, he who keeps Israel  
will neither slumber or sleep.  
The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.  
The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night.  
The Lord will keep you from all evil, he will keep your life.  
The Lord will keep  
your going out and your coming in from this time forward and for evermore.

*Psalm 121*

*\*Then the people shall say or sing,*

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

*\*Here the congregation may confess their faith according to the Apostles' Creed of another affirmation of faith.*

*\*Here one or more of the following lessons from the Scriptures shall be read:*

“Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms: if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.”

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going: how can we know the way?”

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one comes to Father, but by me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also: henceforth you know him and have seen him.”

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you.”

“Peace I leave with you; peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let

not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

*John 14:1-7, 15-17, 27*

All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

We know that in everything God works for the good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose.

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Romans 8:14-18, 28, 31, 35, 37-39*

In fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who had fallen asleep. For as by a man come death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

But some one will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body they come?” You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. But God gives it a body as he has chosen.

So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there also a spiritual body. Just as we have borne the image of the man in dust, we shall also bear the image of the man in heaven. I tell you this, brethren: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

For the perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy

sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

*I Corinthians 15:20-22, 35-36, 42-44, 49-50, 53-58*

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."

And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the foundation of the water of life. He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

*Revelation 21:2-7*

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city: also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his names shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they reign for ever and ever.

*Revelation 22:1-5*

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through this Spirit in the inner man, and the Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have the power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Ephesians 3:14-21*

*\*Here may be sung a hymn or anthem.*

*\*Then may follow a sermon, after which the minister may pray as he is moved, or may offer one or more of the following prayers:*

Eternal God, who committest to us the swift and solemn trust of life: Since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving thee is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of thy holy will, not waiting for tomorrow, but yielding today. Consecrate with thy presence the way our feet may go; and the

humblest work will shine, and the roughest places be made plain. Lift us above unrighteous anger and mistrust into faith and hope and love by a simple and steadfast reliance in thy sure will. In all things draw us to the mind of Christ, that thy lost image may be traced again, and that thou mayest own us at one with him and thee. **Amen.**

O God, who art the strength of thy saints, and who redeemest the souls of thy servants. We bless thy name for all those who have died in the Lord, and who now rest from their labours, having received the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. Especially we call to remembrance thy loving kindness and thy tender mercies to this *thy servant*. For all thy goodness that withheld not *his* portion in the joys of this earthly life, and for thy guiding hand along the way of *his* pilgrimage, we give thee thanks and praise. Especially we bless thee for thy grace that kindled in *his* heart the love of this dear name, that enabled *him* to fight the good fight, to endure unto the end, and to obtain the victory, yea, to become more than a conqueror, through him that loveth us. We magnify thy holy name that, *his* trial and temptations being ended, sickness and death being passed, with all the dangers and difficulties of this mortal life, *his* spirit is at home in thy presence, with whom dwelleth eternal peace. And grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that we who rejoice in the triumph of thy saints may profit by their example, that, becoming followers of their faith and patience, we also may enter them into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fade not away; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, the fountain of all life, who art our refuge and strength and our help in trouble: Enable us, we pray thee, to put our trust in thee, that we may obtain comfort and find grace to help in this and every time of need; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Remember thy servant, O Lord, according to the favour which thou bearest unto thy people, and grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of thee, *he* may go from strength to strength, in the life of perfect service in thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Father of spirits, we have joy at this time in all who have faithfully lived, and in all who have peacefully died. We thank thee for all fair memories and all loving hopes; for the sacred ties that bid us to the unseen world; for the dear and holy dead who compass us as cloud of witnesses, and make the distant heaven a home to our hearts. May we be followers of those who now inherit the promises: through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Lord and Master, who thyself didst weep beside the grave, and art touched with the feeling of our sorrows; Fulfil now thy promise that thou wilt not leave thy people comfortless, but wilt come to them. Reveal thyself unto thy sorrowing servants and cause them to hear thee say, I am the resurrection and the life. Help them, O Lord, to turn to thee with true discernment, and to abide in thee through living faith, that, finding now the comfort of thy presence, they may have also a sure confidence in thee for all that is to come; until the day break, and the shadows flee away. Hear us for thy great mercy's sake. O Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Thou who hast ordered this wondrous world, and who knowest all things in earth and heaven: so fill our hearts with trust in thee that, by night, and by day, at all times

and in all seasons, we may without fear commit those who are dear to us to thy neverfailing love for this life and the life to come. **Amen.**

O Lord, we pray thee, give us strength, that we may live more bravely and faithfully for the sake of those who are no longer with us here upon earth; and grant us so to serve thee day by day that we may find eternal fellowship with them; through him who died and rose again for us all, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, who art leading us through the changes of time to the rest and blessedness of eternity: Be thou near to comfort and uphold. Make us to know and feel that thy children are precious in thy sight, that they may live evermore with thee; and that mercy endureth forever. Thankful for the life which thou hast given us for these seasons we pray thy help now to resign it obediently unto thee. Assist us to return to the scenes of our daily life, to obey thy will with patience, and to bear out trials with fortitude and hope. And when the peace of death falls upon us, may we find our perfect rest in these through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*For a child one or both of the following prayers may be used:*

O God, whose most dear Son did take little children into his arms and bless them: Give us grace, we beseech thee, to entrust the soul of this child to thy never-failing love and care, and bring us all to thy heavenly kingdom; through the same thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, we pray that thou wilt keep in thy tender love the life of this child whom we hold in blessed memory. Help us who continue here to serve thee with constancy, trusting in thy promise of eternal life, that hereafter we may be united with thy blessed children in glory everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the minister shall give this blessing:*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*\*At the grave, when the people are assembled, the minister shall say one or more of the following sentences:*

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

*Psalm 124:8*

As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him.

*Psalm 103:13*

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come and save you."

*From Isaiah 35:4*

The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children.

*Psalm 103:17*

*\*Then the minister may say,*

Forasmuch as the spirit of the departed has entered into the life immortal. we therefore commit his body to its resting place, but his spirit we commend to God, remembering how Jesus said upon the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

*\*Or the minister may say,*

Forasmuch as almighty God hath received unto himself the soul of our departed brother, we therefore tenderly commit his body to the ground, in the blessed hope that as he hath borne the image of the earthly so also he shall bear the image of the heavenly.

