

**Southern Missouri District Council  
OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD**

**Bylaws**  
*Revised April, 2016*

**528 West Battlefield Road  
Springfield, MO 65807**

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# Bylaws

OF THE

## Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God

### DECLARATION

#### WE BELIEVE:

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

That these believers, saved and called out of the world, constitute the body or church of Jesus Christ built and established upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself, being the chief cornerstone;

That the members of the body, the church (ecclesia) of Jesus Christ, are enjoined to assemble themselves for worship, fellowship, counsel and instruction in the Word of God, the work of the ministry and for the exercise of those spiritual gifts and offices provided for New Testament church order;

That it is evident the early apostolic churches came together in fellowship as a representative body of saved, Spirit-filled believers who ordained and sent out evangelists and missionaries, and under the supervision of the Holy Spirit set over the church Pastors and teachers;

That the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God is to be an agency of God for evangelizing the world, to be a corporate body in which man may worship God, to be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son, and to be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world;

That the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, which enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs, adding a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God, and enabling them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ; and

That we are a cooperative fellowship of Pentecostal, Spirit-baptized saints from local Pentecostal assemblies of like precious faith throughout the Southern Missouri District of The General Council of The Assemblies of God, hereinafter called the "District Council," whose purpose is neither to usurp authority over the various local assemblies, nor to deprive them of their scriptural and local rights and privileges; but to recognize and promote scriptural methods and order for worship, unity, fellowship, work and business for God; and to disapprove unscriptural methods, doctrines, and conduct,

endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13).

## **ARTICLE I. NAME**

### **Section I. Name**

The corporate name shall be “The Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God”, which term is reserved for legal use when referring to the legal entity. It shall be incorporated as a non-profit religious organization under the laws of the State of Missouri. The term “District Council” shall be used both as an abbreviated form of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, or to refer to sessions of the corporation. In these Bylaws, the term “District Council” shall refer to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, unless otherwise noted. The term “Assemblies of God” shall be used to refer to the entire constituency.

### **Section 2. Headquarters**

The headquarters of the District Council shall be at Springfield, Missouri.

## **ARTICLE II. NATURE**

### **Section 1. In General**

The Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God shall be an integral part of, and in full cooperative fellowship with, The General Council of the Assemblies of God. The principles and purposes of the District Council shall be in keeping with the broad principles of Christian fellowship and cooperation as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, which Constitution and Bylaws shall hereby become a part of the Bylaws of the District.

### **Section 2. Territory**

The territory in which the District Council shall operate shall be that part of the State of Missouri which lies south of the Missouri River.

## **ARTICLE III. PREROGATIVES**

The prerogatives of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God shall be:

- A.** To encourage and promote the evangelization of the world;
- B.** To encourage and promote the worship of God;

- C. To encourage and promote the edification of believers;
- D. To respond to human need with ministries of compassion;
- E. To provide a basis of fellowship among Christians of like precious faith;
- F. To establish and maintain such departments and institutions as may be necessary for the propagation of the Gospel and the work of this Pentecostal fellowship;
- G. To approve all scriptural teachings, methods, and conduct; and to disapprove unscriptural teachings, methods, and conduct; and
- H. To have the right to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of such property, real or chattel, as may be needed for the prosecution of its work.

## **ARTICLE IV. PRINCIPLES FOR FELLOWSHIP**

The Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God shall represent, as nearly as possible in detail, the body of Christ as described in the New Testament Scriptures. It shall recognize the principles inherent in the body as also inherent in this Fellowship, particularly the principles of unity, cooperation, and equality. It recognizes that these principles will enable it to achieve its priority reason-for-being as an agency of God for evangelizing the world, as a corporate body in which man may worship God, as a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son, and as a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world.

## **ARTICLE V. STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS**

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all Biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

### **1. The Scriptures Inspired**

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

### **2. The One True God**

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of

relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

## THE ADORABLE GODHEAD

**a. Terms Defined.** The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from “gods many and lords many.” We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

**b. Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead.** Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

**c. Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.** Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11, 21; Zechariah 14:9).

**d. Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead.** The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30,32,37; 8:17,18).

**e. The Title, Lord Jesus Christ.** The appellation Lord Jesus Christ, is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

**f. The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us.** The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is “Immanuel,” God with us. (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

**g. The Title, Son of God.** Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of

Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

**h. Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ.** Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2: 22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

**i. Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord.** The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

**j. Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son.** Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead (except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2: 8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

### **3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ**

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- a.** His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
- b.** His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- c.** His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d.** His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- e.** His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- f.** His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

#### 4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

#### 5. The Salvation of Man

Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**a. Conditions to Salvation.** Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

**b. The Evidences of Salvation.** The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

#### 6. The Ordinances of the Church

**a. Baptism in Water.** The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

**b. Holy Communion.** The Lord’s Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He come!”

#### 7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).



## **8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

## **9. Sanctification**

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

## **10. The Church and Its Mission**

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23). Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).
- d. To be a people who demonstrate God’s love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).

**b.** Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).

**c.** Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

**d.** Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times in order to demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Galatians 5:22-26).

## **11. The Ministry**

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16), and (4) demonstrating God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

## **12. Divine Healing**

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).

## **13. The Blessed Hope**

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

## **14. The Millennial Reign of Christ**

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

## **15. The Final Judgment**

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

## **16. The New Heavens and the New Earth**

“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21, 22).

## **ARTICLE VI. PARLIAMETARY ORDER**

The work of the District Council shall be governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship.

## **ARTICLE VII. RELATIONSHIPS**

The District Council shall prosecute its activities through its general offices.

## **ARTICLE VIII. MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1. Southern Missouri District**

The membership of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God shall consist of (1) all credentialed ministers holding a current fellowship certificate with the General Council and in good standing with the District Council, and (2) all General Council and District Council affiliated assemblies located in the District.

### **Section 2. Voting Constituency**

The voting constituency at a District Council shall be composed of (1) all credentialed ministers holding a current fellowship certificate with the General Council and in good standing with the District Council who are present and registered, and (2) such lay delegates present and registered as may be chosen by General Council and District Council affiliated assemblies located within the District, each assembly being entitled to one such lay delegate.

### **Section 3. Jurisdiction**

The District Council shall have jurisdiction over those ministers and assemblies that are members of the District.

# ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

## Section 1. Regular Sessions

The District Council shall meet annually. The time and place of such meetings shall be determined by the District Presbytery, and announcement of the same shall be communicated by letter to all ministers and assemblies in the District not later than one month prior to the time of meeting.

## Section 2. Special Sessions

Special sessions of the District Council may be called by the District Presbytery when, in their opinion, there is due occasion. The time, place, and purpose of all special meetings shall be communicated by letter from the District Superintendent to all credentialed ministers and to all assemblies not later than one month prior to the time of meeting.

## Section 3. Right of Initiative

Special sessions shall be called by the District Presbytery upon receipt of a petition setting forth the special reasons for requesting same and signed by not less than 10% of all credentialed ministers who are members of the District. The notice requirements specified in the preceding section shall apply.

## Section 4. Voting Constituency

**A. Qualifying Voters.** The voting constituency at a District Council shall consist of those persons described in ARTICLE VII, Section 2, of these Bylaws.

**B. Executive Presbytery.** The courtesy of the floor shall be extended to all members of the Executive Presbytery of the General Council.

**C. Visiting Ministers.** The courtesy of the floor may be extended to visiting ministers from other districts of the Assemblies of God.

**D. Absentee Voting.** Absentee or proxy voting shall not be allowed.

## Section 5. Order of Business

The regular order of business for the annual District Council meetings shall be as follows:

**A.** Report of the District Superintendent;

**B.** Discussion of reports;

**C.** Report of committees;

D. Unfinished business;

E. Election of officers;

F. New business; and

G. Adjournment.

All business sessions of the District Council shall commence with prayer.

## **Section 6. Quorum**

All qualified members, registered and voting at a duly announced meeting of the District Council or of the Sectional Council shall constitute a quorum.

# **ARTICLE X. OFFICERS**

## **Section 1. Executive Officers**

**A. Executive Officers Described.** The executive officers of the District Council shall consist of the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, and the District Executive Secretary.

**B. Terms of the Executive Officers.** The terms of the District Superintendent, Assistant District Superintendent, and the District Executive Secretary shall be for four years or until their successors are elected. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the District Superintendent or the District Executive Secretary with less than one year of an unexpired term remaining, the term to which the successor shall be elected shall include the remainder of the unexpired term plus the four years of a full term of office. Their terms shall begin the first day of the second month following the election. If the office of the District Superintendent or the District Executive Secretary is vacant at the time of the election, the term of office shall begin immediately.

**C. Qualifications of the Executive Officers.** All executive officers of the District Council shall be chosen from among the ordained membership of the District Council. They shall be individuals of mature experience and proven ability, having been a member of the District for at least one year.

**D. Nomination and Election of the Executive Officers.** Nomination and election of the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, and the District Executive Secretary shall be conducted by secret ballot. On the nominating ballot, at least three votes shall be necessary for nomination. A two-thirds majority of ballots cast shall be required for an election. Should a two-thirds majority vote be achieved on the nominating ballot, an election shall be declared. If there is no election declared after the second elective ballot, the three candidates receiving the largest number of votes on the second elective ballot shall be voted upon on the third and succeeding ballots.

## **E. Duties of the Executive Officers.**

**(1) Duties of District Superintendent.** The duties and responsibilities of the District Superintendent shall be as follows:

- (a)** To preside at all sessions of the District Council;
- (b)** To act as chairman of the Executive Presbytery and the District Presbytery, and to be an ex-officio member of all committees of the District Council;
- (c)** To serve as supervisor of all ministries and departments related to the District, and supervise the work of the District office;
- (d)** To be responsible for the financial stewardship and oversight of the District Council as follows: to be responsible for the supervision of budget control; to receive and record all offerings and monies to be used for the work of the District Council and to keep the same on deposit in a bank designated by the District Presbytery; to pay out and spend the money of the District Council only at the specific instruction and authorization of the District Presbytery;
- (e)** To employ any additional staff that may be deemed necessary subject to ratification of the District Presbytery;
- (f)** To emphasize, coordinate, and promote evangelism in all its phases throughout the fellowship;
- (g)** To give advice and assistance to the ministers and assemblies of the District when needed;
- (h)** To act in a supervisory capacity during the interim between Council sessions in such matters as pertain to the relation of ministers and local assemblies to the District;
- (i)** To promote the welfare of ministers and assemblies, and to stimulate the growth of the assemblies, and of the District as a whole;
- (j)** To administer discipline where needed, upon the authorization and advice of the District Presbytery; and
- (k)** To submit a report to every annual District Council meeting of all important business transacted by the District Presbytery throughout the year, of personal activities through the year, and a comprehensive statement of conditions existing throughout the District.

**(2) Duties of Assistant District Superintendent.** The duties and responsibilities of the Assistant District Superintendent shall be as follows:

- (a)** To assist the District Superintendent;

**(b)** In the event the District Superintendent becomes disabled (as determined by the District Presbytery), to perform any or all of the functions of the District Superintendent's office for so long as the disability continues (the Assistant District Superintendent shall not be required to discontinue the pastorate while assuming the duties of District Superintendent);

**(c)** In the event of a mid-term vacancy in the office of District Superintendent, to perform any or all of the functions of the District Superintendent until a District Superintendent is elected;

**(d)** To perform any other functions under the supervision of the District Superintendent or such as may be directed by the District Council or by the District Presbytery; and

**(e)** To be an ex-officio member of all committees of the District Council.

**(3) Duties of District Executive Secretary.** The duties and responsibilities of the District Executive Secretary shall be as follows:

**(a)** To keep a true record of the proceedings of all meetings of the District Council, of the District Presbytery, and of the Executive Presbytery;

**(b)** On behalf of the District and in conjunction with the District Superintendent, to issue and receive transfers of accredited Assemblies of God ministers leaving or entering the District;

**(c)** To keep an accurate and up-to-date record of all assemblies and ministers of the District;

**(d)** To be the custodian of the seal of the District Council and of all records and important documents thereof;

**(e)** To perform any other functions under the supervision of the District Superintendent or such as may be directed by the District Council or the District Presbytery;

**(f)** To be an ex-officio member of all committees of the District Council; and

**(g)** To serve as Executive Director of the District Missions Department.

## **Section 2. Executive Presbyters**

**A. Terms of Executive Presbyters.** Four Executive Presbyters shall be elected by the District Council in session. Their terms of office shall be for two years, or until their successors are elected, and shall begin upon the adjournment of the District Council in which they are elected.

**B. Geographical Representation.** Four Executive Presbyters shall be elected from among the Pastors of the geographical areas within the District: one from the Northwest Area comprising the sections of Kansas City, Sedalia, and Clinton; and one from the Northeast Area comprising the sections of Sullivan, St. Louis, and Park Hills; one from the Southeast Area comprising the sections of Cape Girardeau,

Kennett, and Van Buren; and one from the Southwest Area comprising the sections of West Plains, Springfield North, Springfield South, and Joplin.

**C. Procedure of Election.** The procedure for choosing and electing the Executive Presbyters shall be as Follows:

(1) Each section shall choose a nominee for Executive Presbyter at their sectional council. This nominee shall be an ordained minister who has served as a senior Pastor of a church within the section for at least one year immediately preceding nomination. Nominations shall be by secret ballot. At least three votes shall be necessary to become a candidate for nomination, and a two-thirds majority vote shall be required.

(2) These nominees (three from the Northwest Area, three from the Northeast Area, three from the Southeast Area, and four from the Southwest Area) shall be presented to the District Council in session, and from the nominees, one Pastor shall be chosen to serve each area: one as Executive Presbyter of the Northwest Area, one as Executive Presbyter of the Northeast Area, one as Executive Presbyter of the Southeast Area, and one as Executive Presbyter of the Southwest Area.

(3) Election of Executive Presbyters shall be by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority of ballots cast shall be required for an election. If there is no election declared after the second elective ballot, the two candidates receiving the largest number of votes on the second elective ballot shall be voted upon the third and succeeding ballots.

**D. Duties of Executive Presbyters.** The duties and responsibilities of Executive Presbyters shall be as follows:

(1) To assist Sectional Presbyters at their request, in church or ministerial problems, serving as a liaison for and with the District Superintendent;

(2) To assist the Sectional Presbyter with District churches concerning church discipline, removal of the Pastor, purchase or sale of property, and any other legal matters; and

(3) To respond to the call of the District Superintendent or District Presbytery for meetings.

(4) Executive Presbyters shall be ineligible to serve as Sectional Presbyters during their tenure.

### **Section 3. Executive Presbytery**

**A. Executive Presbytery Described.** The Executive Presbytery shall consist of the Executive Officers and four Executive Presbyters as described in Sections 1 and 2 of this Article, together with such other officers as may be authorized in the future.

**B. Duties of Executive Presbytery.** The Executive Presbytery shall be considered the Executive Committee of the District Presbytery and shall have the following duties and responsibilities:



(1) To exercise those rights which shall be delegated to and invested in them by the District Presbytery, and to have the oversight of the activities and departments of the District Council during the interim between District Council and District Presbytery sessions;

(2) To initiate and implement policies and programs in keeping with the District Council Bylaws; and

(3) To oversee District finances as provided in these Bylaws or as authorized by the District Presbytery.

#### **Section 4. District Presbytery**

**A. District Presbytery Described.** The District Presbytery shall consist of the Executive Presbytery of the District Council as described in Section 3 of this Article, Presbyters chosen from the sections of the District Council in accordance with the provisions of Article XI, Section 6, and Presbyters chosen from ethnic fellowships as described in Article XII, Section 2. The District Presbytery shall constitute the Board of Directors of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, Incorporated. The Board of Directors is hereby authorized to act for the District Council between sessions thereof in accordance with and subject to the provisions and limitations stated in the Bylaws.

**B. Duties of District Presbytery.** The District Presbytery shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

(1) To act for and on behalf of the District in all matters that affect its interests while the District Council is not in session (its acts and decisions shall be authoritative and final unless revised by the District Council);

(2) To report its acts on behalf of the District to each regular District Council session through its chairman, the District Superintendent;

(3) To call its own meetings and conduct the same, and carry on the business of the District according to its own discretion and best judgment;

(4) To serve as the Credentials Committee of the District Council; and

(5) To constitute the investigating ministerial relations committee of the District Council, and as such, to function in all matters involving ministerial discipline.

#### **Section 5. General Presbyters**

The Southern Missouri District Council shall be represented on the General Council General Presbytery by three members: the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent (provided that the Assistant Superintendent is a Pastor), and the District Executive Secretary. If the Assistant Superintendent is not a Pastor, then an ordained Pastor who meets the qualifications of an executive officer shall be elected to serve as a General Presbyter by the District Council in session. In such case,

nomination shall be conducted by secret ballot and a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for election.

In addition, the Southern Missouri District Council shall participate in the additional representation allowed by The General Council Bylaws, Article II, Section 2, paragraph d (10), by electing two qualified ministers--one ordained minister under 40 years of age at the time of election active in ministry and one ordained female minister active in ministry. Such election shall take place as scheduled by the Executive Presbytery of the General Council. Election shall be conducted by secret ballot and a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for election. Such General Presbyters shall serve a one-year term.

## **Section 6. General Council Executive Presbyter Nominees**

The Southern Missouri District Council shall, at its annual meeting prior to the appropriate General Council session, nominate two ministers from its district, one of whom is not an elected full-time district official, to be presented to the General Council as nominees from its area. These nominees shall be presented to and be balloted upon by the General Council in session. A two-thirds majority vote shall be required to elect said nominees.

In addition, the Southern Missouri District Council shall participate in presenting nominees to the General Presbytery for consideration as additional representatives on the Executive Presbytery of the General Council as described in the *Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God*, ARTICLE II, Section 2, Subsection c (2) (c). Thus, the Southern Missouri District Council shall, at its annual meeting prior to the appropriate General Council session, elect one ordained minister under 40 years of age, one ordained female minister, and one ordained African-American minister to serve as nominees for such additional representation. Election shall take place by secret ballot and a two-thirds majority vote shall be required to elect said nominees. The names of the three elected nominees shall be submitted to the General Presbytery.

## **Section 7. Vacancies**

Any vacancy that may occur in any office in the District, with the exception of the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyters, may be filled for the unexpired term by appointment by the District Superintendent and ratification by the District Presbytery. Should a mid-term vacancy occur in the office of the District Executive Secretary during a regular or specially called District Council, the office shall be filled by election by the District Council in session. Should a mid-term vacancy occur in the office of the District Superintendent for any cause other than disability (see Article IX, Section 1.E. (2)(b)), election shall be held at a specially called District Council, unless the vacancy should occur at, or within two months prior to, the regular District Council, in which case election shall be held at the regular District Council. Notice requirements set forth in Article VIII, Section 3, shall apply. Any vacancy that occurs in the office of a Sectional Presbyter shall be filled in the manner prescribed in Bylaws Article XI, Section 9.

## Section 8. Corporate Action

The District Superintendent and the District Executive Secretary shall also serve as President and Secretary of the Corporation respectively in business matters requiring such officers. They shall be the officers to sign, execute and deliver, in the name of and on behalf of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, all instruments that have been authorized by the Board of Directors (or, as provided below, by the District Council or Executive Presbytery) affecting the properties of the District Council. Both the District Superintendent (President) and the District Executive Secretary (Secretary) shall be required to sign all official and legal documents of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God. In the event one of the officers is not available, the Assistant Superintendent shall be authorized as an additional signatory.

**A. Real Property.** Real property for use by the entire District, such as District Headquarters offices or campgrounds shall be bought, taken or otherwise acquired, sold, transferred, mortgaged, assigned or conveyed, or otherwise alienated upon authorization as given by a two-thirds affirmative vote by the District Council in regular or in special sessions called for that purpose. Written notice of the time, place, and purpose of any such meeting shall be published not later than one month prior thereto by letter from the District Superintendent to all credentialed ministers.

**B. District Council Affiliated Assemblies Properties.** Purchase or sale of District Council affiliated assemblies properties whose titles are held by the District shall be authorized and directed by the District Executive Presbytery. No real property of the assembly shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, encumbered, or otherwise disposed of, without the same having first been approved by the Executive Board and General Board and then recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of those in attendance and voting at the annual or special business meeting of the assembly called for the consideration of the proposal. The Pastor shall submit these recommendations to the Executive Board, who shall evaluate and act upon them appropriately. The District Superintendent and the Sectional Presbyter shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized.

**C. Donated Funds.** The Executive Presbytery shall be authorized, and hereby is authorized, to hold in trust such funds as may be entrusted to the District Council, or to dispose of the same as may be designated by donors.

## Section 9. Limited Authority

The District Superintendent (President) and the District Executive Secretary (Secretary) shall be authorized to act for the directors of the corporation in the interim between meetings of the Board of Directors to buy, sell, transfer, mortgage, lease, assign or convey property, with the provision that such actions shall be limited to matters involving sums not to exceed \$20,000 for any single transaction. When authorized by action of the Board of Directors, such limitation shall not apply.