*\*Or the minister may say,*

Forasmuch as the spirit of the departed hath returned to God who gave it, we therefore commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in him shall be changed and made like unto his own glorious body: according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

*\*Then may be said,*

I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me:

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works to follow them. Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

*\*Here the minister and people may pray, saying,*

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*\*Then the minister may offer one or more of the following prayers:*

Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of those who depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful after death in strength and gladness: We give thee hearty thanks for the good examples of all those thy servants who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labour. And we beseech thee that we with all those who have finished their course in faith, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in thy eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O merciful God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die, and whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall not die eternally: We beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin into the life of righteousness, that when we shall depart this life we may rest in him, and may receive that blessing which is thy well-beloved Son shall pronounce to all that love and fear thee, saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Grant this, we beseech thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. **Amen.**

O God of infinite compassion, who art the comforter of thy children: Look down in thy tender love and pity, we beseech thee, upon thy servants. In the stillness of our hearts we entreat for them thy sustaining grace. Be thou their say, their strength, and their shield, that trusting in thee they may know thy presence near, and in the assurance of thy love be delivered out of their distress; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the minister may give one of these blessings:*

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Amen.**

369.

### **The Order for the Ordination of Deacons**

*\*When the day appointed by the bishop is come, there shall be a sermon or exhortation*

*declaring the duty and office of such as come to be admitted deacons, how necessary that order is in the Church of Christ, and also how the people ought to esteem them in*

*their office; after which one of the elders shall present unto the bishop all who are to be ordained, and say,*

**I present unto you these persons present to be ordained deacons:**

*\*Their names having been read aloud, the bishop shall say to the people,*

Brethren, *these are they* whom we purpose, God willing, this day to ordain *deacons*. For, after due examination, we find that *they are* lawfully called to this office and ministry and that *they are persons* meet for the same. But if there be any of you who knows any valid reason for which *any one of them* ought not to be received into this holy ministry, let him come forth in the name of God, and disclose what the impediment is.

*\*If any impediment be alleged, the bishop shall desist from ordaining that person until*

*he shall be found to be innocent.*

*\*Then shall be read the Collect:*

Almighty God, who by thy divine providence hast appointed diverse orders of ministers in thy Church, and didst inspire thine apostles to choose into the order of deacons thy first martyr, St. Stephen, with others: Mercifully behold these thy servants, now called to the like office and administration; so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that by both word and good example they may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name and the edification of thy Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

*\*Then shall be read the Epistle:*

Deacons likewise must be serious; they must uphold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. Those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

*1 Timothy 3:8a, 9:13*

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time. Therefore, do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. Be filled with the Spirit, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

*Ephesians 5:15-16a, 17, 18b, 20-21*

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

*Ephesians 6:10-18*

*\*Then the bishop, in the presence of the people, shall examine every one of those to be ordained after this manner.*

Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon you the office of the ministry in the Church of Christ, to serve God for the promoting of his glory and the edifying of his people?

**I trust so.**

Do you unfeignedly believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

**I do believe them.**

Will you diligently read and expound the same unto the people whom you shall be appointed to serve?

**I will.**

It appertains to the office of a deacon to conduct divine worship and to assist the elder in the administration of the Holy Communion, to read and expound the Holy Scriptures, to instruct the youth, and to baptise. And furthermore. it is his office to search for the needy, that they may be visited and relieved. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

**I will do so, by the help of God.**

Will you apply all your diligence to frame and fashion your own lives and the lives of your families according to the teachings of Christ?

**I will, the Lord being my helper.**

Will you reverently heed them to whom the charge over you is committed, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

**I will so do.**

*\*Here those to be ordained shall knee, and the bishop, laying his hands upon the head of each severally, shall say,*

Take thou authority to execute the office of a deacon in the Church of God; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop shall deliver to every one of them the Bible, saying,*  
Take thou authority to read the Holy Scriptures in the Church of God, and to preach the Word. **Amen.**

*\*Then shall be read the Gospel:*

Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the marriage feast, so that they may open to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes; truly, I say to you, he will gird himself and have them sit at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those servants!

*Luke 12:35-38*

*\*Then the bishop shall pray,*

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who of thy great goodness hast vouchsafed to accept *these thy servants* into the office of deacon in thy Church: Make *them*, we beseech thee, O Lord, to be modest, humble, and constant in *their* ministrations, and to have a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline: that *they*, continuing ever stable and strong in thy Son Jesus Christ, may so well behave *themselves* in this office that *they* may be found worthy to be called into the higher ministry in thy Church: through thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour, world without end. **Amen.**

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop may give this blessing:*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

370.

### **The Order for the ORDINATION OF ELDERS**

*\*When the day appointed by the bishop is come, there shall be a sermon or exhortation*

*declaring the duty and office of such as come to be admitted elders, how necessary that*

*order is in the Church of Christ, and also how the people ought to esteem them in their*

*office; after which one of the elders shall present unto the bishop all who are to be ordained, and say,*

**I present unto you these persons present to be ordained elders:**

*\*Their names having been read aloud, the bishop shall say to the people,*

Brethren, these are they whom we purpose, God willing, this day to ordain *elders*. For, after due inquiry, we find that *they* are lawfully called to this office and ministry and that *they are persons* meet for the same. But if there be any of you who knows any

valid reason for which *any one of them* ought not to be received into this holy ministry, let him come forth in the name of God, and disclose what the impediment is.

*\*If any impediment be alleged, the bishop shall desist from ordaining that person until*

*he shall be found to be innocent.*

*\*Then shall be read the Collect:*

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by thy Holy Spirit hast appointed diverse orders of ministers in thy Church: Mercifully behold *these* thy servants, now called to the office of elder, and so replenish *them* with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that by both word and good example *they* may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name and the advancement of thy Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

*\*Then shall be read the Epistle and the Gospel:*

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things. And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

*Ephesians 3:7-9; 4:11-13*

Jesus said, "I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd: whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd."

*John 10:9-16*

*\*Then the bishop shall say, to the persons to be ordained elders,*

Dearly beloved, you have heard of what dignity and of how great importance is this office whereunto you are called. And now again we exhort you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you are to be *messengers, watchmen, and stewards* of the Lord; to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this evil world, that they may be saved through Christ forever.

Have always, therefore, in your remembrance how a great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they unto whom you are to minister are the sheep of Christ, for whom he gave his life. the Church which you must serve is his Bride and his Body. And if it shall happen the Church, or any member thereof, do take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, you know the greatness of the fault. Wherefore see that you never cease your labour, your care, and your diligence until you have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden duty, to bring all such as shall be committed to your charge unto perfectness in Christ.

Forasmuch, then, as your office is both of so great excellency and so great difficulty, consider how you ought to forsake, as much as you can, all worldly cares and be studious in learning the Scriptures, and in acquiring such knowledge and skill as may help you to declare the living Word of God.

We hope that you have weighed and pondered these things with *yourselves* long before this time, and that you have clearly determined by God's grace, to give *yourselves* wholly to this work whereunto it has pleased God to call you.

Also that you will continually pray that the Holy Spirit may assist you to order your own *lives* and the lives of your *families* after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that you may grow riper and stronger in ministry and be godly and wholesome *examples* for the people to follow.

And now, that this congregation of Christ here assembled may also understand your purpose in these things, and that this your promise may the more move you to perform your duties, you shall answer plainly to these things which we, in the name of God and his Church, shall ask of you touching the same:

Do you believe in your heart that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the ministry of elders?

**I do so believe.**

Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all truth required for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the same Holy Scriptures so to instruct the people committed to your charge that they may enter into eternal life?

**I am so persuaded and determined, by God's grace.**

Will you give faithful diligence duly to minister the doctrine of Christ, the Sacraments, and the discipline of the Church, and in the spirit of Christ to defend the Church against all doctrine contrary to God's Word?

**I will so do, by the help of the Lord.**

Will you be diligent in prayer, in the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of God and of his kingdom?

**I will, the Lord being my helper.**

Will you apply all your diligence to frame and fashion your own lives and the lives of your families according to the teachings of Christ?

**I will, the Lord being my helper.**

Will you maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people, and especially among them that shall be committed to your charge?

**I will do so, the Lord being my helper.**

Will you reverently heed them to whom the charge over you is committed, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

**I will so do.**

*\*Then the bishop shall pray, saying,*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who hath given you a good will to do all these things, grant also unto you wisdom and power to perform the same, that he may accomplish in you the good work which he hath begun, that you may be found blameless; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Here those to be ordained elders shall kneel. The people shall be requested to make their earnest supplications in silent prayer to God for them. Silence shall be kept for a space, after which shall be said the Veni, Creator Spiritus, the bishop beginning and all other responding.*

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire.  
**And lighten with celestial fire.**

Thou the anointing Spirit art,  
**who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.**

Thy blessed unction from above  
**Is comfort, life, and fire of love.**

Enable with perpetual light  
**The dullness of our blinded sight.**

Anoint and cheer our soiled face  
**With the abundance of thy grace.**

Keep far our foes, give peace at home;  
**Where thou art guide, no ill can come.**

Teach us to know the Father, Son,  
**And thee, of both, to be but One;**

That through the ages all along,  
**This may be our endless song;**

Praise to thy eternal merit,  
**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop shall say,*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we bless and magnify thy holy name for the gift of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and for all his apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, and pastors, whom thou hath sent abroad into the world. For these here present whom thou hast called to the same holy office and ministry, we render unto thee our most hearty thanks. And now, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee to grant that by *these thy ministers*, and by those over whom they shall be appointed thy holy name may be forever glorified, and thy blessed kingdom enlarged; through thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

*\*Those to be ordained still kneeling the bishop and elders assisting shall lay their hands*

*upon the head of each severally, the bishop saying,*

The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an elder in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the authority of the Church through the imposition of our hands. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop shall deliver to every one of them the Bible, saying,*

Take thou authority as an elder in the Church to preach the Word of God, to administer the holy Sacraments in the congregation. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop shall pray, saying,*

Most merciful Father, we beseech thee to send upon these thy servants thy heavenly blessings, that they may be clothed with righteousness, and that thy Word spoken by them may never be spoken in vain. Grant also that we may have grace to receive what they shall deliver out of thy Word as the means of our salvation, and that in all our words and deeds we may seek the glory, and the increase of thy kingdom; through Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop may give this blessing:*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*\*If on the same day, the order for deacon given to some and that of elder to others, the deacons shall be presented first, and then the elders. The Collect shall be said and the Epistle read, immediately after which they who are to be ordained deacons shall be examined and ordained as above described. Then, the Gospel having been read, they who are to be ordained elders shall likewise be examined and ordained.*

371.

### **The Order for the CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS**

*\*This service may be adapted for the installation of the conference president.*

*\*When the time appointed for the consecration of bishops is come, the service shall begin with a hymn, after which the Collect shall be read:*

Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to thy holy apostles, elders, and evangelists many excellent gifts, and didst charge them to feed thy flock: Give grace, we beseech thee, to all the ministers and pastors of thy Church, that they may diligently preach thy Word and duly administer the godly discipline thereof, and grant to the people that they may faithfully follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then an elder shall read the Epistle:*

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "You yourselves know how I lived among you all the time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which befell me, how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit

has made you guardians, to feed the church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

Acts 20:17-24, 28-32

*\*Then an elder shall read the Gospel:*

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”

John 21:15-17

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

*\*Then each elected bishop shall be presented by two elders to the officiating bishop, the elders saying,*

**We present unto you this elder chosen to be consecrated a bishop.**

*\*Then the bishop shall call upon the people present to pray, saying,*

Dearly beloved, it is written in the Gospel of St. Luke that our Saviour Christ continued the whole night in prayer before he chose and sent forth his twelve apostles. It is also written in the Acts of the Apostles that the disciples who were at Antioch did fast and pray before they laid hands on Paul and Barnabas and sent them forth on their first mission to the gentiles. Let us therefore, following the example of our Saviour Christ and his apostles, give ourselves to prayer before we admit and send forth this person presented to us, to the work whereunto we trust the holy Spirit hath called him.

*\*Then the bishop shall pray, saying,*

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by thy Holy spirit has appointed diverse offices in thy Church; graciously behold *this* thy *servant* now called to the office and ministry of a bishop. So replenish *him* with the truth of thy doctrine, and so adorn *him* with innocency of life, that by both word and deed *he* may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name and the edifying and well governing of thy Church, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop shall say to the person or persons to be consecrated.*

Brother, forasmuch as the Holy Scriptures command that we should not be hasty in admitting any person to government in the Church of Christ, before you are admitted to this ministration, you will, in the fear of God, give answer to these questions:

Are you persuaded that you are truly called to this ministration, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ?