## Section 10. Electronic Meetings

Members of the District Presbytery, the Executive Presbytery, the Executive Boards of District Council affiliated assemblies, the General Boards of District Council affiliated assemblies, and any committees designated by the District Presbytery may participate and act at any meeting through the use of a conference telephone or other communications device by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate simultaneously with each other. Participation in such meeting shall constitute attendance and presence in person at the meeting of the member or members so participating. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the District Presbytery, the Executive Presbytery, the Executive Boards of District Council affiliated assemblies, or the General Boards of District Council affiliated assemblies may be taken without a meeting if all members consent thereto in writing, and the writings are filed with the minutes of proceedings.

# ARTICLE XI. COMMITTEES

## Section 1. District Committees

**A. Standing Committees.** Standing committees shall be appointed as necessity may require. They shall serve for the designated time or until their purpose is accomplished.

**B. Credentials Committee.** The District Presbytery shall constitute the District Credentials Committee.

**C. Roster Committee.** A roster committee shall be appointed by the District Superintendent prior to each meeting of the District Council. This committee shall be expected to open the roster on the day of the convening of the District Council. It shall be entrusted with the responsibility of examining credentials of all ministers and delegates. All credentialed ministers shall identify themselves by fellowship cards of the current year; delegates from assemblies shall obtain letters from their church secretary or Pastor certifying their appointment by the assembly to represent it in the District Council. Suitable badges shall be issued by the committee indicating the classification of credentialed ministers and the status of delegates from assemblies and visitors.

**D. Resolutions Committee.** A resolutions committee shall be appointed by the District Superintendent.

**(1) Procedure for Presentation of Resolutions.** All resolutions for presentation to the District Council, except emergency measures, shall be presented to the District Executive Secretary's office at least 60 days prior to a District Council session. The resolutions committee shall prepare the resolutions in printed form and mail them to the District Council ministers and churches 30 days prior to the District Council, with the understanding that this does not apply to business growing out of District Presbytery meetings just prior to the District Council. Resolutions of an emergency nature may be considered by the Council upon the consent of a two-thirds vote of the District Council in session.

**(2) Sponsorship Policy.** All resolutions presented to the resolutions committee shall be signed by the author or sponsor. When a resolution is presented for the consideration of the District Council in session the author, sponsor, or a spokesperson shall be given opportunity to be the first speaker on behalf of the resolution.

**(3) Appropriateness of Resolution.** The resolutions committee shall, by a two-thirds vote, determine the appropriateness of all proposed resolutions, and may reject resolutions based on the following criteria: (a) possible conflict with the corporate charter or District Bylaws; (b) absurdity in substance.

**(4) Right of Sponsor.** If the resolutions committee determines that a resolution is inappropriate, it shall so advise the author and shall apprise the author of their right to present the proposed resolution to the house for determination as to appropriateness.

**(5) Format of Presentation.** The resolutions committee shall (a) put the resolutions in proper form, and (b) eliminate duplication where similar resolutions relating to a specific subject are offered.

**E. Other Committees.** Other committees may be appointed as deemed necessary.

## **Section 2. Sectional Committees**

The sectional officers shall appoint such sectional committees as they deem necessary, among which may be a committee to audit the financial records of the section.

# **ARTICLE XII. SECTIONS**

## **Section 1. Boundaries**

The District Council shall, from time to time, divide the District into well-defined sections, which sections shall constitute units of fellowship and administration. The convenience and wishes of assemblies and Pastors within these areas shall be considered by the District Council in arranging or rearranging the boundary lines of these sections, but the decision of the District Council in the matter shall be final.

The Southern Missouri District shall be divided into thirteen sections, defined by name and area as follows.

**A. KANSAS CITY SECTION** shall be composed of Cass, Jackson, Johnson, and Lafayette Counties.

**B. SEDALIA SECTION** shall be composed of Camden, Cole, Cooper, Miller, Moniteau, Morgan, Pettis, and Saline Counties.

**C. SULLIVAN SECTION** shall be composed of Crawford, Dent, Franklin, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps, and Pulaski Counties.

**D. ST. LOUIS SECTION** shall be composed of St. Louis and St. Louis County.

**E. PARK HILLS SECTION** shall be composed of Jefferson, Madison, St. Genevieve, St. Francois, and Washington Counties, and that part of Iron County lying north of Highway 143 and west of Highway 49.

**F. CAPE GIRARDEAU SECTION** shall be composed of Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Perry, and Scott Counties, that part of Butler County lying on or north of Highway 60, that part of Stoddard County lying on or north of Highway 60, that part of New Madrid County lying east and north of a point drawn from the southeast corner of Stoddard County to the nearest point on the Mississippi River, and that part of Wayne County lying east of Highway 67.

**G. KENNETT SECTION** shall be composed of Dunklin, Mississippi, and Pemscot Counties, that part of Butler County lying south of Highway 60 and east of Highway 67, that part of New Madrid County lying west and south of a point drawn from the southeast corner of Stoddard County to the nearest point on the Mississippi River, and that part of Stoddard County lying south of Highway 60.

**H. VAN BUREN SECTION** shall be composed of Carter, Reynolds, Ripley, and Shannon Counties, that part of Butler lying west of Highway 67, that part of Iron County lying south of Highway 143 and east of Highway 49, and that part of Wayne County lying on and west of Highway 67.

**I. WEST PLAINS SECTION** shall be composed of Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Texas, and Wright Counties.

**J. SPRINGFIELD-NORTH SECTION** shall be composed of Dallas, Laclede, and Polk Counties, and that portion of Greene County lying north of Sunshine Street in Springfield.

**K. SPRINGFIELD-SOUTH SECTION** shall be composed of Christian, Stone, Taney, and Webster Counties, and that part of Greene County lying South of Sunshine Street in Springfield.

**L. JOPLIN SECTION** shall be composed of Barry, Barton, Dade, Jasper, Lawrence, McDonald, and Newton Counties.

**M. CLINTON SECTION** shall be composed of Bates, Benton, Cedar, Henry, Hickory, St. Clair, and Vernon Counties.

## **Section 2. Membership**

The membership of each section shall consist of (1) all credentialed ministers within the section holding a current fellowship certificate with the General Council and in good standing with the District, and (2) all General Council and District Council affiliated assemblies located in the section. An individual can be

a member of only one section. If a member resides in a section other than the one in which the employing church is located, membership shall be in the section in which the church is located. Ministers who are not employees of churches shall be members of the section in which they reside.

### **Section 3. Prerogatives**

Each section shall conduct ministry to advance the cause of the Assemblies of God within its section according to its own desires and discretion, consistent with the provisions of the District Bylaws.

### **Section 4. Sectional Councils**

Each Sectional Council shall meet annually within the two months prior to the annual meeting of District Council. Resolutions to be presented at Sectional Council are for that Section's use only and cannot be added to the next District Council in session unless they fulfill the procedures stated in Bylaws Article XI, Section 1.D.

### **Section 5. Voting Constituency**

The voting constituency at a Sectional Council shall be composed of (1) all credentialed ministers of the section who are present at such Sectional Council, and (2) such lay delegates as may be chosen by General Council and District Council affiliated assemblies located within the Section and who are present at such Sectional Council, each assembly being entitled to one such lay delegate. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be allowed.

### **Section 6. Sectional Officers**

#### **A. Sectional Presbyter**

**(1) Sectional Presbyter Described.** Each Sectional Council shall nominate one of its ordained ministers to serve as Presbyter of its section. Each nominee for the office of Sectional Presbyter shall be presented to the District Council for election by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority vote shall be required for election. Presbyters so elected shall become members of the District Presbytery.

**(2) Duties of Sectional Presbyter.** The Sectional Presbyter shall serve and represent the District Council in their respective sections as follows:

- (a)** To seek to promote and assist in the upbuilding of the assemblies therein;
- (b)** Under the District Superintendent, to supervise assemblies and ministers in such matters as pertain to their relation to the District;
- (c)** To attempt to resolve all difficulties that arise;

(d) To consult with the District Superintendent and the area Executive Presbyter regarding district churches in matters concerning church discipline, removal of the Pastor, purchase or sale of property, and any other legal matters;

(e) To call a meeting of the General Board of each district council affiliated assembly in the assigned section on at least an annual basis and to serve as chairman of the General Board;

(f) To use all available resources for the evangelizing of the Section;

(g) To report their sectional activities to the District Superintendent; and

(h) To attend and participate, if at all possible, in at least one camp each year in order to know from personal knowledge how the camps operate.

## **B. Assistant Presbyter**

**(1) Assistant Sectional Presbyter Described.** At the annual meeting of the Section, another ordained minister shall be elected to serve as Assistant Presbyter. This individual shall be eligible for election as Presbyter by the District Council in the event the nominee of the section fails to be elected.

**(2) Duties of Assistant Sectional Presbyter.** The duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Sectional Presbyter shall be as follows:

(a) To assist the Sectional Presbyter; and

(b) To perform other duties as prescribed in the Bylaws.

## **C. Secretary-Treasurer**

**(1) Sectional Secretary-Treasurer Described.** A Sectional Secretary-Treasurer shall also be elected by each Section at its annual business meeting from among its ordained and licensed ministers.

**(2) Duties of Sectional Secretary-Treasurer.** The duties and responsibilities of the Sectional Secretary-Treasurer shall be as follows:

(a) To keep a true record of all business in the section in a uniform book as prescribed by the Executive Committee of the District;

(b) To receive and record all offerings and monies for the section and deposit the same in a bank where the officer resides;



(c) To disburse all monies by check as authorized by the Sectional Executive Committee or the ministers of the section in their monthly meeting held in conjunction with the monthly fellowship meeting;

(d) To maintain a unified system of bookkeeping as directed by the District Executive Committee;

(e) To keep secretarial and financial records for the section; and

(f) To perform other duties prescribed in the Bylaws.

**D. Eligibility.** The Presbyter and Assistant Presbyter shall be selected from among ordained ministers who Pastor churches within the section. No minister shall be eligible for Sectional Presbyter or Assistant Presbyter until after he or she has served as Pastor of a church in the section for at least one year immediately preceding the time of taking office. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be selected from among the ordained ministers in the section. If there are no ordained ministers who qualify, then the Secretary-Treasurer may be selected from among licensed ministers who qualify. No minister shall be eligible for Secretary-Treasurer until after he or she has been a member of the section for at least one year immediately preceding the time of taking office.

**E. Other Officers.** Other officers of the Section shall consist of the departmental representatives.

## **Section 7. Executive Committee**

The Presbyter, Assistant Presbyter, and the Secretary-Treasurer of each section shall constitute the Executive Committee (executive officers) of that section and as such, shall have those rights and duties which shall be vested in them by the other members of that section.

## **Section 8. Elections**

**A. Executive Officers.** All elections shall be by secret ballot. On the nominating ballot, at least three votes shall be necessary for nomination. A two-thirds majority of all votes cast shall be required for the election of the Sectional Presbyter nominee, Assistant Presbyter, and Secretary-Treasurer.

**B. Other Sectional Officers.** Other sectional officers shall be elected as follows: The Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the District Departmental Director shall appoint the sectional officers of the respective departments and submit the names of said appointees to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot with the nominees listed. A blank line shall be left for other nominations to be written in. The Sectional Council must ratify said appointees by secret ballot by a majority vote.

**C. District Executive Presbyter Nominee.** Each section shall choose a nominee for District Executive Presbyter as provided for in the Bylaws, Article IX, Section 2.C.

## **Section 9. Vacancies**

**A. Executive Officers.** In the event a vacancy occurs in the office of a Sectional Presbyter, the Assistant Sectional Presbyter shall succeed to the office to fill the unexpired term, if such succession is first ratified by the District Presbytery. Should the Assistant Sectional Presbyter choose not to fill the vacant office, a Sectional Council shall be called, in consultation with the District Superintendent, to elect a Presbyter. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Assistant Sectional Presbyter or Sectional Secretary-Treasurer, a Sectional Council shall be called, in consultation with the District Superintendent, to fill the office for the unexpired term.

**B. Other Sectional Officers.** Vacancies occurring in any other sectional office shall be filled through appointment by the Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the District Departmental Director.

## **Section 10. Terms of Office**

The terms of office for Sectional Presbyters shall be for two years, or until their successors are elected, and shall begin upon the adjournment of the District Council in which they are elected. All other sectional officers shall be elected for a two-year term and shall begin immediately upon election.

## **Section 11. Timing of Elections**

### **A. Elections in Even Years**

The Sullivan, St. Louis, Park Hills, Cape Girardeau, Kennett, and Van Buren Sections shall nominate a Presbyter to be presented at District Council for election and elect an Assistant Presbyter and Secretary-Treasurer in even years. In uneven years, they shall elect all other sectional leaders.

### **B. Elections in Uneven Years**

The Kansas City, Sedalia, Clinton, Joplin, Springfield North, Springfield South and West Plains Sections shall nominate a Presbyter to be presented at District Council for election and elect an Assistant Presbyter and Secretary-Treasurer in uneven years. In the even years, they shall elect all other sectional leaders.

# **ARTICLE XIII. ETHNIC FELLOWSHIPS**

## **Section 1. Definition of an Ethnic Fellowship**

Ethnic groups may be authorized by the District Presbytery as ethnic fellowships for the purpose of exchanging information and facilitating evangelism.

## **Section 2. Representation on District Presbytery**

**A.** Ethnic fellowships which are comprised of at least seven churches may be represented on the District Presbytery by an Ethnic Presbyter.

**B.** Qualified ethnic fellowships shall choose an Ethnic Presbyter nominee at a specially called caucus to be held prior to the annual District Council in even years. Place and time of the caucus shall be announced by the District Superintendent, and the caucus shall be presided over by an Executive Officer of the District. The nominees shall be presented to the District Council for election. Nominees shall meet all the requirements for a Sectional Presbyter as specified in these Bylaws. Ethnic Presbyters shall serve on the District Presbytery along with the Presbyters chosen from the geographical sections of the District.

**C.** The terms of office for Ethnic Presbyters shall be two years.

**D.** Should a vacancy occur in the office of Ethnic Presbyter, the office shall be filled for the unexpired term by appointment by the District Superintendent and ratification by the District Presbytery.

**E.** Ethnic Presbyters shall function under the direction of the District Superintendent and shall serve as liaisons between the District Superintendent and the ethnic fellowships which they represent.

## **Section 3. Relationship to Geographical Sections**

Although functioning as a fellowship, the ethnic churches and ministers shall remain affiliated with their respective geographical sections.

# **ARTICLE XIV. LOCAL ASSEMBLIES**

## **Section 1. Affiliation**

A group of believers desiring to affiliate with the Assemblies of God may submit a request to the District Superintendent.

## **Section 2. General Council Affiliated Assemblies**

**A. General Council Affiliated Assemblies Described.** A General Council affiliated assembly is one which has applied for and has received a Certificate of Affiliation from The General Council of the Assemblies of God, operating under Article XI, Local Assemblies, of the General Council Constitution. This assembly will have adopted Articles of Incorporation, and a constitution or bylaws compatible with models recommended by the District Council, or district approved governance models that provide for adequate accountability, amenability, and safeguards so that a Pastor and/or governing board cannot directly or indirectly exert dictatorial control over a church. The General Council affiliated assembly is the highest recognition given to affiliated churches. It is recognized to have arrived at a mature status of growth and may govern itself according to the provisions of its constitution and bylaws.

**(1) Nature.** General Council affiliated churches are sovereign, autonomous, self-governing, and self-determining bodies which have, by their sovereign, self-determining action in making

application for and receiving recognition as a General Council church, entered into an agreement with the Fellowship to be amenable to the General Council and District Council in matters of doctrine and practice.

**(2) Organizational Relationship.** The Assemblies of God is a cooperative fellowship between local churches, the District Council, and the General Council. Each General Council affiliated assembly may have representation at General Council and District Council meetings by one lay delegate. He or she shall have full speaking and voting privileges at the Council sessions. Written evidence of delegate appointment must be presented to the roster committee.

**(3) Organizational Assistance.** The services of both the General Council and the District Council are available to assist a General Council affiliated church in dealing with any of its problems, either internal or external, when requested by the Pastor or a majority of the Church Board, or a petition signed by 30 percent of the voting members.

**(4) Preservation of Affiliation.** In the event the termination of affiliation with the General Council of the Assemblies of God is under consideration by an affiliated assembly, the Pastor or board shall invite the District Executive Officers to participate in a specially called business meeting for the express purpose of giving the District Executive Officers the opportunity to present the case for continued General Council affiliation.

**(5) Guidelines for Minimal Membership and Minimal Number of Deacons.**

**(a)** When the membership of a General Council affiliated church falls below twenty active voting members, it shall revert to District Council affiliated status, and shall conduct its business under the provisions of the *Bylaws for the District Council Affiliated Assemblies*, attached to these Bylaws as Addendum 2. When the active membership increases to twenty or more, the Pastor may request that recognition be restored as a General Council affiliated assembly, if other qualifications for such recognition can be met. In cases where there are fewer than twenty voting members, an exception may be granted by the District Presbytery, provided that the church has demonstrated the capacity for self-governance.

**(b)** When the number of qualified persons to serve as deacons shall fall below two, the church shall revert back to District Council affiliated status, and shall conduct its business under the provisions of the *Bylaws for the District Council Affiliated Assemblies*, attached to these Bylaws as Addendum 2. When the Pastor feels the church is able to elect at least three qualified persons as deacons, it may be requested that recognition be restored as a General Council affiliated assembly, if other qualifications for such recognition can be met.

**(6) District Authorization To Appoint a Pastor.** If a General Council affiliated assembly neglects or is unable to elect a Pastor within sixty days after the stated termination date of the previous Pastor, the District shall be authorized to appoint a Pastor to such church who may serve under such appointment for one year.

**(7) District Guidelines for Deacons.** The deacons shall be persons of mature Christian experience and knowledge, be filled with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4, not be entangled in their marriage relations, except when the divorce occurred prior to conversion; or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9); or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15), and meet the requirements as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Acts 6. Deacons shall be at least 23 years old, and shall have been members of the assembly for at least one year. They shall currently support the church with their tithes and offerings, have a cooperative spirit, and regularly attend church services. All Church Board members are chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in a supportive role to the Pastor, according to Acts 6. No credentialed minister shall serve as a deacon in any assembly. No credentialed minister's spouse may serve as a deacon in any assembly in cases where that credentialed minister serves in a leading or supporting pastoral role.

**B. Procedure for General Council Affiliation.** It shall be the responsibility of the District Presbytery to determine when an assembly has reached a state of growth, stability, and maturity qualifying it for affiliation with The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Qualifications shall include a minimum active voting membership of twenty persons and a scripturally qualified board of deacons of at least three members. In cases where there are fewer than twenty voting members, an exception may be granted by the District Presbytery, provided that the church has demonstrated the capacity for self-governance. These steps for affiliation shall be followed.

**(1)** A church desiring affiliation shall make request to the Sectional Presbyter or to office of the District Council. The District Council shall provide an approved application form and procedural instructions.

**(2)** The District Superintendent shall present such request for affiliation to the District Presbytery for approval.

**(3)** The District Superintendent shall arrange for the training of the prospective Board of the assembly.

**(4)** The meeting in which an assembly shall be set in order as a General Council Affiliated Assembly shall be presided over by the District Superintendent or the District Executive Secretary who shall assist the assembly in the adoption of bylaws approved by the District Presbytery.

**(5)** The application for affiliation shall be forwarded to the General Secretary of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Recognition of affiliation shall be regarded as completed upon receipt by the assembly of an official Certificate of Affiliation to be issued by the General Secretary.

**C. Recommended Bylaws for General Council Affiliated Assemblies.** The Southern Missouri District Council recommends that General Council Affiliated Assemblies within the District operate by the *Recommended Bylaws for General Council Affiliated Assemblies*, attached to these Bylaws as Addendum 1.

### **Section 3. District Council Affiliated Assemblies**

**A. District Council Affiliated Assemblies Described.** Provision shall be made for District Council affiliated assemblies which shall be under the supervision of the District Council, in accordance with the provisions of the District Council Bylaws. These assemblies shall be encouraged to proceed to the status of sovereign General Council affiliated assemblies.

**(1) Procedure for District Council Affiliation.** The qualifications for District Council affiliation include maintaining Southern Missouri District standards for membership, accepting supervision by elected District and sectional officials, giving the Executive Officers and Sectional Presbyter the authority to appoint the Pastor and other necessary church officers, and involvement in programs of the Assemblies of God.

**(2) Representation at District Council Sessions.** A District Council affiliated church will have the privilege of sending one representative to serve as its delegate to the District Council sessions.

**B. Bylaws for District Council Affiliated Assemblies.** District Council Affiliated Assemblies within the Southern Missouri District shall operate by the *Bylaws for District Council Affiliated Assemblies*, attached to these Bylaws as Addendum 2.

**C. Legal Liabilities of District Council Affiliated Assemblies.** District Council Affiliated Assemblies shall be required to:

- (1)** Become and remain incorporated with the State of Missouri;
- (2)** Secure and maintain insurance coverage which meets the minimum standards approved by the District Presbytery through the District's authorized provider;
- (3)** Maintain weekly church services;
- (4)** Submit a quarterly report form to the Sectional Presbyter and District; and
- (5)** Maintain an active voting membership roll.

The District Presbytery shall have the prerogative of authorizing any evaluation, supervision, assistance, or other actions necessary to ensure the viability of all District affiliated assemblies and the protection of the District.

### **Section 4. Parent Affiliated Churches**

A Parent Affiliated Church (PAC) is a church which is governed and supervised by a parent church. Parent Affiliated Churches include multi-site campuses of a parent church, churches which function temporarily under the supervision of a parent church, and churches which function permanently under the supervision of a parent church.

The District Presbytery, working through the leadership of the Superintendent, shall be empowered to oversee the formation of Parent Affiliated Church agreements in order to advance the gospel.

Each Parent Affiliated Church partnership shall be governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which shall be drafted and signed by the District Superintendent, the Pastor of the parent church, and (when applicable) a representative of the Parent Affiliated Church.

## **Section 5. Church Planting and Development**

**A. Mission Statement.** The Southern Missouri District is committed to the work of the expansion of Christ's Kingdom through the planting of new churches and through the continual revitalization and development of existing churches within its borders. The vision for church planting and development shall be continually communicated and encouraged by District leadership.

**B. Policies and procedures** for the planting of new churches and the revitalization and development of existing churches shall be formulated and implemented by the office of the District Superintendent.

**C. Funds for the planting of new churches and the revitalization and development of existing churches** shall come from the support of partnering churches within the District, from the proceeds of the sale of District Council affiliated church assets, and from other sources made available at the direction of the District Presbytery. All funds invested by the District into the planting of new churches and the revitalization of existing churches shall be approved by the District Presbytery.

**D. Locations and schedules for the planting of new churches** shall be determined by the District Superintendent after due evaluation, investigation, and consultation regarding the community under consideration.

## **Section 6. Incorporation of Churches**

All General Council and District Council affiliated assemblies shall be incorporated using the non-profit method of incorporation. In a spirit of cooperation, any church wishing assistance in incorporation should contact the District Officers for help and advice in arranging for or maintaining incorporation.

## **Section 7. Relocation of Assemblies**

Relocation of General Council Assemblies shall take place at the discretion of the assembly, provided such church shall not be located within one mile of an existing affiliated church. In the event of unusual circumstances warranting profit for the Kingdom of God, the one-mile limit may be waived. In such cases, the relocating church shall secure approval from the District Superintendent, the Sectional Executive Committee, and a representative from the affected churches, who shall act with due consideration for the existing church, and in keeping with ministerial courtesy and ethics.

## **Section 8. General Directives**

**A.** Each assembly is requested to keep an up-to-date membership roll and report this number annually to the District office.

**B.** The standard of individual membership in each assembly in the District Council provides that only persons possessing the following qualifications shall be admitted to membership.

(1) The applicant shall have a testimony to the experience of the new birth.

(2) The applicant shall have been baptized in water by immersion.

(3) The applicant shall be expected to manifest a lifestyle portraying a positive Christian testimony which is free from worldliness (1 John 2:15).

(4) The applicant must abstain from drinking intoxicating liquors of any kind and the use of tobacco in any form.

(5) The applicant must refrain from the sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21.

(6) The applicant must agree and adhere to Scriptural basis for divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15-28).

(7) The applicant must indicate willingness to contribute regularly to the financial support of the church of which they are to become a member.

(8) The applicant must evidence a belief in all the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith including the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in other tongues as the initial physical evidence, divine healing, and the pre-millennial second coming of Jesus Christ.

**C.** An assembly shall not call a minister as Pastor or evangelist who is not a member in good standing with the General Council, or of one of its District Councils, or one whose character and doctrines are not endorsed by the District Presbytery. It is recommended that churches call their Pastors for indefinite terms. When a Pastor is elected for a specific term, only a majority vote shall be required for re-election.

**D.** If a vote on an incumbent Pastor is less than the number required for re-election, the Pastor shall have the right of appeal to the District if questions arise regarding the propriety of the election process. The District Superintendent shall determine the validity of the appeal, and if valid, call for a second business meeting of the congregation, to be held within two weeks of the election in question. The membership roll shall be examined and all duly qualified voting members shall be notified of the time and place of the meeting. At such meeting, a second and official vote shall be taken on the Pastor under the supervision of a District or sectional official. The results of this vote shall be considered final.



**E.** When a pastorate becomes vacant, the Presbyter and the District Superintendent should be advised immediately. It is recommended that when a pastorate is filled that any applicants being considered should be notified within ten days.

**F.** As soon as possible after a new Pastor's first service in the local church, it is recommended that the local church and the Pastor arrange a commissioning service, which the Superintendent shall be called to officiate. In the event the Superintendent is not available to conduct the service, a substitute shall be recommended.

**G.** When a member moves to a new community, either the member or the Pastor of the church now being attended shall write a request to the former church for a transfer of membership. The Pastor and Church Board should then transfer such member with any notation of status of position in the church from which membership is being transferred.

**H.** The Southern Missouri District Council believes in missions and the method of supporting missionaries recommended by the General Council. Therefore, we urge all assemblies to receive regular monthly missions offerings for the support of Assemblies of God missions.

**I.** Should irreconcilable differences arise between the Pastor and other members of the Church Board or members of the church body, destroying unity and the successful ministry of the local assembly, intervention from the District may be requested by the Pastor, a majority of the Church Board members, or a petition signed by not less than 30% of the voting members. Upon such invitation, an investigating committee appointed by the District Superintendent from among the Executive Presbytery and including the Sectional Presbyter shall investigate such differences and, upon a two-thirds majority vote of the committee, declare the church under District supervision. The term "District supervision" means that the investigating committee has the authority to (1) suspend the Constitution and/or Bylaws of the church, (2) direct the Pastor to resign, (3) suspend the board invested with the authority to manage the affairs of the church, (4) remove individual members from the board of the church, (5) re-classify the church as a District Council affiliated church, or (6) appoint a temporary Church Board of directors invested with the authority to manage both the secular and ecclesiastical affairs of the church until such strife will cease. If the Pastor is also the Sectional Presbyter, then the Assistant Sectional Presbyter shall be a member of the investigating committee in the Pastor's place. When district officers receive such requests for intervention, it is recommended they first verify that scriptural principles of reconciliation, such as those found in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19, have been reasonably attempted by the requesting party in situations involving interpersonal conflict.

**J.** Special business meetings of the assembly may be called by the Pastor, or by a majority of the Church Board, or by a petition signed by not less than 30% of the active voting members of the assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services and financially supported this assembly with their tithes for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted. Petitions pertaining to the business affairs of the church shall be submitted to the Pastor or the secretary of the Church Board. A petition pertaining to the status of the Pastor shall be directed to the District Superintendent who shall arrange for a special business meeting of the assembly. No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any twelve month

period. Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of each special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting, or by mail. In the case of notification by mail, the date of mailing shall be at least five days in advance of the date of the meeting. No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting of the assembly.

## **Section 9. Property**

The District Council disapproves of the private ownership of church properties if such property was secured by, or paid for, or otherwise supported by funds that were solicited for God's work.

**A.** All property purchased by or for a new church plant and all property of District Council affiliated assemblies shall be deeded to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God. Upon being approved as a General Council affiliated assembly, the title may be transferred to the church.

**B.** In the event that any General Council affiliated assembly or District Council affiliated assembly located within the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God shall be divided over doctrinal or any other issues, or shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God, all property of the assembly shall remain with those members whatever their number, desiring continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adhering to its Statement of Fundamental Truths. The determination of which group of members desires continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adheres to its Statement of Fundamental Truths shall be arbitrated by the District Presbytery of the Southern Missouri District Council, and its decision shall be final and binding. If all of the members of the local assembly shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God for doctrinal or any other reason, then all of the property of such assembly shall revert to the Southern Missouri District Council and shall be used by the District as an Assemblies of God Church if possible, and if not possible, the District may sell the property and apply the proceeds in any manner consistent with its stated purposes.

## **Section 10. Discipline of Assemblies**

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

## **Section 11. Right of Appeal**

All assemblies and ministers shall have the right of appeal to the District Superintendent from any decision made by a Sectional Presbyter.

## **Section 12. Assemblies of God Total Giving Participation**

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

# **ARTICLE XV. MINISTRY**

## **Section 1. Ministry Described**

Christ's gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, Pastors, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11), exhorters, administrators, leaders, and helpers (Romans 12:7,8).

In terms of maturity of ministry, three classifications of ministry are recognized—the ordained minister, the licensed minister, and the certified minister.

All ministers holding current ministerial credentials are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church in accordance with applicable federal or state laws.

## **Section 2. Basic Qualifications**

The following qualifications pertain to all applicants for ministerial recognition.

**A. Salvation.** Testimony to having experienced the new birth (John 3:5).

**B. Baptism in the Holy Spirit.** Testimony to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable the individual to fulfill the fourfold mission of the church (Bylaws Article V, Section 10).

**C. Evidence of Call.** Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidenced by a personal conviction, confirmed by the work of the Spirit and the testimony of fellow ministers.

**D. Christian Character.** A blameless Christian life and a good report of those who are without (Titus 1:7; I Timothy 3:7).

**E. Doctrinal Position.** A thorough understanding of and agreement with our doctrinal position as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.

**F. Assemblies of God Polity.** A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices and purposes of the Fellowship through a study of the General Council Constitution and Bylaws and the District Council Bylaws.

**G. Voluntary cooperation and commitment to the Fellowship.** An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older mature Christians and those in positions of authority. By voluntary it is meant that, upon learning the principles, doctrines, and practices of the Assemblies of God, and by seeing the

benefits to be derived from being associated with such an organization, persons of their own free choice decide to become members, thus subscribing to all that for which the organization stands. For the minister, by cooperation, it is meant, to the best of one's ability, complying with all decisions setting for the defining duties and responsibilities incumbent upon members of the organization. It includes active participation and respect for the will of the majority expressed through constitutional processes. Hence, for the minister, voluntary cooperation means that when the minister decides to become a cooperating member of the Assemblies of God, this cooperation and participation thereby becomes obligatory and not optional.

**H. Basic Educational Requirements.** Any level of formal academic achievement (diploma or degree) shall not be a requirement for credentials; however, credential applicants shall meet the following criteria:

(1) All applicants are required to be interviewed by the District Credentials Committee and, in preparation for the interview, pass a standard exam approved by the General Presbytery whereby they demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Assemblies of God doctrines, and ministerial practices; and either

(2) Successfully complete equivalent training to that indicated in paragraph (3) below, preferably, in an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school; or in a seminary, college, Bible college, or school approved by the district credentials committee consistent with criteria established by the General Council Credentials Committee; or

(3) Successfully complete courses, prescribed by the General Presbytery, offered in correspondence through the Global University of the Assemblies of God, or pass the final examinations in the prescribed courses; or

(4) Be recommended by a district credentials committee as qualifying for credentials through self-study and ministerial experience. Such candidates shall have a proven and fruitful ministry of substantial duration. Requests from a district for such a candidate shall be presented to the General Council Credentials Committee and may be granted on a case by case basis.

**I. Mandatory Screening.** All applicants for ministerial credentials shall be screened through a designated screening agency established by the Executive Presbytery. Said screening shall be done by the District Council prior to the submission of the application to the office of the General Secretary.

**J. Marriage Status.** The Southern Missouri District Council disapproves of any married persons holding ministerial credentials if either marriage partner has a former spouse living, unless the divorce happened prior to salvation; or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9); or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1Corinthians 7:10-15), except as hereinafter provided.

**K. Annulments and Marriage Dissolutions.** The District Presbytery shall make recommendations to the General Council Credentials Committee regarding annulments and marriage dissolutions.

The General Council Credentials Committee shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant's annulment of a former marriage is consistent with the Scriptural position of the Fellowship relating to the granting or holding of ministerial credentials; or, in the case of a divorce or dissolution whether the circumstances would more appropriately be classified as calling for an annulment. The application for annulment must be accompanied by clear and satisfactory evidence of an illegal marriage through deception or fraud. Appeals from the decisions of the Executive Presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.

**L. Eligibility of Women.** The Scriptures plainly teach that divinely called and qualified women may also serve the church in the ministry of the Word (Joel 2:29; Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5). Women who meet the qualifications for ministerial credentials are eligible for whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and have the right to administer the ordinances of the church and are eligible to serve in all levels of church ministry and District leadership.

**M. Ministers from Other Organizations.** If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the District Credentials Committee is under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate on their own merits as to the level of credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

- (1) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition;
- (2) Complete an application for ministerial recognition;
- (3) Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or the Sectional Presbyter for the applicant's area;
- (4) Submit a recommendation from the body with which he or she was formerly affiliated (if such is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry);
- (5) Take the credential examination;
- (6) Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credential bodies;
- (7) Meet with the District Credentials Committee; and
- (8) Be recommended by the District Credentials Committee for the approval of the General Council Credentials Committee.
- (9) All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers with the laying on of hands by the District Presbytery.

(10) Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition will relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization.

**N. Church Membership.** Membership in an Assemblies of God church shall be required of all candidates for credentials, with the Pastor's approval of character of such applicant.

### **Section 3. Specific Qualifications**

**A. Residency Requirements of Applicants.** Applicants for all credentials must be residents of or hold credentials in the district where they make application and appear before its credentials committee.

**B. Local Church Credential.** A local church credential shall be administered by the local church pursuant to basic guidelines adopted by the General Presbytery and such additional guidelines adopted by the District Council. It shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church).

#### **C. Certified Minister**

(1) **General Requirements.** They shall show promise of usefulness in the gospel work. They shall devote full or part time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the district credentials committees, may remain under the supervision of a Pastor or a ministry coach or mentor. They shall show evidence of a divine call and be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry and proclamation of the gospel, except in case of ill health or advanced age.

(2) **Pastoral Requirements.** In the event a certified minister is serving in a position as the Pastor, they shall be expected to advance to license to preach within 2 years of acceptance of the pastorate. This shall not apply to any minister who has reached the age of 65 or older, or whose certificate has been issued on a provisional basis. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the district credentials committee.

(3) **Exception for Provisional Issuance.** A Certificate of Ministry may be issued on a provisional basis to a person who has not met all the credentialing requirements but who is deemed by the District Credentials Committee to be essential to the continuity of a church or a ministry outreach. The reason for such a provisional issuance must be ministry driven, and the justification for its use is terminated when the minister ceases to be involved in the ministry for which it was initially granted unless the minister accepts another qualifying assignment. Other limitations are:

(a) The ministry certificate on a provisional basis will be issued for one year and shall not be renewed more than two times; and

(b) A person who has been granted the Certificate of Ministry on a provisional basis must meet the qualifications for a ministry certificate within a three-year period.

**D. Licensed Minister.** Qualifications for license shall include clear evidence of a divine call, character and preparation suitable for that calling, practical ministry experience, and an evident purpose to devote one's life in service to the proclamation of the gospel.

**E. Ordained Minister.** Qualifications for ordination are outlined in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9). In addition, the candidate must meet the following requirements.

(1) Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.

(2) They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.

(3) No person may be ordained to the ministry until he or she has shown evidence of a divine call and has held a ministry license and has been actively engaged in ministry and proclamation of the gospel for at least two full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.

**(4) Residency Requirements of Applicants.** Applicants must be residents of or hold credentials in the District where they make application and appear before its credentials committee. District Councils are required to refrain from approving any applicant for ordination who may have been licensed in another District, until such licensed minister shall have been a member of the District in which they are seeking ordination at least one year. If the applicant has not been a member of the District where application was made for ordination for two full consecutive years, they must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officary of the District where previously licensed, as well as that of the District of residence.

**(5) Exceptions to Residency Requirements.** In the event that an applicant has qualified and been approved for ordination by the district of their former residence before being publicly ordained, the district where the applicant resides may waive the one-year residency requirement and ordain that minister upon the request or approval of the former district.

(6) In order to maintain active status, ordained ministers shall be engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel except for cases of disability, retirement, or other valid circumstances as determined by the general secretary.

#### **Section 4. Credentialing Process**

The granting of credentials shall be as follows.

**A.** The District Presbytery shall constitute the Credentials Committee of the District Council and, as such, shall examine all applications and applicants for District recognition.

**B.** The District Presbytery shall be empowered to accept all those candidates who conform to requirements constituted herein, and who, in its judgment, are fitted for ordination, license, or certified minister's certificates and to arrange for their formal dedication to such ministry. Those who qualify shall

be recommended to the General Council Credentials Committee for final approval. The appropriate credentials shall be issued to approved applicants.

**C.** Application for ordination, license, or certified minister certificates shall be considered by the District Presbytery only when submitted to the District Executive Secretary on a regular application form no later than six weeks prior to the meeting at which time it is to be considered.

**D.** All credential and renewal certificates shall be issued by the General Council Credentials Committee after the District has approved and recommended such application. All fellowship certificates shall expire on December 31, each year.

**E.** All applications for credentials shall be accompanied by a fee as authorized by the District Presbytery.

## **Section 5. Official List**

**A. Active Ministers.** The official list of all credential holders shall be compiled by the District Credentials Committee. This official list shall be revised annually and shall contain the names of those who are engaged in active ministry and whose credentials have been renewed by the issuance of a Fellowship card for the current year.

**B. Senior Ministers.** Those ministers who shall reach the age of 65 or older shall be given status of recognition as senior ministers. A minister who is active more than half-time in ministry shall be listed as senior-active; a minister who gives one-half or less time to the ministry shall be listed as senior semi-retired; a minister without regular ministry shall be listed as senior-retired.

**C. Credential Resignations.** Ministers who elect to remove themselves from the Fellowship shall submit a letter of resignation to the District Superintendent. If there is no cause for disciplinary action, such resignation shall become effective after having been approved by both the District Council and General Council credentials committees. In all cases of resignation, the minister shall surrender his or her credential and current fellowship card to the District Office, who shall forward the surrendered credential to the General Secretary of the General Council.

## **Section 6. Ministerial relations**

**A. Amenability.** All ministers holding credentials with the District shall be amenable to the District Presbytery in matters of doctrine and conduct. Those ministers who are ordained shall be amenable to both the District and General Council. "Amenability" means that the minister is subject to discipline for (1) rejecting any part of the Statement of Fundamental Truths, (2) endorsing any of the "Doctrines and Practices Disapproved" listed in Article IX of the General Council Bylaws and Article XVI of the District Council Bylaws, or (3) committing any of the "Causes of Disciplinary Action" identified in Article X of the General Council Bylaws and Article XVII of the District Council Bylaws.



**B. Arbitration.** Inasmuch as the scriptures require Christians to take their disputes to the saints and not to the civil courts (1 Corinthians 6:1-8), all disputes that may arise (1) between any minister holding credentials with this District or serving as Pastor of a church located within the District and either the Southern Missouri District Council (including any officer thereof) or the General Council of the Assemblies of God (including any officer thereof), or (2) between any General Council or District Council affiliated church located within this District, and either the Southern Missouri District Council (including any officer thereof) or the General Council of the Assemblies of God (including any officer thereof), shall be resolved by binding arbitration if efforts to mediate or conciliate the dispute have failed. Either party to the dispute may initiate the arbitration process by filing with the other party a written request for arbitration within a reasonable time after the dispute has arisen and efforts to mediate or conciliate have failed. In such a case, the minister and the District (or General Council, as the case may be) shall each name an arbitrator, and the two so selected shall name a third. If a minister has a dispute with both the District and General Council, then the District and General Council shall together agree upon and select one arbitrator. All arbitrators must be ordained Assemblies of God ministers who are not executive officers of the Southern Missouri District. The third arbitrator chosen by the other two shall disclose, before accepting the appointment, any financial or personal interest in the outcome of the arbitration, and any existing or past financial, professional, family, or social relationships which are likely to affect impartiality or which might reasonably create an appearance of partiality or bias. Either of the parties to the arbitration, on the basis of such disclosures, may disqualify such a candidate from serving as the third arbitrator. A third arbitrator who serves without objection from either party has a continuing duty to disclose relationships or interest which may impair impartiality. Either party, regardless of the stage of the arbitration process, may, on the basis of such disclosures, disqualify such a person from further participation.

The arbitrators shall appoint the time and place for the hearing and cause notification to the parties to be served personally or by registered mail not less than five days before the hearing. Appearance at the hearing waives such notice. The arbitrators may adjourn the hearing from time to time as necessary and, on request of a party and for good cause, or upon their own motion, may postpone the hearing to a later date. The arbitrators may hear and determine the controversy upon the evidence produced notwithstanding the failure of a party duly notified to appear. The parties are entitled to be heard, to present evidence material to the controversy, and to cross-examine witnesses appearing at the hearing. The hearing shall be conducted by all the arbitrators, but a majority of them may determine any question and render a final award. If during the course of the hearing, an arbitrator for any reason ceases to act, a replacement shall be made in the same manner in which the person was originally selected. The arbitrators may in their absolute discretion admit as evidence any affidavit or declaration concerning the matters in dispute, a copy thereof having been given at least ten days previously to the party against whom the same is offered, but the person whose evidence is so taken shall be subject to cross-examination by such party. The arbitrators shall have the power to order and direct what they shall deem necessary to be done by either of the parties relating to the matters in dispute. Costs of the arbitration shall be assessed in the discretion of the arbitrators, who may award by and whom they shall be paid. Any submission of a dispute to arbitration shall not be revoked by the death of the minister involved in the dispute, and any award will be binding upon their estate.