**I am so persuaded.**

Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all truth required for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the same Holy Scriptures so to instruct the people committed to your charge that they may enter eternal life?

**I am so persuaded and determined, by God's grace.**

Will you then faithfully exercise yourself in the Holy Scriptures, and call upon God through study and prayer for the true understanding of the same?

**I will so do, by the help of God.**

Are you ready with all faithful diligence to seek and to promote the truth of Christ and to defend the Church against all doctrine contrary to God's Word?

**I am ready, the Lord being my helper.**

Will you live soberly, righteously, and devoutly in this present world, that you may show yourself in all things an example of good works unto others, to the honour and glory of God?

**I will so do, the Lord being my helper.**

Will you show yourself gentle, and be merciful for Christ's sake to poor and needy people, and to all strangers destitute of help?

**I will, by the help of God.**

Will you maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in you, quietness, love, and peace among all men; and faithfully exercise such discipline in the Church as shall be committed unto you?

**I will so do, by the help of God.**

Will you be faithful in ordaining and appointing others and will you ever seek to deal justly and kindly with your brethren of the minister over whom you are placed as chief pastor?

**I will so do, by the help of God.**

*\*Then the bishop shall pray, saying,*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who hath given you a good will to do all these things, grant also unto you wisdom and power to perform the same, that he may accomplish in you the good work which he hath begun, that you may be found blameless; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the persons to be consecrated bishop shall kneel. The people shall be requested to make their earnest supplications in silent prayer to God for them. Silence shall be kept for a space, after which shall be said the Veni, Creator Spiritus, the officiating bishop beginning, and all others responding.*

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire.  
**And lighten with celestial fire.**

Thou the anointing Spirit art.  
**Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.**

Thy blessed unction from above  
**Is comfort, life, and fire of love.**

Enable with perpetual light  
**The dullness of our blinded sight.**

Anoint and cheer our soiled face  
**With the abundance of thy grace.**

Keep far our foes, give peace at home:  
**Where thou art guide, no ill can come.**

Teach us to know the Father, Son.  
**And thee, of both, to be but One;**

That through the ages all along.  
**This may be our endless song:**

Praise to thy eternal merit,  
**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop say,*

Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful Father, who of thine infinite goodness hast given thine only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer, and hast made some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to the edifying and making perfect of thy Church. Grant, we beseech thee, to *this thy servant* such grace that *he* may evermore be ready to spread abroad thy gospel, the glad tidings of reconciliation with thee, and to use the authority given him, not to destruction, but to salvation; not to hurt, but to help; so that as a wise and faithful *servant*, giving to all their portion in due season, he may at last be received into everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

*\*The persons to be consecrated still kneeling, the bishops and elders assisting shall lay*

*their hands upon the head of each severally, the officiating bishop saying,*

The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a bishop in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the authority of the Church through the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And remember that thou stir up the grace of Grace which is in thee; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop shall deliver to each the Bible, saying*

Give heed unto reading, exhortation, and teaching. Think upon the things contained in this Book. Be diligent in them, that the increase coming thereby may be manifest unto all men. Take heed unto thyself and to thy teaching, for by so doing thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee. Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcast, seek the lost; faithfully minister discipline, but forget not mercy; that the kingdom of God may come upon the earth and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, that you may receive the never-failing crown of glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Most merciful Father, we beseech thee to send down upon *this thy servant* thy heavenly blessing and so endure him with thy Holy Spirit that he, preaching thy word, not only may be earnest to reprove, beseech, and rebuke with all patience and doctrine, but also may be to such as believe a wholesome example in word, in conversation, in love, in faith, in chastity, and in purity; that faithfully fulfilling his course, at the latter

day he may receive the crown of righteousness laid up by the Lord, the righteous judge, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Direct us, O lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further as with thy continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*\*Then the bishop may give this blessing:*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

372.

### **The Order for the COMMISSIONING OF DIACONAL MINISTERS**

(The Act of Commissioning will be done by the Bishop and may be a part of the Ordination Service or it may be a separate event, in which case, it will be one part of a longer service of worship. At the proper time those to be commissioned will be presented by an elder to the Bishop).

*Elder:* Bishop I present the following to be commissioned Diaconal Minister/s.  
(Those to be commissioned will then step forward and stand before the Bishop).

#### **Declaration of Purpose**

*Bishop:* We have gathered together as the body of Christ's Church to celebrate the Lordship of Jesus, to acknowledge God's claim on our lives, to affirm our acceptance of the call to serve, and to commission this/these person/s as Diaconal Minister/s.

*People:* Let us consider together the meaning of discipleship that we may learn how to share in the work of God's kingdom.

*Scripture Reading:* An appropriate passage may be read.

#### **The Act of Commissioning**

*Bishop:* Do you accept the challenge of ministry through the Church of Christ and promise as a Diaconal Minister to perform your task loyally and faithfully, to teach the Word of God, and to share God's love through deeds, words and relationships, to fulfill all the responsibilities entrusted to you?

*Diaconal Minister:* I will, with God's help.

(As an act of acceptance of this charge, the Diaconal Minister kneels and the Bishop lays his hands upon his/her head).

*Congregation:* We, the Church with God's guidance and grace pledge to you our loyalty and support. We shall strive to create among us a caring community. We will pray for you and we trust that you will pray for us so that God may bless and prosper this Church. We are happy to receive you as a Diaconal Minister, and we promise

both to support and labour with you as we together minister in the name of Jesus Christ.

*Prayer:* Lord, give us loving hearts to mend what is broken and touch what needs to be loved. Help us to be aware of our relationship to you and to each other, and to see other persons in new ways.

Give us the grace to live each day as a gift from you and bless us now as we begin this new relationship as your people. May we see our ministry together as a part of Christ's mission throughout this world, and may your gospel of love come alive in our midst so that we might have it share with your people everywhere. **Amen.**

*Hymn:* (An appropriate hymn may be sung).

[This page intentionally left blank]

## PART VI

<b>THE SCHEDULES</b>
----------------------

### **SCHEDULE I**

#### **Chapter 1**

#### **Constitution of The Methodist Women's Fellowship of The Methodist Church in Australia**

- 1.1. *Name* -- The name of this organization shall be called the ***Methodist Women's Fellowship (MWF)*** of *The Methodist Church in Australia*.
- 1.2. *Purpose* -- The purpose shall be:
  - (i) to help women grow in the knowledge and experience as revealed in Jesus Christ,
  - (ii) to challenge them to respond to God's redemptive fellowship,
  - (iii) to make Christ known throughout the world,
  - (iv) to develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the church.
- 1.3. In order to carry out the purpose, the Methodist Women's Fellowship shall:
  - (i) Unite women of the church in service,
  - (ii) Joins hand with the World Federation of Methodist Women "*To Know Christ And Make Him Known*".
- 1.4. *Functions*:
  - (i) To coordinate the work of the local fellowships towards the realization of the purpose of the Methodist Women's Fellowship;
  - (ii) To unite all fellowships within the Conference to promote the work of the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship;
  - (iii) To cooperate with other Christian women's group in ecumenically,
  - (iv) To provide opportunities and resources to meet the needs and interests of women;
  - (v) To enlist workers and secure funds for the fulfillment of their responsibilities in the mission of the church at home and abroad.
- 1.5. *Authority* -- The District Methodist Women's Fellowship shall have authority to promote their work in accordance with the program and policy of The Methodist Church in Australia.
- 1.6. *Membership* -- Any women who is a member of the Methodist Women's Fellowship in her local church shall be a member of the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship of The Methodist Church in Australia. The Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship of the Methodist Church in Australia shall comprise all local Women's Fellowships within the Conference.

- 1.7. *Meetings:*
- a.) There shall be an Annual General Meeting for the transaction of business and the election of officers, counsellors, coordinators of programs and such committees as it shall determine. Reports from officers and coordinators shall be received.
  - b.) Voting members at the General Meeting shall be the officers, coordinators of programs, the president of each Local Women's Fellowship or her representative who shall be an officer of the Fellowship, and the elected delegates from each Local Women's Fellowship, the number of which shall be determined by the Conference Women's Fellowship at the General Meeting.
  - c.) Notice of such meeting shall be given at least one month in advance. The President, with approval of the Executive Committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- 1.8. *Funds* -- All funds secured by the Conference Women's Fellowship shall belong to this organization and shall be disbursed only by its Constitution and by its Order, in accordance with the fiscal policy of the Conference. Requests for financial aid from overseas for women's work shall be submitted to the Conference of the Methodist Church in Australia for action.
- 1.9. *Amendments* -- Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be made in writing and be received by the Secretary of the Conference MWF thirty days before its General Meeting.
- 1.10. *The Conference Relations:*
- a.) The President of the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship shall be a member of the Conference of the Methodist Church in Australia and its Executive Board, with voting rights. In her absence at the Conference, the Vice President or her representative who is an officer of the organization shall take her place with the right to vote.
  - b.) In her absence at the Executive Board meeting, her alternate shall take her place with the right to vote.
  - c.) Designated officers shall represent the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship on the various Boards of the Conference as the Constitutions of such agencies provide.
- 1.11. *Quorum* -- A majority of voting members shall form a quorum.

## Chapter 2

### By Laws Of The Methodist Women's Fellowship of The Methodist Church In Australia

#### The Conference Level

- 2.1. Organization -- The Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship shall elect such officers, coordinators of programs and committees as it shall determine.
- 2.2. Officers : The officers shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 2.3. Coordinators of Programs.: The Coordinators of Programs shall be:  
The Coordinator of spiritual life; the Coordinator of Christian Social Concerns and Outreach; and the Coordinator of Christian Education.
- 2.4. Committees: There shall be the following committees:
  - a.) The Executive Committee shall comprise:
    - i) The Officers, the Coordinators of Programs, the Chairman of the Nominations Committee, the President of each Local MWF or her representative who shall be an officer of the MWF.
    - ii) Ex-officio members shall be:  
Two counsellors, one of whom may be the immediate past president of Conference MWF and the Conference's Superintendent/ President/ Bishop
    - iii) Duties and responsibilities:  
  
The Executive Committee shall execute the decisions of the Conference MWF and coordinate the work of the various programs coordinators. It may incur expenses necessary for the performance of its function, subject to such budgetary controls as may be specified by the Conference. Its annual expense shall be budgeted for.
  - b.) The Finance Committee shall comprise:
    - i) The Treasurer as Chairman, the President, the Vice President, the Secretary and the Coordinator of Programs.
    - ii) The Committee shall be responsible for the budget:
- 2.5. Income: The Conference MWF shall receive from each Local MWF:
  - i) an annual contribution, which amount shall be decided by the Conference MWF at the General Meeting for promotional and administrative work and for the World Federation of Methodist Women. This may be augmented by special gifts from Local MWFs and individuals;

- ii) contributions towards approved Conference projects;
  - iii) special gifts and offerings.
- 2.6. Obligations: An annual contribution of the Conference MWF to cover:-
- i) affiliation dues to the World Federation of Methodist Women,
  - ii) support of projects,
  - iii) travel expenses to the Executive Committee Meeting and to meetings and conferences as the Conference MWF representatives,
  - iv) program materials,
  - v) contingent fund,
  - vi) the Conference Church Support.
- 2.7. All funds belonging to the Conference MWF shall be deposited in a banking institution in the name of the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship.
- 2.8. All accounts shall be audited before the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.9. a.) The Program Committee shall comprise: The Vice President as chairman, the President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Coordinators of Programs.
- b.) Functions: The Committee shall plan and recommend the Conference MWF such programs as will contribute to the fulfillment of the purpose, including the programs of the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.10. i) The Nominations Committee shall be elected from the floor of the Annual General Meeting to serve a term of two years and shall comprise a chairman or two or more elected members. The Superintendent/ President/ Bishop shall be an ex-officio member of the Nominations Committee.
- ii) The duties of the Nominations Committee shall be to present nominations of suitable persons to serve on the committees of the Conference MWF with consent of the nominees having been previously secured and without prejudice to the right to make any other nominations from the floor. Only women who are members of the Methodist Church are eligible to hold office.
- 2.11. Elections -- Elections should be by acclamation or by ballot, a majority vote being sufficient for election.
- 2.12. Officers, Coordinators of Programs, Counsellors and any other officer as provided for in the By-Laws, shall be elected for a term of two years and shall not hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. They shall take office at the close of the General Meeting.
- 2.13. Vacancies occurring during the term shall be filled by the Executive Committee.
- 2.14. Delegates to national and international meetings shall be elected at the General Meeting or by the Executive Committee.