The decision of the arbitrators shall be binding on both parties, and both parties submit themselves to the personal jurisdiction of the courts of Missouri, both state and federal, for the entry of a judgment confirming the arbitrators' award.

The arbitration process is not a substitute for the disciplinary process set forth in the Bylaws of the District and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and shall in no way affect the authority of either the District or the General Council of the Assemblies of God to investigate reports of ministerial misconduct, conduct hearings, and administer discipline.

Any matter not provided for herein shall be governed by the provisions of the Uniform Arbitration Act.

If a dispute may result in an award of monetary damages, then use of this arbitration procedure is conditioned on acceptance of the procedure by the liability insurers of both the District and General Council, and the insurers' agreement to honor any arbitration award up to any applicable policy limits.

**C. Affiliation.** All ministers holding credentials shall be expected to affiliate with the District Council within the boundaries in which they reside, and to work in cooperation with the same. When a minister labors in another district they shall be expected to cooperate with the policies of that district. In the case where a minister resides in one district but Pastors a church located in another district, the minister shall be required to be a member of the district in which the church is located.

**Exceptions.** See General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 8b and 9a, for exceptions in District Affiliation or Transfer.

**D. Non-Assemblies of God Ministers.** Inasmuch as unity is a vital principle of the church, the condition of growth and spirit, development and power in the apostolic body, it is essential that we recognize our vital relationship to each other, and that we practice Christian cooperation in all our pastoral, evangelistic, missionary, and local church work and business. Ministers holding credentials with the Assemblies of God shall confer with a District Executive Officer before holding meetings for a non-Assemblies of God church.

## **ARTICLE XVI. DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES DISAPPROVED**

In accordance with its prerogatives, and in conformity with the doctrinal position of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, the Southern Missouri District Council emphasizes and endorses the position taken in Article IX of the General Council Bylaws.

### **Section 1. Unconditional Security**

In view of the Biblical teaching that the security of the believer depends on a living relationship with Christ (John 15:6), in view of the Bible's call to a life of holiness (1 Peter 1:16; Hebrews 12:14), in view of the clear teaching that a man may have his part taken out of the Book of Life (Revelation 22:19), and in view of the fact that one who believes for a while can fall away (Luke 8:13), the District disapproves

of the unconditional security position which holds that it is impossible for a person once saved to be lost.

## **Section 2. Legalism**

**A. Matters of Conscience.** The Assemblies of God strongly affirms that the Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). However, since sincere commitment to holy living sometimes results in sharp differences of opinion among believers on debatable matters of personal conscience, the Assemblies of God disapproves the practice of pressing these debatable matters of personal conscience upon others (Romans 14:1-4).

**B. Adding Conditions to Salvation.** The Assemblies of God strongly affirms that salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8,9). Therefore, the Assemblies of God disapproves any teaching or practice that seems to add conditions to salvation (Galatians 3:1-5).

## **Section 3. Eschatological Errors**

**A. The Restitution of All Things.** The Assemblies of God understands the teaching of Acts 3:21 to limit the restoration to that of which the prophets have spoken, thus denying the universal redemption theory. We are opposed to all forms of universalism (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:10).

**B. Setting a Date for the Lord's Return.** It is unwise to teach that the Lord will come at some specified time, thereby setting a date for His appearing (Mark 13:32,33; Luke 12:37-40; I Thessalonians 5:2). It is also unwise to give out from the platform, or publish, visions of numbers and dates fixing the time of the second coming of the Lord.

**C. Post-Tribulation Rapture.** The Assemblies of God holds to the belief in the imminent coming of the Lord as the blessed hope of the Church; and since the teaching that the Church must go through the Tribulation tends to bring confusion and division among the saints, it is recommended that all our ministers teach the imminent coming of Christ, warning all men to be prepared for that coming, which may occur at any time, and not lull their minds into complacency by any teaching that would cause them to feel that specific Tribulation events must occur before the rapture of the saints.

**D. Amillennialism.** The Assemblies of God disapproves of the amillennial teaching and its attendant erroneous philosophy which denies the fact of a literal 1,000 years' reign of Christ on the earth, and substitutes for it the theory that this Christian or Church dispensation is the spiritual Millennium of which, its proponents say, the Bible writers prophesied.

**E. Credentials Jeopardized If Made an Issue.** The District recommends that ministers who embrace any of the foregoing eschatological errors, refrain from preaching or teaching them. Should they persist in emphasizing these doctrines to the point of making them an issue, their standing in the Fellowship will be seriously affected (Luke 21:34-36; 1 Thessalonians 5:9,10; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10; Revelation 3:10,19,20).

## Section 4. Membership in Secret Orders

Ours is a last-day message in preparation for the coming of the Lord (Matthew 24:14), leaving us no alternative but wholehearted devotion to the cause of spreading the gospel (Luke 9:62), and it is well known that the various secret orders require much valuable time and interest, thus diverting the servant of the Lord out of the way (Ephesians 5:16).

The nature of such organizations demands secrecy (John 18:20; Acts 26:26) reinforced by religious oaths (Matthew 5:34) and strong attachment by binding obligations to persons who are for the most part unregenerate (2 Corinthians 6:14). The spirit, philosophy, and general influence of such secret orders aim at the improvement of the natural man only (1 Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 2:8), thus wrongly channeling by incorrect interpretation important spiritual truths (2 Peter 3:16).

Confidence in these secret orders and their teachings has always tended toward the embracing of a false hope of salvation through good works and improved moral service (Ephesians 2:8,9).

In consideration of the foregoing, all Assemblies of God ministers should refrain from identifying themselves with any of the secret orders, and those who may have identified themselves with such orders are advised to sever their connections therewith (2 Corinthians 6:17). Furthermore, ministers are requested to use their good influence among lay church members to dissuade them from such fraternal affiliations (1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:24-26).

## Section 5. Divorce and Remarriage

### A. Membership.

**(1) Marriage Entanglements Before Conversion.** There are now among Christian people those who became entangled in their marriage relations in their former lives of sin and who do not see how these matters can be adjusted. We recommend that these people be received into the membership of local assemblies and that their marriage complications be left in the hands of the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:17, 20,24).

**(2) Common-law Marriage.** We recommend that in no case shall persons be accepted into membership who are known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony.

**B. Remarriage.** Low standards on marriage and divorce are very hurtful to individuals, to the family, and to the cause of Christ. Therefore, we discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. We positively disapprove of Christians getting divorces for any cause except fornication and adultery (Matthew 19:9). Where these exceptional circumstances exist or when a Christian has been divorced by an unbeliever, we recommend that the question of remarriage be resolved by the believer in the light of God's Word (1 Corinthians 7:17,27,28).

### **C. Local Church Leadership.**

**(1) Standard for Offices of Bishop, or Elder, and Deacon.** Since the New Testament restricts divorced and remarried believers from the church offices of bishop, or elder, and deacon, we recommend that this standard be upheld by all our assemblies (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:12) except when the divorce occurred prior to conversion (2 Corinthians 5:17), or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9), or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15). However, we recommend that all other opportunities for Christian service for which these believers may be qualified be made available to them.

**(2) Prerogative of Local Assemblies.** It is understood that recommendations are not binding, but local assemblies shall maintain the prerogative of setting their own standards in accord with provisions of Article XIII of these Bylaws.

### **D. Performing Marriage Ceremonies**

**(1) Ministerial Guidelines.** We disapprove of any Assemblies of God minister performing a marriage ceremony for anyone who has been divorced and whose former companion is still living, unless the case is included in the exceptional circumstances described in Article XV, Section 5. Any minister of our Fellowship who performs a ceremony for a disapproved marriage (indicated above), unless innocently deceived into doing so, may be dismissed from the Fellowship. An Assemblies of God minister is required to counsel applicants for marriage ceremonies with scriptural guidelines for Christian marriage prior to the performing of the ceremony. The minister may not perform ceremonies for persons who, in the minister's opinion, approach marriage without proper forethought, wisdom, and sobriety.

**(2) Violation of Conscience Not Required.** Remarrying of such persons included in the exceptional circumstances in Article XV, Section 5, B., could violate the conscience of a minister, and if this should be the case, the minister should not be expected to perform such ceremonies.

**E. Ministerial Credentials.** We disapprove of any married minister of the Assemblies of God holding credentials if either minister or spouse has a former companion living unless the divorce happened prior to salvation; or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9); or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15). (See also Article XIV, Section 2, paragraphs J and K).

## **Section 6. Worldliness**

In view of the alarming erosion of national moral standards, we reaffirm our intention of holding up Bible standards against all forms of worldliness. We urge all believers to "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.... For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15,16).

In its teaching regarding worldliness, the Scripture warns against participation in activity which defiles the body or corrupts the mind and spirit, the inordinate love of or preoccupation with pleasures, position, or possessions (which lead to their misuse), manifestation of extreme behavior, unbecoming speech, inappropriate appearance, or any fascination or association which lessens one's affection for spiritual things (Luke 21:34,35; Romans 8:5-8; 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 2:8-10; 4:12; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; Titus 2:12).

## **Section 7. Tithing Abuses**

**A.** According to the Scriptures, tithes should be used for the support of active ministry and for the propagation of the gospel and work of the Lord and not be given to charity or used for other purposes. In tithing, the ministers ought to be examples.

**B.** We recognize the duty of tithing and urge all our people to pay tithes to God. It is recommended that arrangements satisfactory to the Pastor and the church be made by all Pastors and churches, so that the Pastor may receive regular and adequate support. We disapprove however, of the teaching that all tithes necessarily should belong to the Pastor for their support.

## **Section 8. Violation of Ministerial Courtesy**

All discourteous conduct is disapproved, and all ministers are advised against interfering with Pastors in charge of assemblies, whether it be by going in upon their work without consent or by such correspondence with members of the assembly as will hurt the influence of the leader. All correspondence which concerns the whole assembly shall be addressed to the one in charge and not to individual members. Where there is no Pastor, letters concerning the work shall be addressed to the officers of the assembly. Any minister who so offends shall be subject to scriptural discipline.

## **Section 9. Ministry in a Non-Assemblies Church**

Ministers shall not be limited or restrained from entering open doors to preach this Pentecostal message, so long as they retain Assemblies of God doctrine, standards of holiness, proper attitudes, and proper ministerial conduct without compromise.

Inasmuch as unity is a vital principle for growth and spiritual development of the Assemblies of God fellowship, it is essential that we recognize our relationship to each other and that we practice Christian cooperation in all our pastoral, evangelistic, missionary, and local church work.

We recommend therefore that our ministers confer with one or more of the Executive Officers of the District before engaging in ministry in any church group or organization not affiliated with the Assemblies of God so as to ascertain whether such ministry might result in confusion or misunderstandings. A minister who does not have District approval, shall be expected to refrain from conducting services for the church. Ministers who violate this principle shall be subject to discipline.

## **Section 10. An Improper Attitude Toward Those Removed From The Fellowship**

In order to render effective decisions made in the interest of proper discipline and for the protection of our assemblies, all who hold credentials shall refrain from taking any attitude toward offenders that would tend to nullify the solemn verdict of those entrusted with this responsibility. Those who fail to support said verdict shall be subject to reprimand or, if persisted in, appropriate discipline.

## **Section 11. Interdenominational or Ecumenical Relationships**

The General Council of the Assemblies of God encourages ministers or churches to fellowship with other Christians of like precious faith who hold to the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the universality of sin, the substitutionary Atonement, the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and His second coming.

The Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God shall not belong to any interdenominational or ecumenical organization that denies the evangelical beliefs stated in the above paragraph, and urges its ministers and churches to avoid entanglement with such interdenominational or ecumenical organizations except as opportunity may arise to support biblical values in the culture or provide opportunity to bear witness to our evangelical and Pentecostal faith and experience.

# **ARTICLE XVII. DISCIPLINE**

## **Section 1. The Nature and Purposes of Discipline**

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible. The aims of discipline are that God may be honored, that the purity and welfare of the ministry may be maintained, and that those under discipline may be brought to repentance and restoration (Galatians 6:1).

Discipline is to be administered for the restoration of the minister, while fully providing for the protection of the spiritual welfare of our local assemblies. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective and is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy.

## **Section 2. The Relationship Between the District and General Council Credentials Committee**

The Executive Presbytery of the General Council is the Credentials Committee of the General Council of the Assemblies of God (General Council Constitution Article X, Paragraphs d and f). It shall have the final authority in matters of doctrine and the personal conduct of all ministers. District actions related to the termination of credentials or the remedial discipline of rehabilitation are to be in the form of recommendations to the General Council Credentials Committee. All references to the discipline of ministers within this Article of the Bylaws relates solely to certified, licensed, and ordained ministers.

### **Section 3. Causes of Disciplinary Action**

Violations of Assemblies of God principles as stated in these Bylaws may give cause for disciplinary action by the Credentials Committee. Among such causes for action shall be:

- A.** Any moral failure involving sexual misconduct;
- B.** Moral failure involving pornography;
- C.** Any moral or ethical failure other than sexual misconduct;
- D.** General inefficiency in the ministry;
- E.** A failure to represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly;
- F.** A contentious or non-cooperative spirit;
- G.** An assumption of dictatorial authority over an assembly;
- H.** An arbitrary rejection of district counsel;
- I.** A declared open change in doctrinal views;
- J.** Immoral, unethical, or illegal practices related to personal, church, or ministry finances;
- K.** A marriage in violation of our stand on marriage and divorce (General Council Bylaws, Article IX, B, Section 5, paragraphs d and e);
- L.** Violations of ministerial courtesy (General Council Bylaws, Article IX, B, Section 8);
- M.** Ministry without prior approval in a non-Assemblies of God church (General Council Bylaws, Article IX, B, Section 9); and
- N.** An improper attitude toward those dismissed from the Fellowship (General Council Bylaws, Article IX, B, Section 10).

### **Section 4. General Directives**

**A.** Charges against a minister shall be presented in writing to the District Superintendent and shall be signed by at least two members in good standing in the local congregation, or by two fellow ministers. In the event such charges filed against the minister are found to be false, the accusers shall be disciplined at the discretion of the District Presbytery. Grounds for such action shall include those causes listed in Section 3 of this Article.



**B.** Oral charges brought against a minister may be investigated at the discretion of the District Superintendent. Should the District Superintendent feel that sufficient grounds exist, disciplinary action shall be instituted.

**C.** Upon being made aware of the charges of an alleged moral failure of a credentialed minister, the District Superintendent shall contact the minister. If deemed necessary, the Superintendent may appoint an investigating committee from among the members of the District Presbytery to meet with the minister and to determine if formal charges should be filed. Should the Superintendent and the investigating committee feel it wise, the minister may be placed on suspension, requiring the minister's fellowship card be surrendered until the charges are answered successfully, lest disrepute be laid to the ministry.

**D.** All formal charges involving the minister shall be fully stated to that individual in writing. An opportunity shall be given the minister to appear before the Credentialing Committee to answer those charges and to present evidence in defense.

**E.** The District Credentials Committee, by a two-thirds majority vote, may recommend to the General Council Executive Presbytery that a minister be dismissed or approved for the restoration process. If recommendation for dismissal has been made by the District Credentialing Committee and the General Council Executive Presbytery concurs with these findings, the disciplined minister may appeal to the General Council Executive Presbytery within 30 days. Such appeal must follow the guidelines of *General Council Bylaws Article X. Discipline, Section 10*. Failure to appeal within the prescribed time shall result in severance of fellowship.

**F.** It is obvious that the Credentials Committee which has the authority to grant ministerial recognition also has the right to withdraw such approval and to recall such credentials. The Credentials Committee shall have the right to institute action against a minister on the basis of the foregoing as well as on statements contained in the General Council Constitution and Bylaws. The Credentials Committee shall consider charges brought against a minister and shall decide disciplinary action when such is necessary.

**G.** When a Pastor's credentials are withheld or withdrawn by the District Credentials Committee and the General Council Credentials Committee, their term of office as Pastor shall be automatically terminated forthwith.

## **Section 5. District Action**

In the event that a credentialed minister of the Southern Missouri District Council should violate Assemblies of God principles as outlined in Section 3, thus subjecting that individual to disciplinary action, the District Credentials Committee will handle District actions, procedures, and appeals which may result therefrom in accordance with Article IX. Discipline, of the General Council Bylaws.

## Section 6. Trial by Jury

The procedure for trial by jury is described fully in Article IX of the General Council Bylaws.

# ARTICLE XVIII. FINANCES

## Section I. Voluntary Cooperation

The principle of voluntary cooperation upon which the General Council of the Assemblies of God is based involves the following.

**A. Voluntary.** By “voluntary” it is meant that, upon learning the principles, doctrines, and practices of the Assemblies of God, and by seeing the benefits one could derive from being associated with such an organization, a person freely chooses to become a member, thus subscribing to all that for which the organization stands.

**B. Cooperation.** By “cooperation”, it is meant that, to the best of their ability, one will comply with all decisions setting forth and defining duties and responsibilities incumbent upon members of the organization, and will respect the will of the majority, expressed through democratic processes, as long as the minister remains a member.

**C. Voluntary Cooperation.** “Voluntary cooperation” therefore means that by one’s own will, the decision is made to become a cooperating member of the Assemblies of God, this cooperation being obligatory and not optional. Each should be willing to carry his/her share of the expense of the District work voluntarily. Failure to do so will be considered a serious spiritual problem.

## Section 2. Manner of Remitting

**A. Minister’s Support of the District.** It shall be considered the standard of cooperation with District policy that a minister contribute not less than one-half of his or her tithe, from ministerial and secular income, to the Southern Missouri District Council, 528 W. Battlefield Road, Springfield, Missouri, 65807. It is recommended that remittance be made on a monthly basis, and all active ministers of the Southern Missouri District who fail to contribute at least quarterly to the District shall receive a letter from the District office requiring an explanation.

**B. Support from Evangelists.** Ministers of the District shall, while serving as evangelists within the District, contribute on the same basis as provided in paragraph “A.” When ministering in another district, however, it is recommended that the evangelist’s tithes be divided between the district visited and the home district.

**C. Church Financial Assistance Plan.** All ministers shall support the District with their tithe support as explained in the Bylaws. Then, if the Pastor feels their church is in need of financial assistance, a written request shall be made, first to the Sectional Presbyter, who then shall make recommendations

to the District Presbytery. At their discretion, the District Presbytery may designate funds that they deem necessary to the local church, not to exceed 5% of the minister's income. Each request shall be reviewed annually by the District Presbytery.

**D. Support of Missionaries.** It shall be considered the standard of cooperation with District financial policy for each missionary to contribute not less than \$10 per month while serving overseas, and not less than \$25 per month while on furlough, to the Southern Missouri District Council, 528 W. Battlefield Road, Springfield, Missouri, 65807.

**E. Support of Chaplains.** It shall be considered the standard of cooperation with District financial policy concerning chaplains, military and institutional, to contribute ten percent of their tithes from income earned from the chaplaincy to District support. It is understood that this policy does not affect the obligation of chaplains to support the District from other sources of income as outlined in paragraph "A." of this section.

**F. Support of Senior Ministers.** Senior-active and senior semi-retired ministers shall continue to designate the required amount of support to the District headquarters. Senior retired ministers shall be exempt from this requirement. Whatever support they give shall be on a voluntary basis.

**G. Support of the General Council Offices.** All ordained ministers are expected to contribute from their tithes or other income \$25 each month to the support of the General Council offices. Licensed ministers should contribute \$20 per month. Certified Ministers should contribute \$10 per month. All who can contribute more, personally or through their assemblies, are urged to do so and to send such contributions to the General Treasurer, 1445 Boonville Avenue, Springfield, Missouri 65802.

**H. Assembly Offerings.** It is recommended that all assemblies contribute to the District campgrounds an offering each year to be used for its development.

**I. Special Financial Assistance Plan.** Ministers working in a recognized special ministries area shall make a request for the return of ministerial contributions, first to the Sectional Presbyter, who shall make recommendations to the District Presbytery. At their discretion, the District Presbytery may designate funds that they deem necessary to the ministry, not to exceed 5% of the minister's income. It is understood that these funds would be used for the special ministry and not to supplement the minister's salary. Each request shall be reviewed annually by the District Presbytery. For the purposes of this provision, "recognized special ministries area" shall be defined as those ministries approved as such by the District Presbytery.

### **Section 3. Disbursements**

**A. Executive Officers.** The District Superintendent and the District Executive Secretary shall be paid adequate salaries and traveling expenses as determined by the District Presbytery.

**B. Executive Presbyters and Sectional Presbyters.** The Executive Presbyters and Sectional Presbyters shall be reimbursed for traveling expenses for District business.

**C. Surplus Funds.** Any surplus of funds which may accrue to the District shall be invested or expended by the District Presbytery in that manner which they shall consider best for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

**D. Investment of Funds.** The District Presbytery shall be authorized to invest or to expend all funds of the District subject to any provisions or limitations as may be contained in the Bylaws.

**E. Resolutions for Fund Expenditure.** The procedure to present to a District Council meeting a resolution or motion that may involve the expenditure of more than \$5,000.00 shall be to first refer it to the District Presbytery, and then the resolution shall be presented to the Council in session with the District Presbytery's evaluation of any financial involvements contained in it.

**F. Incurrence of Debt.** Any incurrence of debt on behalf of the District in excess of \$250,000.00 annually shall require approval from the District Council in session at a duly called meeting.

#### **Section 4. Audit**

**A. District Records.** The District Superintendent shall be empowered and authorized to provide for an annual audit of the financial records of the District.

**B. Sectional Records.** The Executive Committee of the Section shall be empowered to appoint an audit committee comprised of ministers within the Section to audit the financial records annually.

## **ARTICLE XIX. MINISTERS RETIREMENT PROGRAM**

#### **Section 1. Program**

The Southern Missouri District Ministers Retirement Program will consist of the enrollment of each credentialed minister who desires to enroll in the Ministers Benefit Association of the General Council of the Assemblies of God and supported by a monthly fee from each minister or his/her church. This will provide a foundation upon which it is recommended that each minister build an effective personal retirement program.

#### **Section 2. Membership**

All credentialed ministers of the Southern Missouri District shall be recommended to participate in the District Retirement Program.

#### **Section 3. Administration**

The Southern Missouri District will only be responsible for making sure each minister is enrolled in the MBA. All other administrative responsibilities will be handled by the MBA.

## Section 4. Recommendation

A \$10.00 monthly fee shall be recommended of each credentialed minister to be sent to the MBA and deposited in the minister's MBA retirement account.

# ARTICLE XX. MINISTERS BENEVOLENT FUND

## Section 1. Administration

The Ministers Benevolent Fund shall be administered by the District Presbytery.

## Section 2. Membership

Participation in the Ministers Benevolent Fund shall be mandatory for all credentialed ministers of the Southern Missouri District Council. Members shall be classified as follows.

**A. Class-A Members** shall include all credentialed ministers of the Southern Missouri District who have not reached the age of 56 years at the time of granting of credentials or by the time of transferring into the District.

**B. Class-B Members** shall include all credentialed ministers of the Southern Missouri District who have reached the age of 56 years at the time of granting credentials or the time of transferring into the District.

**C. Class-C Members** shall include all credentialed ministers who have transferred to other districts and have chosen to continue their membership in the Ministers Benevolent Fund.

## Section 3. Enrollment of Ministers' Spouses

**A. Eligibility for Enrollment.** The spouses of those ministers being granted credentials and those transferred into the District are eligible to enroll in the Ministers Benevolent Fund program within 90 days after the credentials have been process or transferred.

**B. Conditions of Ineligibility.** When a minister no longer holds credentials with the Southern Missouri District, or when a minister has transferred to another district and has not chosen to continue membership in the Ministers Benevolent Fund, the spouse shall be no longer eligible to participate.

**C. Eligibility of Widowed Spouses.** Upon the death of a member who is a credentialed minister, the spouse may continue to participate if already enrolled.

## Section 4. Benefits

**A. Class-A Membership.** The beneficiary will receive \$1,000 if death of the member should occur during the first year of membership, \$3,000 if death of the member occurs during second year of membership, and \$5,500 if death of the member occurs during third year of membership or thereafter.

**B. Class-B Membership.** Class B members shall receive 6% interest added to their contributions on an annual basis. The principal and interest accrued at the time of death will be paid to the beneficiary, the amount not to exceed \$5,500.

**C. Class-C Membership.** Upon transferring out of the Southern Missouri District, a credentialed minister and participating spouse may continue participation in the Ministers Benevolent Fund by continuing to contribute to the program as required. Such members shall be considered Class-C Members and shall be eligible for benefits at the same level as Class-A and Class-B Members.

**D. Spouse Membership.** A participating spouse shall be eligible for benefits at the same level as a participating credentialed minister.

### **E. Transfers Back Into District.**

**(1) Class-A Members.** Class-A members who, upon transferring out of the District chose not to continue participation in the Ministers Benevolent Fund, then transfer back into the District shall have the option to reimburse to the Ministers Benevolent Fund the full amount of monthly contributions which they would have made had they continued their participation. Upon meeting this requirement they shall be reinstated to their previous Class-A membership status. Should a member be under the age of 56 at the time of transfer back into the District and choose not to reimburse the required amount, such member will be required to resume participation in the Ministers Benevolent Fund and will be classified as a Class-A member with reduced benefits during the first two years as provided for in Section 4., A. of this Article.

**(2) Class-B Members.** Ministers who have reached the age of 56 by the time of transfer back into the District, and who do not choose to reimburse the Ministers Benevolent Fund for that amount of contributions which they would have made had they continued participation, shall be retained as Class-B members and shall be required to resume participation.

## Section 5. Dues

Dues of \$10 per month shall be required of each credentialed minister and each participating spouse.

## Section 6. Forfeiture

**A. Surrender of Credentials.** Should a minister withdraw from the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God or be severed from membership for any reason, their Ministers Benevolent Fund benefits shall be forfeited.

## **B. Failure To Pay Dues**

### **(1) Credentialed Members**

**(a)** If a credentialed member whose account is six to twelve months delinquent has been enrolled in the program for more than two years, the benefit shall be reduced to \$1,000.

**(b)** If a credentialed member whose account is six to twelve months delinquent has been enrolled in the program for less than two years, the benefit shall be reduced to \$250.

**(c)** If a credentialed member's account is twelve or more months delinquent at the time of the annual credentialing renewal, his or her credentials shall not be renewed, but shall be classified as lapsed. In order to be moved from lapsed status or to be reinstated, the minister must pay all of the delinquent dues.

**(d)** Should a credentialed member whose account has been delinquent pay all dues that are delinquent, his or her benefits shall be restored. The policy of full restoration of benefits shall only apply if delinquent dues are paid prior to the member's being deceased.

**(2) Member's Spouse.** Should a spouse's account become more than six months delinquent, all benefits shall be forfeited. Reinstatement shall be granted upon full payment of all membership dues, if such dues are paid before the spouse's death.

## **Section 7. Claims**

**A. Submitting Claims.** All claims shall be made in writing within one year after the death of the member. Proof of death shall be given by proper certification prior to the payment of any claim.

**B. Beneficiary.** Each member shall designate a beneficiary by completing the required beneficiary designation form. Payment shall be made to the beneficiary designated by the member. If no beneficiary has been designated, payment shall be made to the estate of the deceased member.

## **Section 8. Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the Ministers Benevolent Fund for any reason, all remaining funds, after expenses and liabilities have been paid, shall be divided among the current members in proportion to the amount each member has paid into the fund.

## **Section 9. Hardship Exception**

**A. Senior Retired Ministers.** Senior Retired ministers facing financial strain may make application to their Sectional Presbyter for a Hardship Exception. Each application shall be kept confidential and shall be considered on a case by case basis by the District Presbytery. Upon approval, an exception shall be granted to the minister and he or she shall be exempted from the required contributions.

**B. Disabled Ministers.** Ministers who are disabled may make application to their Sectional Presbyter for a Hardship Exception. Each application shall be kept confidential and shall be considered on a case by case basis by the District Presbytery. Upon approval, an exception shall be granted to the minister and he or she shall be exempted from the required contributions.

## **ARTICLE XXI. DISTRICT DEPARTMENTS**

For the purpose of furthering the work of the District in its various fields of service, the establishing of departments is authorized. Such departments shall function within the organizational structure of the District Council and shall be subordinate and amenable thereto.

### **Section 1. Missions Department**

**A. Authorization and Name.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of the District Missions Department of the Southern Missouri District Council.

**B. Purpose.** The purpose of this department shall be to:

- (1) Promote Assemblies of God World Missions and Assemblies of God United States Missions in the churches of the District;
- (2) Direct the missions program and activities of the District at home and abroad;
- (3) Serve the needs and interests of Southern Missouri District missionaries; and
- (4) Promote and assist in the conducting of missions conventions in the churches of Southern Missouri.

### **C. Government**

#### **(1) Leadership**

**(a) District Leadership.** The leadership shall consist of a Director, an Assistant Director, and a Secretary. The District Executive Secretary shall be the District Missions Director by virtue of office.

**(b) Executive Leadership Team.** The Director, Assistant Director, and Secretary shall constitute the Missions Executive Leadership Team.

**(c) Sectional Representatives.** There shall be a Sectional Representative from each of the sections in the District.



**(d) Missions Leadership Team.** The Director, Assistant Director, Secretary, and Sectional Representatives shall constitute the Missions Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

## **(2) Duties of Leaders**

**(a) Director.** The duties of the Director shall be as follows:

1. Provide general oversight and supervision for the ministry of the District Missions Department;
2. Represent the District Missions Department to, and work in harmony with, the District Superintendent, to the District Executive Presbytery, and to the District Presbytery;
3. Promote world missions in the churches of the District;
4. When possible, conduct services in the interests of the missions program in the local churches;
5. Promote and assist in the conducting of missions conventions throughout the District;
6. Recognizing that the District Superintendent's approval is necessary for missionary candidates, offer to assist the District Superintendent in the approval process;
7. Approve itineration in the Southern Missouri District of Assemblies of God missionaries credentialed in other Districts, and inform them of the Southern Missouri District itineration policy;
8. Receive and disseminate information concerning missionaries credentialed with the Southern Missouri District and represent the missionaries and their needs to the constituency of the District; and
9. Call and chair meetings of the Missions Leadership Team.

**(b) Assistant Director and Secretary.** Duties of these leaders shall be to:

1. Assist the Director in planning and implementing the missions program of the District; and
2. Attend all duly called meetings of the Missions Leadership Team.

**(c) Missions Leadership Team.** The duties of the Missions Leadership Team shall be to:

1. Assist the Director in designing and implementing the missions program of the District; and

2. Attend meetings of the Missions Leadership Team.

**(d) Sectional Representatives.** The duties of the Sectional Representatives of the District Missions Department shall be to:

1. Serve as members of the Missions Leadership Team;
2. Become knowledgeable about all areas of Assemblies of God Missions;
3. Be a part of the line of communication between the Director and the Pastors of the section;
4. Conduct at least one missions rally per year at the sectional level;
5. Provide Pastors and congregations with training on how to have a missions convention;
6. Encourage each church in the section to support the District Missions Department;
7. Work with the Sectional Presbyter to help churches and Pastors with training, encouragement, support, orientations, and outreach projects; and
8. Attend sectional fellowship meetings and other sectional activities.

## **D. Elections and Vacancies**

### **(1) Qualifications and Elections**

**(a) Director.** The District Executive Secretary shall be the District Missions Director by virtue of office. The terms of the District Missions Director shall therefore run concurrently with the terms of the District Executive Secretary.

#### **(b) Assistant Director and Secretary**

**1. Qualifications.** The Assistant Director and Secretary of the District Missions Department shall meet the following qualifications:

- a.** Be ordained ministers in good standing with the Southern Missouri District;
- b.** Have been a member of the Southern Missouri District for at least one year; and
- c.** Demonstrate in their present ministry an exceptional and firm commitment to the cause of world missions.

## **2. Elections and Terms of Office**

**a.** The District Superintendent, in consultation with the District Missions Director, may nominate a nominee for the offices of Assistant Director and Secretary of the District Missions Department subject to the approval of the District Presbytery. These approved nominees shall then be presented to the voting body at District Council. This will not, however, preclude nominations from the voting constituency at the District Council where at least three votes shall be required to nominate from the floor. In the event of a failure to elect, subsequent nominees shall be presented by the Superintendent until there is an election.

**b.** The Assistant Director and Secretary shall be elected in alternate years to the election of the District Executive Officers and shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected.

**c.** The Assistant Director and Secretary shall be elected by secret ballot by a two-thirds majority vote. They shall take office on the first day of the second month following their election.

### **(c) Sectional Representatives**

**1. Qualifications.** Each Sectional Missions Representative shall be selected from among the ministers of the section. He or she shall have demonstrated strong support for Assemblies of God missions.

**2. Elections and Terms of Office.** The Sectional Executive Committee with the approval of the District Director shall appoint the Sectional Missions Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. A blank line shall be left for other nominations to be written in. The Sectional Council must ratify the nominee by secret ballot by a majority vote. They shall be elected on alternate years from the Executive Officers of the section, and shall serve for two years.

### **(2) Vacancies**

**(a) Assistant Director and Secretary.** A vacancy in the office of Assistant Director or Secretary shall be filled for the unexpired term by the appointment of the District Superintendent, in consultation with the District Missions Director, with the ratification of the Presbytery.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** The Sectional Executive Committee, in consultation with the Director of the District Missions Department, shall be authorized to fill such vacancies by appointment to complete an unexpired term.

## **E. Finances**

**(1) Support of Missions Department.** Each church is strongly encouraged to support the District Missions Department in an amount commensurate with its support of other missionaries, sending contributions monthly.

**(2) Disbursements.** All District Missions Department funds shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery and the District Missions Director.

## **Section 2. Youth Department**

**A. Authorization and Name.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of the District Youth Department of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, to be named Southern Missouri Youth Ministries.

**B. Purpose.** The purpose of this department shall be to promote, develop, and encourage youth ministry within the District.

**C. Relationships.** The District Youth Department shall maintain ongoing relationship with the sectional youth ministries in the District and with the youth ministries of local churches.

### **D. Government**

#### **(1) Leadership**

**(a) District Leadership.** The leadership shall consist of a Director and an Assistant Director.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** There shall be a Sectional Representative from each of the sections in the District.

**(c) Youth Ministries Leadership Team.** The Director, Assistant Director, and Sectional Representatives shall constitute the Youth Ministries Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

#### **(2) Duties of Leaders**

**(a) District Director.** The Director shall oversee all District youth ministries, including youth camps and conventions, Ambassadors in Missions, Fine Arts Festival, Bible Quiz, and Speed-The-Light, and shall lead the Youth Ministries Leadership Team.

**(b) Assistant Director.** The Assistant Director shall assist the Director as far as is practicable and shall serve on the Youth Ministries Leadership Team.

**(c) Sectional Representatives.** The Sectional Representatives shall:

1. Serve as members of the Youth Ministries Leadership Team;
2. Arrange for and conduct all sectional events for the youth and youth leaders of their section;
3. Send reports on all sectional youth events to the District Director and send an annual financial report to the District Director and to their Sectional Presbyter;
4. Send 20% of each sectional offering to the Southern Missouri Youth Ministries Department; and
5. Be amenable to the District Director and the Sectional Presbyter.

## **E. Elections and Vacancies**

### **(1) Qualifications and Elections**

#### **(a) Departmental Leaders**

**1. Qualifications.** The District Youth Director and Assistant Director shall be ordained ministers of the Southern Missouri District. They shall have been members of the district for at least one year. They shall be within the ages of 23 and 40 at the time of the initial election. They shall have proven leadership and be properly qualified in the area of youth ministry.

#### **2. Elections and Term of Office**

**a.** The District Superintendent may nominate a nominee for each office of the Youth Ministries Department subject to the approval of the District Presbytery. These approved nominees shall then be presented to the voting body at District Council. This will not, however, preclude nominations from the voting constituency at the District Council where at least three votes shall be required to nominate from the floor. In the event of a failure to elect, subsequent nominees shall be presented by the Superintendent until there is an election.

**b.** The leaders of the District Youth Department shall be elected in alternate years to the election of the District officers and shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected.

**c.** The leaders of the District Youth Department shall be elected by secret ballot and by a two-thirds majority vote. They shall take office on the first day of the second month following their election.

## **(b) Sectional Representatives**

**1. Qualifications.** Each Sectional Youth Representative shall be selected from the ministers of the section. They shall be between the ages of twenty-three and forty at the time of initial election. If no minister of this age designation is available at the time of election, the Sectional Council shall elect the minister most qualified to serve that term.

**2. Elections and Term of Office.** The Sectional Executive Committee with the approval of the District Director shall appoint the Sectional Youth Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. A blank line shall be left for other nominations to be written in. The Sectional Council must ratify the nominee by secret ballot by a majority vote. They shall be elected on alternate years from the Executive Officers of the Section, and shall serve for two years.

## **(2) Vacancies**

**(a) District Departmental Officers.** A vacancy in the office of Director or Assistant Director shall be filled for the unexpired term by the appointment of the District Superintendent with the ratification of the Presbytery.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the District Director.

## **F. Finances**

**(1) Sectional Offerings.** Each section shall send 20% of each sectional offering to the District Youth Department.

**(2) Local Youth Group Offerings.** Each church is encouraged to send one offering per month to the District Youth Department.

**(3) Disbursements.** All Southern Missouri Youth Ministries Department funds shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery and the District Youth Director.

## **Section 3. Christian Education Department**

**A. Authorization and Name.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of the District Christian Education Department of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

**B. Purpose.** The purpose of this department shall be to promote, develop, and encourage Christian education and discipleship within the District.

**C. Relationships.** The District Christian Education Department shall maintain ongoing relationship with the Christian Education and discipleship ministries in the District and in the local churches.

**D. Government.**

**(1) Leadership**

**(a) District Leadership.** The leadership shall consist of a Director and an Assistant Director.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** There shall be a Sectional Representative from each of the sections in the District.

**(c) Christian Education Leadership Team.** The Director, Assistant Director, and Sectional Representatives shall constitute the Christian Education Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

**(2) Duties of Leaders**

**(a) District Director.** The Director shall oversee all District Christian education ministries, including kids camps and conventions, Junior Bible Quiz, and Boys and Girls Missionary Challenge, and shall lead the Christian Education Leadership Team. The Director shall serve as a resource to local churches in the areas of Sunday School, small groups ministries, and children's ministries.

**(b) Assistant Director.** The Assistant Director shall assist the Director as far as is practicable and shall serve on the Christian Education Leadership Team.

**(c) Sectional Representatives.** The Sectional Representatives shall:

1. Serve as a resource to the churches and ministers in their sections in the area of Christian education and discipleship;
2. Serve as members of the District Christian Education Leadership Team and attend all Leadership Team meetings as called by the District Director;
3. Participate in and promote the District Christian Education events and ministries to the churches of their sections; and
4. Be amenable to the District Director and the Sectional Presbyter.

## **E. Elections and Vacancies**

### **(1) Qualifications and Elections**

#### **(a) Departmental Leaders**

**1. Qualifications.** The Director and Assistant Director shall be ordained ministers of the Southern Missouri District. They shall have been members of the District for at least one year. They shall have proven leadership and be properly qualified in the areas of Christian education and discipleship.

#### **2. Elections and Term of Office**

**a.** The District Superintendent may nominate a nominee for each office of the Christian Education Department subject to the approval of the District Presbytery. These approved nominees shall then be presented to the voting body at District Council. This will not, however, preclude nominations from the voting constituency at the District Council, where at least three votes shall be required to nominate from the floor. In the event of a failure to elect, subsequent nominees shall be presented by the Superintendent until there is an election.

**b.** The leaders of the Christian Education Department shall be elected in alternate years to the election of the District Officers and shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected.

**c.** The leaders of the Christian Education Department shall be elected by secret ballot and by a two-thirds majority vote. They shall take office on the first day of the second month following their election.

#### **(b) Sectional Representatives**

**1. Qualifications.** Each Sectional Representative shall be selected from among the ministers of the section.

**2. Elections and Term of Office.** Each Sectional Executive Committee with the approval of the District Departmental Director shall appoint the Sectional Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. A blank line shall be left for other nominations to be written in. The Sectional Council must ratify said appointees by secret ballot by a majority vote. They shall be elected on alternate years from the Executive Officers of the Section, and shall serve for two years.



## **(2) Vacancies/Removals**

**(a) District Departmental Officers.** A vacancy in the office of Director or Assistant Director shall be filled for the unexpired term by the appointment of the District Superintendent with the ratification of the Presbytery.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the District Director.

## **F. Finances**

**(1) Sunday School Tithes.** Each Sunday School in the District is encouraged to tithe from its regular offerings to the District Christian Education Department on a monthly basis.

**(2) Disbursements.** All Christian Education Department funds shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery and the District Christian Education Director.

## **Section 4. Women's Ministries Department**

**A. Authorization and Name.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of the Women's Ministries Department of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

**B. Purpose.** The purpose of the Women's Ministries Department shall be to unite the women of the Southern Missouri District in furthering the cause of Christ both locally and around the world. The Women's Ministries Department shall focus on the following areas of ministry.

### **(1) Assemblies of God World and United States Missions**

**(a) The Compassion Room** incorporates the women of the District in assisting with providing household furnishings and supplies to missionaries affiliated with the Southern Missouri District Council.

**(b) Etta Calhoun Memorial Fund** honors the life of women's ministries pioneer Etta Calhoun by promoting a special offering each year in September to supply indoor furnishings for missionaries and benevolence institutions.

**(c) Women's Ministries Library Fund** encourages local women's ministries groups to collect canceled postage stamps which are provided to the National Women's Ministries Department for marketing.

### **(2) Benevolence Ministries**

**(a) Benevolence Institutions.** Women's Ministries works to provide financial assistance to Assemblies of God benevolence institutions.

**(b) Retired Ministers, Missionaries, and Ministers' Widows.** Women's Ministries works to assist with needs of retired Assemblies of God ministers, missionaries, and ministers' widows.

**(c) District Projects.** Women's Ministries may partner with other ministries within the Southern Missouri District and assist with a variety of special projects.