2.15. Duties of Officers and Coordinators of Programs:

- a) The President:
  - i) shall preside at the General Meeting and all meetings of the Executive Committee,
  - ii) shall be responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the MWF,
  - iii) shall be an ex-officio member on all committees, except the Nominations Committee,
  - iv) shall be a member of the Conference and any Boards as the Discipline may provide,
  - v) shall give an annual report to the General Meeting of the Conference MWF, and the Annual Conference.
  - vi) shall promote the total program of the Conference.
  
- b) The Vice President:
  - i) shall assume all duties of the President in her absence or at her request,
  - ii) shall be responsible for organizing leadership training.
  - iii) shall promote the work of the World Federation of Methodist Women.
  
- c) The Secretary:
  - i) shall give notice of the General Meeting and all meetings of the Executive Committee,
  - ii) shall keep a permanent and accurate record of proceedings,
  - iii) shall present all recommendations at the General Meeting of Conference MWF.
  - iv) shall notify all officers and coordinators of programs of their appointments,
  - v) shall notify the Conference Secretary of the newly elected officers,
  - vi) shall be responsible for all correspondence of the Executive Committee.
  
- d) The Treasurer:
  - i) shall receive and remit monies for all budgeted items and any other items approved by the Executive Committee and shall keep a record of the same,
  - ii) shall sign all cheques,
  - iii) shall present an audited statement of accounts at General Meeting of Conference MWF.
  
- e) The Co-ordinator of Spiritual life:
  - i) shall encourage women in the deepening of their spiritual life,

- ii) shall promote cooperation of Methodist women with other Christian Women's organizations,
  - iii) shall serve as a member of the Conference Board of Evangelism and promote its program,
  - iv) shall give an annual report.
- f) The Co-ordinator of Christian Social Concerns and Outreach:
- i) shall encourage service to church and community,
  - ii) shall serve on the Conference Boards of Christian Social Concerns and Mission and promote their programs,
  - iii) shall recommend appropriate study courses,
  - iv) shall give an annual report.
- g) The Co-ordinator of Christian Education:
- i) shall recommend suitable materials on Christian Home and Family, Youth and Children's work,
  - ii) shall be a member of the Conference Board of Christian Education and promote its program,
  - iii) shall give an annual report.

## Chapter 3

### Constitution of The Methodist Women's Fellowship of The Methodist Church In Australia

#### Local Level

- 3.1. Name -- In every local church there shall be a Methodist Women's Fellowship auxiliary to the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship auxiliary to the Conference/ District MWF..
- 3.2. Purpose: The purpose shall be:
  - a) to help women grow in the knowledge and experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ,
  - b) to challenge them to respond to God's redemptive fellowship to make Christ known throughout the world,
  - c) to develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the Church.
- 3.3. Functions -- In order to carry out the purpose, the MWF shall:
  - a) Unite women of the church in service,
  - b) Join hand with the World Federation of Methodist Women "To Know Christ And Make Him Known",
  - c) Cooperate with other Christian women's groups in spreading the spirit of ecumenicity,
  - d) Provide opportunities and resources to meet the needs and interests of women,
  - e) Enlist workers and secure funds for the fulfillment of their responsibilities in the mission of the Church at home and overseas.
- 3.4. Authority -- The Local Methodist Women's Fellowship shall have authority to promote its work in accordance with the program and purpose of the Conference Methodist Women's Fellowship.
- 3.5. Membership:
  - a) Member - Any women who is a member of a church may become a member of the MWF if she accepts its purpose and is willing to participate in the work of the MWF through prayer, service and gifts.
  - b) Only women who are members of the Methodist Church shall be eligible to hold the office of President and Vice President, and to represent the MWF.
  - c) The Pastor and his wife, if she is not holding office, and two counsellors shall be ex-officio members.
- 3.6. Meetings:
  - a) The Local MWF shall hold one or more meetings during the month for the deepening of spiritual life, for business and for study.

- b) There shall be an Annual General Meeting for the election of officers and Coordinators of areas of work. Notice of such meeting should be given fourteen days in advance. Reports shall be received from officers and Coordinators.
  - c) The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may call an Extraordinary General Meeting.
  - d) Voting members at the Annual General Meeting shall be full members of the MWF.
- 3.7. Funds -- All funds secured by the Local MWF belongs to this organization and shall be disbursed only in accordance with its Constitution and by its order.
- 3.8. Budget: Income -- The Local MWF shall receive:
- a) Pledges and contribution from its member for the promotion of its work,
  - b) Special Gifts and Offerings.
- 3.9. Obligations: An annual contribution to the Conference MWF to cover:
- a) contributions to Conference/ District Methodist Women's Fellowships and World Federation of Methodist Women,
  - b) support of projects,
  - c) travel expenses for elected delegates,
  - d) program materials,
  - e) contingent fund,
  - f) Local Church Support.
- 3.10. All funds belonging to the Local MWF shall be deposited in a banking institution in the name of the Local MWF. All accounts shall be audited before the Annual General Meeting.
- 3.11. Amendments -- Proposed amendments for this Constitution shall be made in writing and received by the Secretary of the Conference MWF thirty days before its Annual General Meeting. Additional amendments may be made by a majority vote at the Annual Conference Meeting.
- 3.12. Local Conference Relations -- The President of the Local MWF shall be a member of the Local Church Executive Committee and the Local Conference. Designated Officers shall represent the MWF on the various committees of the church as the Constitution provides.
- 3.13. Quorum -- A majority of members form a quorum.

## Chapter 4

### By-laws of The Methodist Women's Fellowship of The Methodist Church in Australia

#### Local Level

##### **Section I Methodist Women's Fellowship**

- 4.1. Organization --- The Local Methodist Women's Fellowship shall elect such officers and committees as it shall determine.
- (A) Officers :  
President, Vice President; Secretary; and Treasurer.
- (B) Coordinators of Areas of Work:  
The Coordinator of Spiritual Life; the Coordinator of Christian Social Concerns and Outreach; the Coordinator of Christian Education; and the Coordinator of Local Church Activities.
- (C) Committees :
1. Executive Committee:  
The Officers, the Coordinators of Areas of Work, the Nominations Committee Chairman, The Pastor and the Pastor's wife, if she is not holding office, and the Counsellors, one of whom shall be the immediate past president, shall be ex-officio members.
  2. The Nominations Committee:  
The Chairman, three or more members to be elected from the floor, and the Pastor or the Pastor's wife shall be ex-officio member.
  3. The Finance Committee:  
The Treasurer as Chairman, the President, Vice President, the Secretary and the Coordinators of programs.
- 4.2. Elections:  
  
Election shall be by acclamation or by ballot with a majority vote sufficient for election.
- 4.3. The Nominations Committee shall present nominations for all officers with the consent of the nominees having been previously secured. There shall be opportunities for nominations from the floor.
- 4.4. Officers, Coordinators of Programs and the Counsellors shall be elected for

a term of two years, and shall not hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. They shall take office at the close of the Annual General Meeting.

- 4.5. Vacancies occurring during the term shall be filled by the Executive Committee.
- 4.6. (i) The Nominations Committee shall be elected from the floor of the General Meeting and shall comprise a Chairman and three elected members. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member.
- (ii) The Nominations Committee shall present nominations for all offices with the consent of the nominees having been previously secured. There shall be the right to nominate from the floor.
- 4.7. Duties of Officers:
- (A) The President :
- (i) shall preside at General and Executive Committee meetings.
  - (ii) shall be responsible for close co-operation between the MWF and the local church.
  - (iii) shall be an ex-officio member on all Committees except the Nominations Committee.
  - (iv) shall be a member of the Local Church Executive Committee.
  - (v) shall give a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local MWF, the District MWF and at the Local Conference of the Local Church.
  - (vi) shall be a member of the Executive Committee of the District MWF.
  - (vii) shall promote the total program of the Women's Fellowship.
- (B) The Vice President:
- (i) shall assume all duties of the President in her absence or at her request.
  - (ii) shall be responsible for the program of the MWF.
  - (iii) shall be responsible for the cultivation of membership in the MWF.
  - (iv) shall be responsible for leadership training.
  - (v) shall interpret and promote the work of the World federation of Methodist Women.
- (C) The Secretary:
- (i) shall give notice of the Annual General Meeting and all meetings of the Executive Committee.
  - (ii) shall keep a permanent and accurate record of all proceedings.
  - (iii) shall present all recommendations of the Executive Committee to the Annual General meeting of the Local MWF.
  - (iv) shall notify the Local Church Executive Committee of the newly elected officers.
  - (v) shall notify all Officers and Coordinators of their appointments.

- (vi) shall be responsible for all correspondence.
  - (vii) shall keep a membership roll.
- (D) The Treasurer:
- (i) shall receive and remit monies for all budgeted items and any other items approved by the Executive Committee and shall keep a record of same.
  - (ii) shall be responsible for the cultivation of stewardship.
  - (iii) shall present a report at the monthly meetings.
  - (iv) shall present an audited statement of accounts at the Annual General Meeting.
  - (v) shall be a member of the Church Finance Committee.
- (E) The Coordinator of Spiritual Life:
- (i) shall encourage women in the deepening of their spiritual life.
  - (ii) shall serve as a member of the Church Committee on Evangelism and promote its program.
  - (iii) shall promote cooperation of women Methodist with other Christian women's organizations.
- (F) The Coordinator of Christian Social Concerns and Outreach :
- (i) shall promote study of the Methodist Social Creed.
  - (ii) shall direct the work of the Fellowship in service to church and community.
  - (iii) shall serve as a member of the Church Committee on Christian Social Concerns and Missions and promote their programs.
  - (iv) shall promote appropriate study courses.
- (G) The Coordinator of Christian Education :
- (i) shall recommend suitable material on Christian Home and Family, and on Youth and Children's Work.
  - (ii) shall be a member of the Church Committee on Christian Education and promote its program.
- (H) The Coordinator of Local Church Activities :
- (i) shall cooperate with the local church in all its activities.
  - (ii) shall cooperate with the church in the care and maintenance of church property.

## SCHEDULE II

### The Constitution of the Methodist Men of the Methodist Church in Australia

**Article 1.** **Name :** The name of the organization for Methodist men shall be : The Local Fellowship of Methodist Men of the \_\_\_\_\_ Church.

**Article 2.** **Purpose :** The purpose of The Local Fellowship of Methodist Men shall be :

- meet
- (a) To lead men to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
  - (b) To provide Christian fellowship for all male members of the congregation.
  - (c) To inspire, inform and equip men for their ministry both within the congregation and out in the world.
  - (d) To create an awareness in view of their opportunity to witness in their daily work; to help them prepare to the moral and spiritual problems and dilemmas of personal and vocational life; to encourage men to bear witness to the Christian way in business dealings and in social relationship.
  - (e) To assist in fulfilling the total mission of The Methodist Church.
  - (f) To organize Methodist Men into *koinonia* and study groups.
  - (g) To inspire men to be good stewards of the abundant gifts which God bestows upon them.
  - (h) To encourage men to develop skills of prayer and personal evangelism.
  - (i) To teach men the history, doctrines, aims and programs of The Methodist Church.
  - (j) To enlist and develop men as leaders of children and youth both within the congregation and the community.
  - (k) To involve men in service projects in the congregation, the community and the world.
  - (l) To cooperate with other units of The Methodist Church and of the Methodist Men in carrying out district, conference and church-wide projects.
  - (m) To relate men to inter-church and ecumenical activities.

**Article 3.** **Membership :** Male members of the local congregation of The Methodist Church, nineteen years of age and over, shall be eligible for membership of the local fellowship.

The goal of the local fellowship is to provide opportunity for a deepened spiritual commitment on the part of every eligible member through participation in some phase of the program of the local church.

**Article 4. Charter :** Every organized local fellowship shall be related to the Annual Conference Board of Laity through the securing of a Methodist Men Charter.

**Article 5. Officers :** The officers of the local fellowship shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer.

**Article 6. Committees :** Committees of the local fellowship are as follows :

- (a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers, members of the program committee and the finance committee, and the chairman of the functional committees. The Lay Leader, the minister, the adult director are by virtue of their office ex-officio members. It is authorized to administer the affairs of the organization in the interim of annual meetings of the local fellowship; to be responsible for the long range planning and implementation of the objectives of Methodist Men; and in cooperation with Program Committee to plan the annual program.
- (b) The Program Committee shall consist of a chairman, the adult director and five members appointed by the officers. Each of the five members shall in turn interpret the concerns of the commissions to the Program Committee as it plans the annual program for the local fellowship. In addition to Executive Committee sessions, the Program Committee shall meet annually to survey the needs of men which can be met by the program of the local fellowship; to review the program resources which are provided by the section on Methodist Men, and to plan a program for recommendation to the Executive Committee. When the Executive Committee has approved the program, the Program Committee shall present it to the local fellowship at its annual meeting for adoption and implementation.
- (c) The Finance Committee shall be composed of the treasurer, the president and two members appointed by the officers. The committee shall prepare the annual budget and develop methods for implementing it.
- (d) Other functional committees may be created as the Executive Committee deems it advisable.