**(d) Local Church and Community.** Women's Ministries may assist with programs or projects at the local church level in cooperation with local church leadership.

**C. Relationships.** The District Women's Ministries Department shall maintain ongoing relationship with sectional Women's Ministries in the District and with the Women's Ministries in local churches.

## **D. Government**

### **(1) Leadership**

**(a) District Leadership.** The leadership shall consist of a Director and an Assistant Director.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** There shall be a representative from each of the sections in the District.

**(c) Women's Ministries Leadership Team.** The Director, Assistant Director, and Sectional Representatives shall constitute the Women's Ministries Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

### **(2) Duties of Leaders**

**(a) District Director.** The District Women's Ministries Director shall preside at all District Women's Ministries meetings and have general oversight of the District Women's Ministries work.

**(b) Assistant Director.** The Assistant Director shall assist the Director as far as is practicable and shall serve on the Women's Ministries Leadership Team.

**(c) Sectional Representatives.** The Sectional Representatives shall serve in cooperation with the District Women's Ministries Director, shall promote Women's Ministries in the sections, and shall serve as members of the Women's Ministries Leadership Team.

## **E. Appointments and Vacancies**

### **(1) Qualifications and Appointments**

**(a) Qualifications.** The leaders shall be women of mature experience, sound Christian character, and executive ability who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and are members of

Assemblies of God churches. The Director shall be an ordained minister or the wife of an ordained minister.

### **(b) Appointments and Vacancies**

**1.** The **District Women's Ministries Director and Assistant Director** shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery. The Director and Assistant shall serve until their successors are appointed.

**2. Sectional Representatives.** Each Sectional Executive Committee, in consultation with the District Women's Ministries Director, shall appoint the Sectional Women's Ministries Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. The Sectional Council must ratify the appointee by secret ballot by a majority vote. The Sectional Women's Ministries Representative shall serve a term of two years. The Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the Women's Ministries Director shall fill any vacancies by appointment. Any such appointment shall be for the unexpired term.

## **F. Finances**

**(1) Support of the National Women's Ministries Department.** The District Women's Ministries Department shall tithe from its general fund to the National Women's Ministries Department. Special Women's Ministries Day offerings shall be received annually by local groups and sent for the support of the National Women's Ministries Department.

**(2) Support of the District Women's Ministries Department.** Each local Women's Ministries group shall send two-thirds of the tithe on its income to the District Women's Ministries Department.

**(3) Support of the Sectional Women's Ministries Departments.** Each local Women's Ministries group shall send one-third of the tithe on its income to the Sectional Women's Ministries Department.

**(4) Disbursements.** All District Women's Ministries Department funds shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery and the District Women's Ministries Director.

## **Section 5. Girls Ministries Department**

**A. Name and Authorization.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of the Girls Ministries Department of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, to include Rainbows, Daisies, Prims, Stars, Friends, and Girls Only. The Girls Ministries Department shall function under the direction of the District Women's Ministries Director.

## **B. Purpose**

(1) The purpose of this organization shall be to unite girls of the Southern Missouri District in definite efforts to spread the gospel both at home and abroad.

(2) The objective of the organization is to win members to Christ, to teach them to obey what Jesus has commanded while growing spiritually and mentally, to provide encouragement and accountability through lasting Christian relationships, to provide an environment to develop their gifts and abilities, and to acquaint them with Assemblies of God missions as part of the Great Commission.

**C. Relationships.** The District Girls Ministries Department shall maintain ongoing relationship with the sectional Girls Ministries in the District and with the Girls Ministries of local churches.

## **D. Government**

### **(1) Leadership**

(a) **District Leadership.** The leaders shall be the District Women's Ministries Director and the District Girls Ministries Coordinator.

(b) **Sectional Girls Ministries Representatives.** There shall be a representative from each section.

(c) **Girls Ministries Leadership Team.** The Girls Ministries Leadership Team shall consist of the District Women's Ministries Director, the District Girls Ministries Coordinator, and the Sectional Girls Ministries Representatives. They shall meet at least annually.

### **(2) Duties of Officers**

(a) **District Girls Ministries Coordinator.** The District Girls Ministries Coordinator shall follow a written job description provided by the District Women's Ministries Director and shall work under the direction and supervision of the District Women's Ministries Director. She shall lead the Girls Ministries Leadership Team.

(b) **Sectional Girls Ministries Representatives.** The Sectional Girls Ministries Representatives shall facilitate the District Girls Ministries program at the sectional level in cooperation with the District Girls Ministries Coordinator and the District and Sectional Women's Ministries leaders. They shall serve as members of the Girls Ministries Leadership Team.

## **E. Appointments and Vacancies**

### **(1) Qualifications and Appointments**

**(a) Qualifications.** The leaders shall be women of mature experience, sound Christian character, and executive ability who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and are members of Assemblies of God churches. The Girls Ministries Coordinator shall be a credentialed minister or the wife of a credentialed minister. The leaders shall have completed or be working toward completing the Women's Ministries and Girls Ministries training courses.

### **(b) Appointments and Vacancies**

**1. District Girls Ministries Coordinator.** The District Girls Ministries Coordinator shall be nominated by the District Women's Ministries Director, appointed by the District Superintendent, and ratified by the District Presbytery. She shall serve until her successor is appointed.

**2. Sectional Girls Ministries Representatives.** Each Sectional Executive Committee, with the approval of the District Girls Ministries Coordinator, shall appoint a Sectional Girls Ministries Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. A blank line shall be left for other nominations to be written in. The Sectional Council must ratify the nominee by secret ballot by a majority vote. The Sectional Girls Ministries Representative shall be elected on alternate years from the Executive Officers of the Section, and shall serve for two years. The Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the Women's Ministries Director shall fill any vacancies by appointment. Any such appointment shall be for the unexpired term.

## **F. Finances**

**(1) National.** The District Girls Ministries shall tithe its general fund to the National Girls Ministries Department in line with the General Council's policy of support for the national department.

**(2) District.** Each local Girls Ministries group shall tithe its income, sending the whole of such tithe to the District Girls Ministries Department.

**(3) Section.** The District Girls Ministries Department shall send one-third of sectional tithes to the Sectional Girls Ministries Representative to be used for the support of the sectional Girls Ministries program. Offerings shall be received at sectional Girls Ministries functions to defray the expenses incurred by the section. A tithe from the income of sectional activities shall be sent to the District Girls Ministries Department.

**(4) Disbursements.** All funds of the District Girls Ministries shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery, the District Women's Ministries Director and the District Girls Ministries Coordinator.

## **Section 6. Men's Ministries Department**

**A. Authorization and Name.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of the District Men's Ministries Department of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

### **B. Purpose and Objectives**

**(1)** The purpose of this organization shall be to assist in unifying Assemblies of God men on the local church, sectional, district, and national levels in participating in the objectives of the Men's Ministries Department.

**(2)** The objectives of the Men's Ministries Department of the Southern Missouri District shall be:

**(a)** To challenge, train, and involve men in meaningful ministries in key areas of the church under the leadership of the Pastor; and

**(b)** To unite the efforts of men in national and district advances including National Men's Ministries resources, evangelism and discipleship, Light-For-The-Lost, Royal Rangers, construction ministry, and other designated district projects.

**C. Relationships.** The District Men's Department shall maintain ongoing relationship with the sectional men's ministries in the District and with the men's ministries of local churches.

### **D. Government**

#### **(1) Leadership**

**(a) District Leadership.** The leadership shall consist of the Men's Ministries Director and the Assistant Director.

**(b) District Coordinators.** District Coordinators shall include the Evangelism and Discipleship Coordinator, the Chairman of Light-for-the-Lost, the District Royal Rangers Commander, and the District Construction Coordinator.

**(c) Sectional Representatives.** There shall be a Sectional Representative from each of the sections of the District.

**(d) Men's Ministry Leadership Team.** The Men's Ministries Director, the Assistant Director, the District Men's Ministries Coordinators, and the Sectional Representatives shall constitute the Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

## **(2) Duties of Leaders**

**(a) District Men's Ministries Director.** The District Men's Ministries Director shall be responsible for leading all functions of Men's Ministries in the District. He shall serve as chairman of the Men's Ministries Leadership Team. He shall provide leadership and direction to the District Men's Ministries Coordinators and their respective teams. He shall be an ex-officio member of all Sectional Leadership Teams.

**(b) Assistant District Men's Ministries Director.** The Assistant Director shall assist the Director as far as is practicable and shall serve on the Men's Ministries Leadership Team.

### **(c) District Coordinators**

**1.** The **District Evangelism and Discipleship Coordinator** shall promote evangelism and discipleship throughout the District.

**2.** The **District Light-For-The-Lost Chairman** shall promote and coordinate Light-For-The-Lost activities in the District and shall assist in planning and conducting Light-For-The-Lost area banquets.

**3.** The **District Royal Rangers Commander** shall provide assistance in organizing local Royal Rangers outposts, conduct leadership training, and lead District Royal Rangers events.

**4.** The **District Construction Coordinator** shall assist in promoting and organizing approved domestic and foreign construction projects.

**(d) Men's Ministries Leadership Team.** The Men's Ministries Leadership Team shall be responsible to develop and implement the District Men's Ministries program.

**(e) Sectional Representatives.** The Sectional Representatives shall:

**1.** Serve as members of the Men's Ministries Leadership Team;

**2.** Be responsible for coordinating all facets of Men's Ministries within their respective sections;

**3.** Encourage and assist with organizing Men's Ministries in the local churches in cooperation with the Pastors.

## **E. Appointments and Vacancies**

### **(1) Qualifications and Appointments**

**(a) Qualifications.** The leaders shall be men of mature experience, sound Christian character, and executive ability who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and are members of Assemblies of God churches. The Director shall be an ordained minister or the husband of an ordained minister.

### **(b) Appointments and Vacancies**

#### **1. District Leaders**

**a.** The **District Men's Ministries Director and Assistant Director** shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery. They shall serve until their successors are appointed.

**b.** The **District Coordinators** shall be nominated by the Men's Ministries Director, appointed by the Superintendent, and ratified by the District Presbytery. They shall serve until their successors are appointed.

**2. Men's Ministries Representative.** Each Sectional Executive Committee, in consultation with the District Men's Ministries Director, shall appoint the Sectional Men's Ministries Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. The Sectional Council must ratify the appointee by secret ballot by a majority vote. The Sectional Men's Ministries Representative shall serve a term of two years. The Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the Men's Ministries Director shall fill any vacancies by appointment. Any such appointment shall be for the unexpired term.

**F. Finances.** All District Men's Ministries Department funds shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery and the Men's Ministries Director.

## **Section 7. Royal Rangers Department**

**A. Name and Authorization.** The District Council hereby authorizes Royal Rangers as a division of the Men's Ministries Department of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

**B. Purpose.** The purpose of this organization shall be to evangelize, equip, and empower boys for Jesus Christ. The goals shall be to instruct in Bible doctrine, to challenge for Christian service, to inspire a belief in the Fundamental Truths of our church, and to satisfy the boy's basic need for activity.

**C. Relationships.** The District Royal Rangers Department shall maintain ongoing relationship with the sectional Royal Rangers ministries and the Royal Rangers ministries of local churches.



## D. Government

### (1) Leadership

**(a) District Leaders.** The District Leaders shall be the District Superintendent, serving as the District Chaplain, the District Men's Ministries Director, and the District Royal Rangers Commander.

**(b) District Royal Rangers Leadership Team.** The District Leaders, the District Deputy Commanders, the Divisional Commanders, the Outreach Coordinator, the Training Coordinator, the Communications Coordinator, the Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship President, and the Sectional Commanders shall constitute the District Royal Rangers Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

**(c) Sectional Leadership Team.** The Sectional Leadership Team shall consist of the Sectional Presbyter, serving as Sectional Chaplain, the Sectional Commander, and the Area Commanders.

**(d) National Royal Rangers Council.** The District Royal Rangers shall be represented at the annual National Royal Rangers Council by the District Men's Ministries Director, the District Royal Rangers Commander, one District Deputy Commander, the Outreach Coordinator, the Training Coordinator, the Communications Coordinator, and the Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship President.

### (2) Duties of Leaders

#### (a) District Leaders

**1. District Director.** The District Men's Ministries Director shall serve as the Director of the Royal Rangers program.

**2. District Royal Rangers Commander.** The District Royal Rangers Commander shall work under the direction and supervision of the District Men's Ministries Director. He shall lead the District Royal Rangers Leadership Team. He shall supervise and administrate District Pow-Wows and other District Royal Rangers events and activities.

**(b) Sectional Leaders.** Sectional Commanders and Area Commanders shall work with their respective Sectional Men's Ministries Directors in promoting the Royal Rangers program.

## E. Appointments and Vacancies

**(1) Qualifications.** The leaders on both District and sectional levels shall be men of mature experience, sound Christian character, and executive ability who have been baptized in the Holy

Spirit and are members of Assemblies of God churches. They shall have received or be working toward completing the requirements for the Outpost Leaders Advancement Level.

## **(2) Appointments**

### **(a) District Leaders**

**1. District Director.** By virtue of office, the District Men's Ministries Director shall be the Director of the Royal Rangers.

**2. District Royal Rangers Commander.** The District Royal Rangers Commander shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery. He shall serve until his successor is appointed.

**3. Other District Leaders.** The District Royal Rangers Commander, in consultation with the District Men's Ministries Director, shall appoint all other district leaders subject to the approval of the District Superintendent. They shall serve until their successors are appointed.

**(b) Sectional Leaders.** The Sectional Royal Rangers Director and Area Directors shall be appointed by the District Royal Rangers Director, subject to the approval of the District Men's Ministries Director and the Sectional Presbyter. They shall serve until their successors are appointed.

## **F. Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship**

**(1) Purpose.** The District shall maintain a chapter of the Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship for the purpose of developing boys in the areas of moral character, spiritual maturity, and camping skills.

### **(2) Leadership**

**(a) President.** The President of the Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship shall be elected at the District Fall Trace and shall perform duties as recommended by the National Royal Rangers Office for a term of 3 years.

**(b) District Scout.** The District Scout shall be elected biennially at the District Fall Trace. The District Scout must be less than 16 1/2 years of age at the time of the Fall Trace. The term shall be two years.

**(c) Other Leaders.** Other leaders may be appointed by the District Royal Rangers Leadership Team.

## Section 8. Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Department

**A. Authorization and Name.** The District Council hereby authorizes the formation and maintenance of Fifty Plus Adult Ministries of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

**B. Purpose.** The purpose of Fifty Plus Adult Ministries shall be to disciple and evangelize senior adults within the District, provide fellowship opportunities, and equip Pastors and ministers for ministering effectively to senior adults.

**C. Relationships.** The Fifty Plus Adult Ministries shall maintain ongoing relationship with the sectional Fifty Plus Adult Ministries in the District and with the senior adult ministries of local churches.

### D. Government

#### (1) Leadership

**(a) District Leadership.** The leadership shall consist of a Director and an Assistant Director.

**(b) Sectional Representatives.** There shall be a Sectional Representative from each of the sections in the District.

**(c) Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Leadership Team.** The Director, Assistant Director, and Sectional Representatives shall constitute the Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Leadership Team. They shall meet at least annually.

#### (2) Duties of Leaders

**(a) District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Director.** The Director shall oversee all District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries and lead the Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Leadership Team.

**(b) Assistant Director.** The Assistant Director shall assist the Director as far as is practicable and shall serve on the Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Leadership Team.

**(c) Sectional Representatives.** The Sectional Representatives shall oversee the Fifty Plus Adult Ministries activities within their sections and shall serve on the Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Leadership Team.

### E. Appointments and Vacancies

**(1) District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Director and Assistant Director.** The District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Director and Assistant Director shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and ratified by the District Presbytery. The Director and Assistant Director shall serve until their successors are appointed.

**(2) Sectional Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Representatives.** Each Sectional Executive Committee, in consultation with the District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Director, shall appoint the Sectional Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Representative and submit the name to the Sectional Council in session on a printed ballot for ratification. The Sectional Council must ratify the appointee by secret ballot by a majority vote. The Sectional Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Representative shall serve a term of two years. The Sectional Executive Committee in consultation with the District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Director shall fill any vacancies by appointment. Any such appointment shall be for the unexpired term.

#### **F. Finances.**

**(1) Offerings.** Offerings may be received at sectional and District rallies and other events for the support of the District Fifty Plus Adult Ministries.

**(2) Disbursements.** All Fifty Plus Adult Ministries funds shall be managed and expended under the direction of the District Presbytery and the Fifty Plus Adult Ministries Director.

#### **Section 9. Removals**

Any departmental leadership position, whether elected or appointed, may be declared vacant by action of the District Presbytery. Such actions shall be sustained by a two-thirds vote.

### **ARTICLE XXII. DISSOLUTION**

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the District Presbytery shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation, transfer and distribute all of its remaining assets to The General Council of the Assemblies of God, provided that The General Council of the Assemblies of God is at such time an exempt organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provision of any future federal income tax law. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of Greene County, Missouri, to such organization which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes, and which is an exempt organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax law, and which has purposes nearest those of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.

### **ARTICLE XXIII. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the District Council, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted to the District Presbytery first for consideration, and a copy mailed to each member of the District Council not less than one month prior to the time of the meeting at which the amendment is to be considered. A two-thirds majority vote of all members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption.

**Southern Missouri District Council  
OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD**

**Bylaws Addenda**

RECOMMENDED  
**Bylaws**  
FOR  
**General Council Affiliated Assemblies**

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RECOMMENDED

# Bylaws

FOR

## General Council Affiliated Assemblies

### PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony, to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ, by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands, and to assume our share of responsibility as a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world; we, the members of this assembly, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with, and as a part of, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God; and that we do hereby adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this assembly shall be \_\_\_\_\_. This assembly's affiliation with the Assemblies of God shall be made known in its name, its advertising, and its publications.

### ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES AND PURPOSES

The prerogatives and purposes of a General Council affiliated assembly shall be as follows.

**A.** This assembly shall have the right to govern itself and to conduct its own affairs according to the standard of the New Testament Scriptures and of the Southern Missouri District Council and the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This right shall specifically include such matters as the calling of a Pastor, the election of the Church Board, the discipline of its members, and the conducting of its own services and church program.

**B.** In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes, and to exercise all other powers conferred upon it by its charter or by the applicable nonprofit corporation law of this state; all in accordance with its Bylaws as the same may be hereafter amended.

**C.** This assembly is organized exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax law. In particular, this assembly is organized exclusively for the following

purposes: To establish and maintain a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; and to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands.

**D.** This assembly shall cooperate with the District Council and the General Council to extend the work and Kingdom of God throughout the world. It shall support the missionary program as agreed upon. It shall participate in District Council and General Council sessions through its chosen delegates and share in the support of the ministries of these bodies.

**E.** This assembly shall recognize that the District Council and the General Council have the authority and right to approve scriptural doctrine; also to disapprove unscriptural doctrine and to withdraw their certificates of membership if deemed necessary.

### **ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION**

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs as herein set forth, this assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith, associated in the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

Officers of the District Council and General Council shall be recognized and respected by the Pastor and members of this assembly.

As a member of the General Council, this assembly has the right to request the assistance of both the General Council and the District Council in dealing with any of its problems, upon the request of the Pastor, a majority of the Church Board, or a petition signed by at least 30% of the voting members of the assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services and financially supported this assembly with their tithes for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.

It is understood and agreed that this assembly shall conform its standards of membership, qualifications for deacons, and requirements for a Pastor, to those standards which are set by the District Council and General Council.

By its affiliation, the assembly, its directors, officers and members agree to submit to the authority of and be governed by the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God and the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God as now in effect or hereafter amended.

### **ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH**

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts



2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all Biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

### **1. The Scriptures Inspired**

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

### **2. The One True God**

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

## **THE ADORABLE GODHEAD**

**a. Terms Defined.** The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

**b. Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead.** Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

**c. Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.** Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11, 21; Zechariah 14:9).

**d. Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead.** The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to

nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30,32,37; 8:17,18).

**e. The Title, Lord Jesus Christ.** The appellation Lord Jesus Christ, is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

**f. The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us.** The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us. (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

**g. The Title, Son of God.** Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

**h. Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ.** Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14, 18,29,49; 1 John 2: 22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

**i. Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord.** The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

**j. Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son.** Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead (except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philipians 2: 8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

### **3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ**

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

**a.** His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35).

- b. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- c. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- f. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

#### **4. The Fall of Man**

Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

#### **5. The Salvation of Man**

Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**a. Conditions to Salvation.** Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

**b. The Evidences of Salvation.** The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

#### **6. The Ordinances of the Church**

**a. Baptism in Water.** The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

**b. Holy Communion.** The Lord’s Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He come!”

## **7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

## **8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

## **9. Sanctification**

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

## **10. The Church and Its Mission**

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23). Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).

c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).

d. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).

b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).

c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

d. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times in order to demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Galatians 5:22-26).

## **11. The Ministry**

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16), and (4) demonstrating God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

## **12. Divine Healing**

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).

## **13. The Blessed Hope**

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

## **14. The Millennial Reign of Christ**

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

## **15. The Final Judgment**

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

## **16. The New Heavens and the New Earth**

“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21, 22).

## **ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES**

### **Section 1. Baptism in Water**

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).

### **Section 2. Holy Communion**

The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

## **ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1. Membership Eligibility**

Active voting membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who possess the following qualifications.

- A.** The applicant shall have a testimony to an experience of the “new birth.”
- B.** Approval for membership shall be preceded by baptism in water by immersion.

- C. The applicant shall be expected to manifest a lifestyle portraying a positive Christian testimony which is free from worldliness (1 John 2:15).
- D. The applicant must abstain from drinking intoxicating liquors of any kind and the use of tobacco in any form.
- E. The applicant must refrain from the sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21.
- F. The applicant must agree, and adhere to scriptural basis for divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15-28).
- G. The applicant must indicate willingness to tithe regularly to the financial support of the church in which membership is requested.
- H. The applicant must accept the Tenets of Faith as set forth in Article IV of these bylaws.
- I. The applicant must be at least 18 years of age.
- J. The applicant has regularly attended services of, and supported this assembly with personal tithes, for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to the date of application for membership.
- K. The applicant agrees to be governed by the bylaws of this assembly, and of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, as both may be amended from time to time.

## **Section 2. Procedure for Membership Recognition**

Those individuals eligible for membership who shall desire to become members of this church shall make their request known to the Pastor. The Church Board shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership by majority vote. Those approved for membership by the Church Board shall be received into the church publicly at any of its regular services, and their names thereupon added to the church membership roll. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within thirty days before an annual business meeting or within ten days before a special business meeting.

## **Section 3. Pastor and Spouse**

By virtue of office the Pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during the Pastor's tenure. The Pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the Pastor, subject to Article VI, Section 1.

#### **Section 4. Transfer Members**

A member in good standing of another Assemblies of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of this Article VI (other than the attendance and support requirements), may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the Pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of a majority of the Church Board.

#### **Section 5. Junior Membership**

Junior membership shall be available for young people under 18 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, meet the scriptural standards for membership as specified in these bylaws, and are approved by majority vote of the Church Board. When the junior member reaches the age of 18, they must then apply for adult membership and meet the same standard of membership as an active member at the time they apply.

#### **Section 6. Associate Members**

The Church Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve associate members by a majority vote. Eligibility for associate membership is available to any person who is a member in good standing of an Assemblies of God church in another community, who is in this community on a temporary basis, and who intends to return to his or her home church. Associate members shall be entitled to all the privileges of active members, except that they shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be eligible for any of the offices described in Article VII of these Bylaws.

#### **Section 7. Honorary Members**

The Church Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve honorary members by a unanimous vote of the members present. Honorary membership is available to any member who has left the church indefinitely, (District officers, missionaries, evangelists, Armed Forces, and those who have distinguished themselves in Christian service, etc.). Such membership shall have an inactive status unless activated by the Church Board. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a consistent Christian life, remains sound in doctrine, and maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly. Removal of such membership shall be determined by a majority vote of the Church Board.

#### **Section 8. Inactive Membership**

Active voting members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of two consecutive months or more, or who cease to contribute regularly to its support as determined by the Church Board for a period of two consecutive months, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the assembly through its Church Board.



## Section 9. Discipline

**A. Grounds.** Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible. Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:15-20; Luke 17:3; John 20:23; Acts 16:4; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17. The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through exposing sinful behavior. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective. Any member of the Assembly is subject to discipline on the basis of unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith of this assembly. The discipline of Pastors is administered by the District Presbytery.

**B. Procedure.** Should any member of this church, in the opinion of the Church Board, fall below the standard of membership as stated in Bylaws Article I. Membership, Section 1, in faith or practice, or should their spirit become contentious and discordant to the well-being of the church the following procedure, based on Matthew 18:15-18, shall be followed.

(1) The Pastor and/or a designated member of the Church Board shall make every reasonable effort to contact the person and resolve the matter.

(2) If the first step does not resolve the matter then the Church Board shall attempt to meet with the member in an effort to resolve the matter.

(3) If the first and second steps do not resolve the matter then the Church Board may, at its discretion upon a majority vote, take one of the following two actions.

(a) Place the person's membership on probation for a specific or indefinite time. The member may be restored from such inactive status to the active membership in the same manner.

(b) Dismiss the person from membership in the church. The disciplined or dismissed member shall have the right within 30 days of such action to appeal to the membership in a special business meeting called for that purpose. Such appeal shall be in writing and addressed to the Church Board. The decision of a majority of the voting members present at such a meeting shall be final.

**C. Resignations.** Members who are under discipline by this assembly forfeit and waive the right to resign from membership in this assembly. Resignations from membership are possible only by those members in good standing who are not under any disciplinary action.

## ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT

### Section 1. The Church Board

**A. In general.** The government of this assembly shall be vested in the Church Board which shall consist of the Pastor and at least three deacons, to the extent that such authority is not limited by "District supervision" as provided for under Article XIII, Section 8, Subsection I, of the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

**B. Qualifications of Church Board members.** See qualifications for pastors and deacons (Article VII, Sections 2 and 3. of these Bylaws).

### **C. Duties of Church Board**

(1) The Church Board shall have general charge and management of the affairs, funds, and property of the assembly. The Church Board shall have the authority to carry out the purposes of the assembly according to its charter and these Bylaws.

(2) The Church Board shall act in the examination of applications for membership and in the administration of discipline.

(3) For so long as the church is temporarily without a Pastor, the remaining members of the Church Board shall be empowered to select a temporary chairman of the Church Board.

(4) The Church Board shall elect a secretary from among its members.

(5) The Church Board shall elect a treasurer from among the active voting members who meet the qualifications for such office.

## **Section 2. Officers**

**A. In general.** There shall be a president, secretary, and treasurer. The Pastor, by virtue of office, shall be the president and chairman of the Church Board. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be held simultaneously by the same individual.

### **B. Qualifications**

(1) **Pastor.** The Pastor shall be in good standing with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, holding a current fellowship card, and a member in good standing of the District Council.

(2) **Secretary.** The secretary shall be an active voting member of this assembly for at least one year immediately preceding election to office, and shall currently support the church with tithes, and shall have a cooperative spirit and be faithful in attendance at church services.

(3) **Treasurer.** The treasurer shall be an active voting member of this assembly for at least one year immediately preceding election to office, and shall currently support the church with tithes, and shall have a cooperative spirit, and be faithful in attendance at church services.

### **C. Duties of Officers**

#### **(1) Pastor**

(a) The Pastor shall be the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall direct its activities.

**(b)** The Pastor shall be recognized as a member of the Church Board, president of the assembly, and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the assembly and of the Church Board.

**(c)** The Pastor shall provide for all services of the assembly and shall specifically arrange for all special meetings, conventions, and revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without the Pastor's approval.

**(d)** As chairman of the Church Board, the Pastor shall be a member of the nominating committee for the selection of deacon nominees. The Pastor shall privately interview those nominated, ascertaining their eligibility and availability to serve as deacons.

**(e)** The Pastor should conduct a training class at least once a year on the responsibilities of the Church Board, deacons, trustees, secretary, treasurer, and other church leaders. Such training course shall be based upon the scriptural directives for church leadership and the church bylaws.

**(f)** The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

## **(2) Secretary**

**(a)** The secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Church Board and of the annual and special business meetings of the assembly.

**(b)** The secretary shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of the secretary's duties.

**(c)** The secretary shall be the custodian of all legal documents.

**(d)** The secretary shall file such annual corporation reports with the secretary of state as may be required by state law.

**(e)** The secretary shall be amenable to the Pastor and the Church Board.

## **(3) Treasurer**

**(a)** The treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly that are committed to them, subject to the supervision of the Church Board. The treasurer shall deposit all funds in federally insured accounts, or any other account approved by the Church Board, in the name of the assembly. All checks issued on behalf of the church must be signed by the treasurer and one additional officer authorized by the Church Board.

(b) The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements. The treasurer shall present a report for each regular meeting of the Church Board, and shall present an annual report to the assembly in its annual business meeting.

(c) The treasurer shall assist the assembly in acquiring and maintaining available tax exemptions under state and local law.

(d) The treasurer shall provide a record of all identified giving to each donor at least annually.

(e) The treasurer shall be the custodian of all the financial records of the church.

(f) The treasurer shall be amenable to the Pastor and the Church Board.

### **Section 3. Deacons**

The deacons shall be persons of mature Christian experience and knowledge, be filled with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4, not be entangled in their marriage relations, except when the divorce occurred prior to conversion; or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9); or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15), and meet the requirements as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Acts 6. Deacons shall be at least 23 years old, and shall have been members of the assembly for at least one year. They shall currently support the church with their tithes and offerings, have a cooperative spirit, and regularly attend church services. All Church Board members are chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in a supportive role to the Pastor, according to Acts 6. No credentialed minister shall serve as a deacon in any assembly. No credentialed minister's spouse may serve as a deacon in any assembly in cases where that credentialed minister serves in a leading or supporting pastoral role.

### **Section 4. Fiduciary Duties**

The law imposes several fiduciary duties on officers, deacons, and trustees, including the duties of due care and diligence, loyalty, avoidance of self-dealing, expending designated contributions for the purposes specified, and not commingling personal and corporate funds.

### **Section 5. District Intervention**

Should irreconcilable differences arise between the Pastor and other members of the Church Board or members of the church body, destroying unity and the successful ministry of the local assembly, intervention from the District may be requested by the Pastor, a majority of the Church Board members, or a petition signed by not less than 30% of the voting members. Upon such invitation, an investigating committee appointed by the District Superintendent from among the Executive Presbytery and including the Sectional Presbyter shall investigate such differences and, upon a two-thirds majority vote of the committee, declare the church under District supervision. The term "District supervision" means that the investigating committee has the authority to (1) suspend the Constitution and/or Bylaws of the church, (2) direct the Pastor to resign, (3) suspend the board invested with the authority to manage the affairs

of the church, (4) remove individual members from the board of the church, (5) re-classify the church as a District Council affiliated church, or (6) appoint a temporary Church Board of directors invested with the authority to manage both the secular and ecclesiastical affairs of the church until such strife will cease.

If the Pastor is also the Sectional Presbyter, the Assistant Sectional Presbyter shall be a member of the investigating committee in the Pastor's place.

When district officers receive such requests for intervention, it is recommended they first verify that scriptural principles of reconciliation, such as those found in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19, have been reasonably attempted by the requesting party in situations involving interpersonal conflict.

## **ARTICLE VIII. ELECTIONS, VACANCIES, AND REMOVALS**

### **Section 1. Elections**

#### **A. Pastor**

(1) The Pastor shall be nominated by the Church Board. Recommendations may be made to the Church Board by any member of the assembly.

(2) The Pastor shall be elected to serve for one or more years or for an indefinite period of time as may be determined at time of election.

(3) Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Balloting shall be on only one applicant at a time.

(4) A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election. In the case of a Pastor's being considered for reelection, only a majority vote is necessary.

(5) When voting on a pastoral candidate, a vote may be conducted at the conclusion of the last service in which the candidate is ministering.

(6) In the event either the Pastor or any other member or members of the assembly shall challenge the validity of an election, the validity of the election shall be arbitrated by the District Executive Presbytery or its designees, and the decision of the arbitrators shall be final.

#### **B. Secretary**

The secretary shall be elected by the Church Board from among its members. The term of office shall be one year, and the secretary may serve consecutive terms.

### **C. Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be elected by the Church Board from among the active voting members of the assembly. The term of office shall be one year, and the treasurer may serve consecutive terms.

### **D. Deacons**

Deacons shall be nominated by a nominating committee appointed by the Church Board, and they shall be elected by a majority vote of those active voting members present at an annual business meeting of the assembly at which an election is to be conducted. Active voting members may recommend nominees to the nominating committee, however nominations for deacon shall not be accepted from the floor during any business meeting. Deacons shall be elected for a term of one or more years, and shall hold office until the annual business meeting at which their successor is elected. Deacons may not serve more than six consecutive years. The terms of deacons shall be rotated appropriately.

## **Section 2. Vacancies and Removals**

### **A. Pastor**

When a vacancy in the office of the Pastor shall occur, an interim Pastor shall be appointed by the Church Board until a Pastor shall be chosen as prescribed in Article VIII, Section 1, A, of these Bylaws.

When a Pastor's credentials are withdrawn by the District or General Council, the Pastor's term of office shall be automatically terminated.

Should a special business meeting be called as provided for in Article IX, Section 3, of these Bylaws, for the purpose of voting on a Pastor before their term expires, a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting shall be required to remove the Pastor from office. If a Pastor is removed under such action, severance pay shall be given as provided in Article XI, Section 3, C, of these Bylaws.

### **B. Secretary and Treasurer**

The office of secretary and treasurer shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of the officer's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

### **C. Deacons**

The office of deacon shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of a deacon's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

## **D. In General**

Any office or position of leadership in the church (other than that of the Pastor) may be terminated by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at a special business meeting called for the limited purpose of the removal of such member from the office or position of leadership which he or she holds.

The Pastor may remove a person from a position of leadership if such person fails to be amenable to the Pastor or the Church Board. This action shall be initiated by the Pastor and ratified by the Church Board. In the case of the removal of a deacon by the Pastor and Church Board, such decision may be appealed to the congregation.

## **E. Filling Vacancies**

A vacancy in the office of secretary, treasurer, or deacon may be filled by appointment of the Church Board for the unexpired term.

# **ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS**

## **Section 1. Meetings for Worship**

Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under direction of the Pastor or the Church Board if there is no Pastor.

## **Section 2. Annual Business Meeting**

There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place and the report of all officers shall be presented. This meeting shall be held on the \_\_\_\_\_ of each year. The time and place shall be announced by the Pastor. Notice of the date, time, and place of each annual business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on the two Sunday mornings immediately preceding the time set for the meeting, or by First Class mail. In the case of notification by mail, the date of mailing shall be not more than 40 days or less than five days in advance of the date of the meeting.

## **Section 3. Special Business Meetings**

Special business meetings of the assembly may be called by the Pastor, or by a majority of the Church Board, or by a petition signed by not less than 30% of the active voting members of the assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services and financially supported this assembly with their tithes for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted. Petitions pertaining to the business affairs of the church shall be submitted to the Pastor or the secretary of the Church Board. A petition pertaining to the status of the Pastor shall be directed to the District Superintendent who shall arrange for a special business meeting of the assembly. No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any twelve month period. Notice of the date,

time, place, and purpose of each special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting, or by mail. In the case of notification by mail, the date of mailing shall be at least five days in advance of the date of the meeting. No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting of the assembly.

#### **Section 4. Parliamentary Order**

All business meetings of the church shall be conducted in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, and governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

#### **Section 5. Voting Constituency**

**A. Qualifying of voters.** The voting constituency at all business meetings of the assembly shall consist of all active voting members who are present (Article VI, Section 1).

**B. Transfer members.** Transfer members shall have voting privileges after 30 days of transfer of membership (Article VI, Section 4).

**C. Members under process of discipline.** No member under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed (Article VI, Section 9).

**D. Absentee voting.** Absentee ballots may be accepted in business meetings of the assembly from active voting members who are unable to attend by reason of illness, infirmity, workers on duty, or those out of town for valid reasons. Absentee ballots shall be qualified if the following conditions are met.

(1) The ballot shall consist of a printed ballot form that has been provided by the assembly and shall be sealed in an envelope with the voter's signature on the outside.

(2) The ballot shall denote the decision or position being voted on with the vote listed thereafter.

(3) The ballot shall be in the hand of the Pastor, church secretary, or deposited in the church office, 24 hours prior to the convening of the business meeting. Such ballot may be delivered by mail, or by a person.

(4) The Church Board shall check all absentee ballots to see whether they are qualified. If so, they shall be counted on each vote taken on the decision or position being considered in that meeting on the original proposition.

(5) If the validity of an absentee ballot is in question, the active voting members present shall make the final decisions as to its validity.



(6) Absentee ballots shall not be accepted for meetings called for the removal of officers or other church leaders.

### **Section 6. Quorum**

One-fourth of the active voting members of this assembly shall constitute a quorum.

### **Section 7. Order of Business**

The recommended order of business for the annual business meeting of this assembly shall be as follows:

- A. Devotional;
- B. Reading of previous minutes;
- C. Report of treasurer;
- D. Report of committees;
- E. Unfinished business;
- F. Election of officers;
- G. New business; and
- H. Adjournment.

### **Section 8. The Church Board**

The Church Board shall meet monthly for the transaction of business for the assembly, time and place to be announced by the Pastor. Additional meetings of the Church Board may be called by the Pastor. A majority of the board members must be present to constitute a quorum.

### **Section 9. Membership Roll**

The Church Board shall review the list of active voting members at least annually, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the board immediately preceding the annual business meeting, and compile a current list of active voting members.

## **ARTICLE X. DEPARTMENTS**

This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and ministries as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work. All such departments and ministries shall be subordinate to the

assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Pastor and Church Board, and the Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees or departments.

## **ARTICLE XI. FINANCES**

### **Section 1. In General**

All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions, tithes, and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Church Board and shall be administered by the Treasurer under their direction (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

### **Section 2. Handling of Offerings**

All offerings shall be counted by at least two authorized persons before the funds are removed from the church building. An offering receipts form shall be signed in duplicate by those counting the offering, with one copy going to the treasurer and the other copy given to the Pastor. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving. All funds shall be deposited in federally insured accounts, or any other account approved by the Church Board, in the name of the assembly.

### **Section 3. Pastoral Remuneration**

**A.** The Pastor shall be remunerated for pastoral services by a salary, a percentage of tithes and offerings, or by other means agreed upon by the Church Board and the Pastor. The Church Board shall review the Pastor's remuneration at least annually.

**B.** The Pastor shall be given consideration by the Church Board for expenses incurred by attendance at District Councils, General Councils, and other District functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the church as determined by the Church Board.

**C.** In the event a Pastor is removed from office by a vote of the active voting membership of the church, or shall fail to be sustained by a vote of the active voting membership at the end of a term, he/she shall be given a minimum of two months regular or average remuneration as severance pay, except in the case of moral failure.

**D.** In the event of the death of the senior Pastor of a church, a benefit of compassion shall be given to the surviving spouse departing from and not continuing in the pastorate of that church. This benefit shall be the beginning of consideration and should not be limited to the following provisions. An extension of two months salary, weekly or in one sum, and benefits from the church being pastored at that time shall be provided, with further consideration urged and appreciated. Church owned housing or

housing allowance shall also be provided for two months, with further consideration urged and appreciated.

**E. Minister's Retirement.** It is recommended that each church contribute an amount equal to 5% or more, in accordance to applicable legal limitations, of the minister's compensation to the minister's MBA Retirement account with a minimum contribution of \$50.00 each month. This should be in addition to the minister's regular compensation. A letter will be sent by the District Executive Secretary in November of each year to each church to be read to the Church Board reminding them of this recommendation and encouraging their compliance.

#### **Section 4. Benevolence Fund**

A benevolence fund shall be established by this assembly for the exercise of its religious and charitable purposes. Suggestions by donors for fund disbursements shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. The administration of this fund, including all disbursements, is subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Church Board. Donors making contributions to the benevolence fund will receive a church receipt for their contributions.

### **ARTICLE XII. PROPERTY**

#### **Section 1. Title**

All property of the assembly shall be deeded to the assembly and held in its name.

#### **Section 2. Purchases and Sales of Real Property**

All purchases, sales, mortgages or other encumbrances of real property shall be authorized by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership who are in attendance and voting at a regular or special meeting of the assembly.

#### **Section 3. Discontinuation of Church Services**

Should this assembly cease to maintain a weekly worship service for a period of three months under the direction of a leader duly authorized by and in good standing with the District Council, it shall be dissolved and its properties disposed of according to Article XII, Section 5, of these Bylaws.

#### **Section 4. Disaffiliation**

Title to all real property now owned or hereafter acquired by the assembly shall be held in trust in favor of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, both of Springfield, Missouri. In the event that the assembly shall be divided over doctrinal or any other issues, or shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God, all property of the assembly shall remain with those members, whatever their number, desiring continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adhering to its Statement of Fundamental Truths. The determination of

which group of members desires continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adheres to its Statement of Fundamental Truths shall be arbitrated by the District Presbytery of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, and its decision shall be final and binding. If all of the members of the assembly shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God for doctrinal or any other reasons, then all of the property of such assembly shall revert to said District Council and shall be used by the District as an Assemblies of God church if possible, and if not possible, the District may sell the property and apply the proceeds in any manner consistent with its stated purposes.

## **Section 5. Dissolution**

Upon the dissolution of the assembly, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, trustee, or any other individual. The Church Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the assembly, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the assembly by conveying the same to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, for the purposes of the assembly, and provided that said District Council at the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax law. Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

## **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS**

Articles III, XII, and XIII, of these Bylaws may be amended only by the affirmative vote of one-hundred percent (100%) of the active voting members present at any annual or special business meeting called for the exclusive purpose of amending these Bylaws. Article IV of these Bylaws is not subject to amendment. The remaining Articles of these Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at an annual or special meeting of the assembly. All proposed amendments are subject to the following conditions: (1) the proposed amendment is consistent with the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God; (2) the proposed amendment shall have been first submitted to the Church Board for consideration; and (3) written notice of the proposed amendment is mailed (by regular mail) by the authority of the Church Board to the last known address of each voting member at least ten days before the date set for the meeting at which the proposed change will be considered. This written notice requirement applies to both annual and special meetings, and is in addition to any other applicable notice requirements for said meeting.