**Article 7. Meetings and Programs :** The local fellowship shall be responsible for meetings and programs as follows :

- (a) There shall be an annual meeting of the local fellowship for election of officers and the presentation by the Program Committee of the proposed program for the ensuing year and for report. This annual meeting should correspond to the uniform period for annual elections of officers. To accomplish

the basic purpose outlined in Article 2, frequent meetings may be scheduled for the entire membership. The development of groups for prayer, study, fellowship and service is encouraged. The nature and number of the small groups will be established at the annual meeting upon recommendation by the Executive Committee and the Program Committee. The local fellowship should enlist men to assist in the annual every-member visitation.

- (b) The program of the local fellowship should include :
  - (i) personal evangelism which provides opportunity for men to study the nature of Christian witnessing and participate in orderly and spontaneous visitation of the men of the congregation and the community.
  - (ii) Emphasis upon the stewardship of all areas of life, with the encouragement of men to give a tithe of their income for the work of The Methodist Church in local congregations, in conference and the world-wide outreach of the denomination. The local fellowship should enlist men to assist in the annual every-member visitation.
  - (iii) The observance of Laymen's Sunday.

**Article 8. Finances :** The method of financing the local fellowship shall be determined by the Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

**Article 9. Bylaws :** The local fellowship may adopt bylaws consistent with the Constitution. The bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the local fellowship by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided notice of the proposed amendment has been given at a previous meeting of the local Fellowship of Methodist Men.

**Article 10. Amendments :** This Constitution may be amended only by the Conference of The Methodist Church.

### SCHEDULE III

## The Constitution of The Methodist Youth Fellowship

*Article 1.*     **Name :** This organization shall be known as the METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA (hereinafter referred to as the M. Y. F. ).

*Article 2.*     **Objects :** The Objectives of the M. Y. F. shall be one to help all young people to :

- (a) achieve a vital relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord;
- (b) grow in Christian character;
- (c) render effective and joyous service to the Church and to the world;
- (d) win others into the Kingdom of God.

*Article 3.*     **Motto :** The motto of the M. Y. F. shall be : “CHRIST ABOVE ALL”.

*Article 4.*     **Emblem :**  
CHRIST ABOVE ALL

*Article 5.*     **Benediction:** To signify the warmth, fellowship and concern for one another, we share in the M. Y. F. Benediction :

“The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord makes His face to shine upon you;  
And be gracious unto you;  
The Lord Lift up His countenance upon you;  
And give you peace. AMEN.”

(Numbers 6:24-26)

## **SCHEDULE IV**

### **Rules & Regulations** **of The Methodist Seniors Fellowship**

#### **1. NAME & ADDRESS**

- 1.1. The name shall be known as the Methodist Seniors Fellowship .....Church.
- 1.2. The address shall be : .....
- 1.3. The Methodist Seniors Fellowship ..... Church shall be under the auspices of the ..... and shall work in accordance with the Book of Discipline of the Methodist Church in Australia.

#### **2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1. To share our love, care, concern and bring about a sense of belonging with one another.
- 2.2. To organize activities for the mental, physical and spiritual benefit and well-being of the members.
- 2.3. To tap resources from the wealth of knowledge and experience of senior citizens.
- 2.4. To harness their working experience and utilize their services whenever needed for mutual benefit.
- 2.5. To hold talks, discussions, etc. beneficial to members.
- 2.6. To organize tours of interest.

#### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1. Membership shall be by registration.
- 3.2. All members of the local church who have attained the age of 50 at the time of registration shall be eligible to become members.

#### **4. WORKING COMMITTEE**

- 4.1. The Methodist Seniors Fellowship shall elect at least seven members to form the Management Committee. The Management Committee then elect among themselves the following office-bearers to form the Working Committee.
  - (a) The Chairman
  - (b) The Hon. Secretary
  - (c) The Hon. Treasurer
  - (d) The Program Organizer

The Pastor of the church shall be the adviser.

## **5. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### **5.1. Chairman :**

- a) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Working Committee and at General And Annual General Meeting of the Methodist Seniors Fellowship ..... Church and shall perform the office duties incumbent to his/her office.
- b) In the absence of the Chairman, the Committee members present at the meeting shall elect a protem chairman for the meeting.
- c) The Chairman or in his absence, the duly elected representative shall represent the Methodist Seniors Fellowship at the Local Church Executive Committee and the Local Conference.

### **5.2. Hon. Secretary :**

- a) The Hon. Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings, general and committee meetings and attend to all business as decided by the Working Committee or General Meetings.

### **5.3. Hon. Treasurer :**

- a) The Hon. Treasurer shall take charge of all financial matters.

## **6. MEETINGS**

- 6.1. The Working Committee shall meet at least once in two months.
- 6.2. The Annual General Meeting shall be held on a date and time as decided by the Working Committee after the closing of the fiscal year (January to December) but not later than March of each year.
- 6.3. Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to registered members at least two weeks before the meeting.
- 6.4. The agenda for the Annual General Meeting shall include :
  - a) Opening prayers and devotions;
  - b) To accept minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting;
  - c) To receive report/s from the Hon. Secretary and the Program Organizer;
  - d) To make changes, if any, to the Rules & Regulations;
  - e) To elect members to serve on the Working Committee;
  - f) To discuss any matter for which notice has been given in writing to the Hon. Secretary two weeks before the meeting;
  - g) To discuss any urgent matter presented by the Working Committee.

## **7. ELECTION & VOTING PROCEDURE**

### **7.1. Election**

The Office bearers and members of the Working Committee shall be elected by secret ballot or by hands at the meeting directed by a majority vote, and shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting.

- 7.2. Voting Members  
The voting members are the registered members.

## **8. QUORUM**

- 8.1. Working Committee  
The members present at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- 8.2. General Meeting & Annual General Meeting  
The members present at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

## **9. AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES**

- 9.1. Any registered member may suggest a change to the Rules, provided that such a proposed amendment has been made in writing and submitted to the Hon. Secretary two weeks before the Annual General Meeting.