**Bylaws**  
FOR  
**District Council Affiliated Assemblies**

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# Bylaws

FOR

## District Council Affiliated Assemblies

### PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ, by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands; we, the members of this assembly, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with, and as a part of, the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God; and that we do hereby adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this assembly shall be \_\_\_\_\_ .

This assembly's affiliation with the Assemblies of God shall be made known in its name, its advertising, and its publications.

### ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES AND PURPOSES

The prerogatives and purposes of a District Council affiliated assembly shall be as follows.

**A.** This assembly shall be governed by these Bylaws and the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, and shall conduct its affairs according to the standard of the New Testament scriptures and of the Southern Missouri District Council, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace... till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12,13).

**B.** In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest, or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes, and to exercise all other powers conferred upon it by its charter or by the applicable nonprofit corporation law of this state; all in accordance with its Bylaws as the same may be hereafter amended.

**C.** This assembly is organized exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any

future federal income tax law. In particular, this assembly is organized exclusively for the following purposes: To establish and maintain a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands; and to assume our share of responsibility as a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world.

**D.** This assembly shall cooperate with the District Council and the General Council to extend the work and Kingdom of God throughout the world. It shall support the missionary program as agreed upon. It shall participate in District Council sessions through its appointed delegate.

**E.** This assembly shall recognize that the District Council has the authority and right to approve scriptural doctrine; also to disapprove unscriptural doctrine and to withdraw their certificate of affiliation if deemed necessary.

### **ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION**

This assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith, associated in the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

Officers of the District Council and General Council shall be recognized and respected by the Pastor and members of this assembly.

It is understood and agreed that this assembly shall conform its standards of membership, qualifications for officers, and requirements in a Pastor, to those standards which are set by the District Council. All action taken under these Bylaws by the assembly shall be subject to review and approval by the Executive Board and the General Board.

By its affiliation, the assembly, its officers, and members agree to submit to the authority of, and be governed by, the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God as now in effect or hereafter amended.

All District Council affiliated assemblies shall be required to:

1. Become and remain incorporated with the State of Missouri;
2. Secure and maintain insurance coverage which meets the minimum standards approved by the District Presbytery through the District's authorized provider;
3. Maintain weekly church services;

4. Submit a quarterly report form to the Sectional Presbyter and District; and

5. Maintain an active voting membership roll.

The District Presbytery shall have the prerogative of authorizing any evaluation, supervision, assistance, or other actions necessary to ensure the viability of all District Council affiliated assemblies and the protection of the District.

#### **ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH**

This church shall maintain as its tenets of faith the Statement of Fundamental Truths contained in the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

#### **ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES**

##### **Section 1. Baptism in Water**

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).

##### **Section 2. Holy Communion**

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

#### **ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP**

##### **Section 1. Membership Eligibility**

Active voting membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who possess the following qualifications.

**A.** The applicant shall have a testimony to an experience of the "new birth."

**B.** Approval for membership shall be preceded by baptism in water by immersion.

**C.** The applicant shall be expected to manifest a lifestyle portraying a positive Christian testimony which is free from worldliness (1 John 2:15).

**D.** The applicant must abstain from drinking intoxicating liquors of any kind and the use of tobacco in any form.

**E.** The applicant must refrain from the sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21.



**F.** The applicant must agree, and adhere to scriptural basis for divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15-28).

**G.** The applicant must indicate willingness to tithe regularly to the financial support of the church in which membership is requested.

**H.** The applicant must accept the Tenets of Faith as set forth in Article IV of these bylaws.

**I.** The applicant must be at least 18 years of age.

**J.** The applicant has regularly attended services of, and supported this assembly with personal tithes, for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to the date of application for membership.

**K.** The applicant agrees to be governed by the bylaws of this assembly, and of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, as both may be amended from time to time.

## **Section 2. Procedure for Membership Recognition**

Those individuals eligible for membership who shall desire to become members of this church shall make their request to the Pastor. The Pastor and General Board shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership. Those approved for membership shall be received into the church publicly at any of its regular services, and their names thereupon added to the church membership roll. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within thirty days before an annual business meeting or within ten days before a special business meeting.

## **Section 3. Pastor and Spouse**

By virtue of office the Pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during the Pastor's tenure. The Pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the Pastor, subject to the standards of Section 1 of this Article VI.

## **Section 4. Transfer Members**

A member in good standing of another Assemblies of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of this Article VI (other than the attendance and support requirements), may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the Pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of the General Board.

## **Section 5. Junior Membership**

Junior membership shall be available for young people under 18 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, meet the scriptural standards for membership as specified in these bylaws, and are approved

by the Pastor. When the junior member reaches the age of 18, they must then apply for adult membership and meet the same standard of membership as an active member at the time they apply.

## **Section 6. Associate Members**

The Pastor and General Board may approve the acceptance of associate members. Eligibility for associate membership is available to any person who is a member in good standing of an Assemblies of God church in another community, who is in this community on a temporary basis, and who intends to return to his or her home church. Associate members shall be entitled to all the privileges of active members, except that they shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be eligible for the office of secretary-treasurer.

## **Section 7. Honorary Members**

The General Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve honorary members by a unanimous vote of the members present. Honorary membership is available to any member who has left the church indefinitely (District officers, missionaries, evangelists, Armed Forces, and those who have distinguished themselves in Christian service, etc.). Such membership shall have an inactive status unless activated by the General Board. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a consistent Christian life, remains sound in doctrine, and maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly. Removal of such membership shall be determined by a majority vote of the Executive Board and General Board.

## **Section 8. Inactive Membership**

Voting members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of two consecutive months, or cease to contribute regularly to its support as determined by the Pastor and General Board for a period of two consecutive months, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to active status. That person or persons shall be notified by first class mail that this action has been taken.

## **Section 9. Discipline**

**A. Grounds.** Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible (Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:15-20; Luke 17:3; John 20:23; Acts 16:4; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17). The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through exposing sinful behavior. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective. Any member of the Assembly is subject to discipline on the basis of unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith of this assembly. The discipline of Pastors is administered by the District Presbytery.

**B. Procedure.** Should any member of this church, in the opinion of the Executive and General Boards, fall below the standard of membership as stated in Bylaws Article VI. Membership, Section 1, in faith or practice, or should their spirit become contentious and discordant to the well-being of the church the following procedure, based on Matthew 18:15-18, shall be followed.

(1) At the directive of the District Superintendent, the Pastor and/or a member of either the General or the Executive Board shall make every reasonable effort to contact the person and resolve the matter.

(2) If the first step does not resolve the matter, members of the Executive and General Boards, as directed by the District Superintendent, shall attempt to meet with the member in an effort to resolve the matter.

(3) If the first and second steps do not resolve the matter, the Executive and General Boards may, at their discretion upon a majority vote, do one of two things.

(a) Place the person's membership on probation for a specific or indefinite time. The member may be restored from such inactive status to the active membership in the same manner.

(b) Dismiss the person from membership in the church. The disciplined or dismissed member shall have the right within 30 days of such action to appeal to the membership in a special business meeting called for that purpose. Such appeal shall be made in writing and addressed to the District Superintendent. The decision of a majority of the voting members present at such a meeting shall be final.

**C. Resignations.** Members who are under discipline by this assembly forfeit and waive the right to resign from membership in this assembly. Resignations from membership are possible only by those members in good standing who are not under any disciplinary action.

## **ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT**

### **Section 1. The Church Board**

The government of this assembly shall be vested in the Church Board made up of an Executive Board and a General Board. The Executive Board shall consist of the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, the District Executive Secretary, the Executive Presbyter of the respective region, the Sectional Presbyter, and the Pastor, and shall be chaired by the District Superintendent. The General Board shall consist of the Sectional Executive Committee and the Pastor, and shall be chaired by the Sectional Presbyter. These boards shall serve in the management of all spiritual and material affairs of the assembly. The General Board shall be empowered to act, between meetings of the Executive Board, in matters pertaining to the assembly, except where specified otherwise by these Bylaws. Their actions shall be subject to the approval, if contested, of the Executive Board. The Pastor and Sectional Presbyter shall serve on both the Executive Board and the General Board of the assembly. The General Board shall meet at least on an annual basis to review the state of the assembly.

## **Section 2. Ministry Committee**

A Ministry Committee may be chosen at the discretion of the Pastor and Presbyter from the membership of the assembly to consult with the Pastor and make recommendations to the Pastor and General Board in matters pertaining to the assembly. The Pastor and Presbyter, at their discretion, may receive names recommended for the Ministry Committee. The final appointment shall be made by the Pastor in consultation with the Presbyter.

It is understood that the Ministry Committee members are not deacons or trustees. They do not govern the church or have any authority over the church affairs unless some authority is delegated by the Executive and General Boards (refer to Article VII, Section 1 of these Bylaws) for some special circumstance. The Ministry Committee is a committee which assists the Pastor as the Pastor deems necessary.

The Ministry Committee has no power or authority over the Pastor to dictate to or demand any certain action. The Pastor is under the authority and supervision of the Executive and General Boards. The Pastor has the authority to make decisions about ongoing operations of the church without seeking approval of the Ministry Committee. The Pastor, Executive and General Boards, and Ministry Committee shall be sensitive toward the needs and wishes of the congregation.

In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the Ministry Committee shall recognize the authority of the Sectional Presbyter to appoint interim speakers to fill the pulpit, and the authority of the District Presbytery to name the Pastor's successor as defined in Article VIII, Section 1, A.

The members of this committee shall be supporters of the church in tithes and offerings and have a cooperative spirit and shall regularly attend church services. Ministry Committee members shall not hold ministerial credentials and shall act in a supportive role to the Pastor.

## **Section 3. Duties of Officers**

### **A. Pastor**

(1) The Pastor shall be the chairman of the Ministry Committee, leader of the congregation, and be the spiritual overseer of the assembly, under the supervision of the Executive and General Boards. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without the Pastor's approval.

(2) The Pastor shall be responsible to maintain the membership roll, recommending any revisions to the membership roll to the General Board at least annually, retaining a copy for the Pastor's records, and providing a copy for the church secretary.

### **B. Secretary**

(1) The secretary shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of the secretary's duties.

(2) The secretary shall keep official and legal documents committed to the secretary's care.

(3) The secretary shall file such annual corporation reports with the Secretary of State as may be required by state law.

(4) The secretary shall be amenable to the Pastor and the Executive and General Boards.

### **C. Treasurer**

(1) The treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly that are committed to them, subject to the supervision of the Pastor and the Executive and General Boards. The treasurer shall deposit all funds in federally insured accounts, or any other account approved by the Executive and General Boards, in the name of the assembly. All checks issued on behalf of the church must be signed by the treasurer and the Pastor.

(2) The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements. The treasurer shall assist the Pastor in completing the quarterly and annual financial reports required by the Executive and General Boards, and shall present an annual report to the assembly in its annual business meeting.

(3) The treasurer shall assist the assembly in acquiring and maintaining available tax exemptions under state and local law.

(4) The treasurer shall provide a record of all identified giving to each donor at least annually.

(5) The treasurer shall be charged with the care of the financial records of the church. It is recommended that all financial records be kept and secured within the church facilities.

(6) The treasurer shall be amenable to the Pastor and the Executive and General Boards.

## **ARTICLE VIII. APPOINTMENTS, VACANCIES, REMOVALS**

### **Section 1. Pastor**

**A. Appointment.** The Pastor shall be appointed by the District Presbytery. Whenever feasible, an expression of the assembly may be taken to determine the desire of the members. The Pastor shall serve under such appointment until the Pastor's successor shall be appointed. The District Presbytery shall have the right to determine the Pastor's term of office.

**B. Vacancy.** In the event of the resignation of the Pastor before the expiration of the term of office, the Pastor shall notify the District Superintendent and the Sectional Presbyter at least 30 days in advance.

**C. Removal.** In the event of serious charges being preferred against a Pastor, or should the Pastor's ministry cease to be effective, the Executive Board may remove the Pastor.

## **Section 2. Secretary-Treasurer**

A secretary and a treasurer (or secretary-treasurer) may be appointed by the Pastor, subject to the approval of the Sectional Presbyter, from among the members of the church, to serve for a period of one year from date of appointment, or until a successor is appointed.

## **Section 3. In General**

Other positions of leadership in the church shall be appointed by the Pastor, subject to the approval of the Sectional Presbyter.

## **Section 4. Vacancies**

Should any vacancy occur among the officers of the assembly, the Pastor, subject to the approval of the Sectional Presbyter, may fill such vacancy for the unexpired term, in consideration of the needs and desires of the assembly.

## **Section 5. Removals**

Any office in the assembly other than that of the Pastor may be declared vacant by action of the Executive and General Boards. Grounds for such action shall be (1) unscriptural conduct, (2) doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith, or (3) incompetency in office. Any such officer being removed shall have an opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing before the assembly if desired.

# **ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS**

## **Section 1. Meetings for Worship**

Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the Pastor or the General Board if there is no Pastor.

## **Section 2. Annual Business Meeting**

There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the appointed officers shall be installed and the reports of all officers shall be read. This meeting shall be held in the first quarter of each year, the time and place to be announced by the Pastor or a member of the General Board, after approval for the meeting is given by the Presbyter. Due notice is to be given on the two Sunday mornings immediately preceding the time set for the meeting, or by First Class mail. In the case of the latter, the date of mailing shall be not more than 40 days or less than 5 days in advance of the date of the meeting.

### **Section 3. Special Business Meetings**

Special business meetings of the assembly may be called by the District Superintendent or by the Sectional Presbyter with the District Superintendent's approval. The Pastor may make request to the District Superintendent or the Sectional Presbyter for a special meeting to be called. Special meetings may also be initiated by petition, having been signed by not less than 30% of the active voting members of the assembly, copies of such petition to be placed in the hands of the Pastor, the church secretary, the Sectional Presbyter, and the District Superintendent. Such meeting shall be called by the District Superintendent. Only those members who have regularly attended services and financially supported this assembly with their tithes for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.

Petitions pertaining to the business affairs of the church shall be submitted to the Pastor and the District Superintendent.

A petition pertaining to the status of the Pastor shall be directed to the District Superintendent who shall arrange for a special business meeting of the assembly.

No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any twelve month period. Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of each special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on the two Sunday mornings immediately preceding the time set for the meeting, or by First Class mail. In the case of the latter, the date of mailing shall be not more than 40 days or less than five (5) days in advance of the date of the meeting.

No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting of the assembly.

### **Section 4. Conducting of Business Meetings and Communication of Minutes**

Annual and special business meetings of the assembly shall be conducted by a member of the Executive or General Board, who shall preside as chairman of the meeting. Upon authorization from the Presbyter, the Pastor may chair such meeting, as long as an additional member of either the Executive or General Board is present. Minutes of all meetings of the assembly shall be forwarded to all Executive and General Board members within seven days of the meeting. Decisions made in such meetings shall be considered approved if no challenge is made by either the Executive or General Board within 30 days.

### **Section 5. Parliamentary Order**

All business meetings of the church shall be conducted in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, and governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

## **Section 6. Voting Constituency**

**A. Qualifying of voters.** The voting constituency at all business meetings of the assembly shall consist of all active voting members who are present (Article VI of these Bylaws).

**B. Transfer members.** Transfer members shall have voting privileges after 30 days of transfer of membership (Article VI, Section 4, of these Bylaws).

**C. Members under process of discipline.** No member under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed (Article VI, Section 9, of these Bylaws).

**D. Absentee voting.** Absentee ballots may be accepted in business meetings of the assembly from active voting members who are unable to attend by reason of illness, infirmity, workers on duty, or those out of town for valid reasons. Absentee ballots shall be qualified if the following conditions are met.

(1) The ballot shall consist of a printed ballot form that has been provided by the assembly and shall be sealed in an envelope with the voter's signature on the outside.

(2) The ballot shall denote the decision or position being voted on with the vote listed thereafter.

(3) The ballot shall be in the hand of the Pastor, church secretary, or deposited in the church office, 24 hours prior to the convening of the business meeting. Such ballot may be delivered by mail, or by a person.

(4) The Sectional Presbyter shall check all absentee ballots to see whether they are qualified. If so, they shall be counted on each vote taken on the decision or position being considered in that meeting on the original proposition.

(5) If the validity of an absentee ballot is in question, the active voting members present shall make the final decisions as to its validity.

(6) Absentee ballots shall not be accepted for meetings called for the removal of officers or other church leaders.

## **Section 7. Quorum**

One-fourth of the active voting members of this assembly shall constitute a quorum.

## **Section 8. Order of business**

The recommended order of business for the annual business meeting of this assembly shall be as follows:

**A. Devotional;**



**B.** Reading of previous minutes;

**C.** Report of treasurer;

**D.** Report of committees;

**E.** Unfinished business;

**F.** Installation of officers;

**G.** New business; and

**H.** Adjournment.

### **Section 9. Ministry Committee**

It is recommended that the Ministry Committee meet monthly at the call of the Pastor to encourage, evaluate, and determine ministry tasks.

## **ARTICLE X. DEPARTMENTS**

This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and ministries as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work. All such departments and ministries shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Pastor and General Board, and the Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees or departments.

## **ARTICLE XI. FINANCES**

### **Section 1. In General**

All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions, tithes, and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the General Board and shall be administered by the treasurer under their direction (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

### **Section 2. Handling of Offerings**

All offerings shall be counted by at least two authorized persons before the funds are removed from the church building. An offering receipts form shall be signed in duplicate by those counting the offering, with one copy going to the treasurer and the other copy given to the Pastor. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving. All funds shall be

deposited in federally insured accounts, or any other account approved by the Executive and General Boards, in the name of the assembly.

### **Section 3. Required Reports**

The Pastor and secretary-treasurer shall be responsible to complete the quarterly and annual financial reports and other required reports and submit those reports to the District Executive Secretary and to the Sectional Presbyter.

### **Section 4. Pastoral Remuneration**

**A.** The Pastor shall be remunerated for pastoral services by a salary, a percentage of tithes and offerings, or by other means agreed upon by the General Board and the Pastor. The General Board shall review the Pastor's remuneration at least annually.

**B.** The Pastor shall be given consideration by the General Board for expenses incurred by attendance at District Councils, General Councils, and other District functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the church.

**C.** In the event that a Pastor is removed by petition of the church members before the Pastor's term expires for any reason except moral failure, the Pastor shall be given a minimum of two months regular or average remuneration as severance pay.

**D.** In the event of the death of the senior Pastor of a church, a benefit of compassion shall be given to the surviving spouse departing from and not continuing in the pastorate of that church. This benefit shall be the beginning of consideration and should not be limited to the following provisions. An extension of two months salary, weekly or in one sum, and benefits from the church being pastored at that time shall be provided, with further consideration urged and appreciated. Church owned housing or housing allowance shall also be provided for two months, with further consideration urged and appreciated.

**E. Minister's Retirement.** It is recommended that each church contribute an amount equal to 5% or more, in accordance to applicable legal limitations, of the minister's compensation to the minister's MBA Retirement account with a minimum contribution of \$50 each month. This contribution should be made in addition to the minister's regular compensation. The General Board shall review the Pastor's retirement benefit at least annually.

### **Section 5. Benevolence Fund**

A Benevolence Fund shall be established by this assembly for the exercise of its religious and charitable purposes. Suggestions by donors for fund disbursements shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. The administration of this fund, including all disbursements, is subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the General Board. Donors making contributions to the Benevolence Fund will receive a church receipt for their contributions.

## **ARTICLE XII. PROPERTY**

### **Section 1**

All Property of the assembly shall be deeded to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, a corporation, 528 W. Battlefield Rd., Springfield, Missouri 65807.

### **Section 2**

Property deeded to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, shall be held in trust by them for the assembly as provided in these Bylaws. When the church is affiliated as a General Council assembly, it may request the return of the deed in its corporate name. Such request may be approved provided the District Council is not responsible for the debt or encumbrances on the property.

### **Section 3**

Purchase or sale of District Council Affiliated Assemblies properties whose titles are held by the District shall be authorized and directed by the District Executive Presbytery. No real property of the assembly shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, encumbered, or otherwise disposed of, without the same having first been approved by the Executive Board and General Board and then recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of those in attendance and voting at the annual or special business meeting of the assembly called for the consideration of the proposal. The Pastor shall submit these recommendations to the Executive Board, who shall evaluate and act upon them appropriately. The District Superintendent and the Sectional Presbyter shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized.

### **Section 4. Dissolution**

Upon the dissolution of the assembly, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, trustee, or any other individual. The Executive Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the assembly, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the assembly by conveying the same to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, for the purposes of the assembly, and provided that said District Council at the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax law. Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

## **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the District Council, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted to the District Presbytery first for consideration, and a copy

mailed to each member of the District Council not less than one month prior to the time of the meeting at which the amendment is to be considered. A two-thirds majority vote of all members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption.