

BYLAWS

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BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - PARLIAMENTARY ORDER

This District Council shall be governed by the parliamentary procedure of Roberts Rules of Order newly revised, all in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE II - VOTING CONSTITUENCY AND QUORUM

SECTION 1. THE VOTING CONSTITUENCY

The eligible voting constituency shall consist of all accredited registered members who are present at the time set to convene. This shall include Ordained, Licensed, and Certified ministers and church delegates. Each delegate shall present a letter from the secretary or pastor of his* respective assembly certifying his appointment to represent the assembly in the district meeting or be duly registered as such.

SECTION 2. QUORUM

All ministers and delegates who shall respond to the announcement of the time and place of a District Council meeting as decided by the District Presbytery, shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 3. THE COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

The courtesy of the floor may be extended to visitors by invitation of the Chair.

ARTICLE III- ELECTION OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. TERM OF OFFICE—The term of all officers shall be four years.

SECTION 2. TIME OF ELECTIONS

- A. The District Superintendent and one Executive Presbyter shall be elected at the annual District Council on uneven years.
- B. The Assistant Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, and one Executive Presbyter shall be elected at the annual District Council on even years.

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS

A. District Officers

- 1. The Executive Officers and Executive Presbyters of the District Council shall be men who have been ordained; who are of mature experience and ability; whose lives and ministry are above reproach.
- 2. The Executive Officers and Executive Presbyters of the District Council shall be required to have been members of this District for at least one full year prior to District Council. They shall be deemed fully cooperative in all matters.
- 3. The Executive Presbyters, other than the Superintendent and the Secretary-Treasurer, shall be ordained pastors in the District at the time of their election and hold no other District or Sectional office while serving.

B. Sectional Presbyters, Assistant Presbyters, and Secretaries

- 1. The Sectional Presbyters shall be men who are ordained; who are of mature experience and ability; who have experience as a lead pastor, and whose lives and ministry are above reproach.
 - 2. The Sectional Assistant Presbyter and Sectional Secretary shall be ordained or licensed, and of mature experience and ability whose lives and ministry are above reproach.
 - 3. They shall be required to have been members of this District Council for at least one year prior to election and an active member within a church in the section in which they serve.
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*Masculine gender used throughout document is intended to represent both sexes and to conserve space.

SECTION 4. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

A. Procedure

1. The following procedure shall apply to all elections including Executive Officers, Executive Presbyters, and Non-Resident Executive Presbyters. If no nominee receives a two-thirds majority of all votes cast on the first ballot, all names receiving 5 votes or more shall be presented to the Council for further consideration with the number of votes they each received. If an election is not reached after the second ballot is cast, all names except the three receiving the highest number of votes shall be dropped. If an election is not reached in the next ballot, the two receiving the highest number of votes will be balloted upon until one receives the necessary two-thirds majority of all ballots cast.
2. Names of all nominees and the number of votes received by each nominee on each ballot shall be recorded in the minutes of the District Council.

B. Election of District Officers

1. The Executive officers, namely, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and the Secretary-Treasurer, as well as the Executive Presbyters, shall be nominated by secret ballot, it being understood that the first ballot cast shall be considered an electoral ballot.
2. The Executive Presbyters.
 - a. One shall be elected from each of the two areas of the state. These areas shall be defined as North being that area of the state which includes Sections 1 through 7, and the South being that area which includes Sections 8 through 12.
 - b. They shall serve no more than one term in sequence
3. All terms shall begin 30 days after election.

C. Provision to Fill Unexpired Terms of Executives

1. If for any reason the office of Superintendent is vacated, the Assistant Superintendent shall immediately assume the office. However, if he declines, the District Presbytery shall call for a special District Council to fill the vacancy as provided for in Article X, Meetings, Section 2 of the Constitution.
2. If for any reason, the office of Assistant Superintendent or Secretary-Treasurer is vacated, the District Presbytery shall call for a special District Council to fill the vacancy as provided for in Article X, Meeting, Section 2, of the Constitution unless a vacancy occurs within sixty days of the District Council. In such cases, the vacancy shall be filled by election at the next scheduled District Council.

3. Unexpired Terms of Executive Presbyters

- a. Should a vacancy occur in the office of an Executive Presbyter, other than the three Executive Officers, more than six months before the District Council, the District Presbytery shall make an appointment to fill the unexpired term. Should a vacancy occur in less than six months of the end of the term, it shall be filled at the next District Council.
- b. Should the unexpired term be two years or less, the appointment to fill the unexpired term shall not disqualify the one appointed from serving a full term in succession. (See Constitution Article III, Section 4., B., 2., b.)

D. Election of General Council Non-Resident Executive Presbyters

1. By virtue of his office, the Superintendent shall be a nominee for Non-Resident Executive Presbyter to the General Council.
2. An additional nominee for the Office of Non-Resident Executive Presbyter to the General Council, at the call of the General Secretary, shall be elected at the District Council

proceeding the biennial General Council from the ordained ministers of the District who are in good standing.

3. Additional Executive Presbyters called for by the General Council, e.g., Under 40, Women ministers, African Americans, etc., shall be elected from those representative groups who meet the qualifications.
4. A two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall constitute an election.
5. The nominee's names shall be forwarded to the General Secretary's office as required by the General Council.

E. Election of Sectional Officers.

1. The Sectional Officers are to be elected by the Sectional Councils. Each officer is to be voted on separately, beginning with the presbyter.
2. The voting constituency shall consist of the qualified ministers and one duly appointed delegate from each church of the Section.
3. Other than the minimum number of votes necessary for further consideration, the balloting for Sectional Officers shall proceed as in A. 1. of this Section.
3. A Two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall constitute an election.
4. The term of office for all Sectional Officers begin 30 days after election.
5. In the event of a vacancy, the District Superintendent shall make necessary appointments in harmony with the ministers of the section.

SECTION 5. APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL LEADERS.

All departmental leaders shall be appointed by the Superintendent and shall be ratified by the District Presbytery. They shall serve at the discretion of the District Superintendent.

SECTION 6. PASTORS OF PARENT AFFILIATED CAMPUSES

Due to the organizational relationship of off-site campuses to the Parent Assembly, Pastors of Parent Affiliated Churches are not eligible to hold District or Sectional offices.

ARTICLE IV- DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. DUTIES OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- A. He shall be the President of the Corporation in all its legal matters and shall be a member of all committees.
- B. He shall be a full-time officer.
- C. He shall preside at the meetings of the District Presbytery and of the Executive Leadership Team.
- D. He shall preside at the meetings of the District Council.
- E. He shall have personal supervision of all the work of the District with the cooperation of the District Presbytery.
- F. He shall supervise the work in the District Office.
- G. He shall administer discipline in all cases, when requested by the District Presbytery.
- H. He shall sign all District credentials requiring his signature.
- I. He shall perform any other function customary for the presiding officer, or such as may be directed by the District Council or Presbytery.

SECTION 2. DUTIES OF ASSISTANT DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- A. He shall be the Vice-President of the Corporation.
- B. He shall be a member of the Executive Leadership Team.
- C. He shall assist the Superintendent as requested.

SECTION 3. DUTIES OF SECRETARY-TREASURER

- A. He shall be the Secretary-Treasurer of the Corporation.
- B. He shall be a member of the Executive Leadership Team.
- C. He shall be an officer.

- D. He shall keep true records of the proceedings of the District Council and meetings of the District Presbytery and shall publish same as approved and directed by the District Presbytery.
- E. He shall be custodian of the corporation seal of the District Council.
- F. He shall be authorized to sign all official and legal documents and to perform such other functions as are customary or as may be directed by the District Presbytery.
- G. He shall keep an accurate, itemized record of all receipts and disbursements, conducting the work of his office according to accepted business methods.
- H. He shall be the editor of the District publication in consultation with the District Superintendent.
- I. He shall sign all District credentials issued or those requiring his signature.
- J. He shall have the financial records reviewed annually by a certified public accountant, and shall publish the letter certifying the review in the Annual Report.
- K. He shall be bonded for an amount to be determined by the District Presbytery.
- L. He shall maintain a record of all Ordained, Licensed, and Certified Ministers in the District.
- M. He shall be responsible to post the minutes of the District Council along with an updated Constitution and Bylaws to the District website within 60 days of the close of Council. The minutes are to be approved by the Executive Leadership Team prior to their being posted.
- N. He shall be responsible for maintaining the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

SECTION 4. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. The Executive Officers shall be trustees of the District Corporation. They shall be empowered to transact all legal business as authorized by the District Presbytery.
- B. The Executive Leadership Team shall have the oversight of each department of the District during the interim of the District Council sessions, acting for the fellowship in all matters affecting the interest of the District Council as may be delegated to them by the District Presbytery.
- C. The Executive Leadership Team shall provide for its own meetings, and it shall take charge of the Executive phase of the District work, under the supervision of the Superintendent in all matters of moment, or that might affect the welfare of the District as a whole.
- D. The Executive Leadership Team shall act on behalf of the District Presbytery, when it is not in session, regarding ministerial discipline as outlined in the General Council Bylaws, Article X, Discipline.
- E. The Executive Leadership Team shall supervise the finances of all departments of the District.

SECTION 5. DUTIES OF THE HONORARY GENERAL PRESBYTER

He may, when possible, represent the Mississippi District Council at the General Presbytery meetings.

SECTION 6. DUTIES OF DISTRICT PRESBYTERY

The District Presbytery shall act as representatives of this fellowship and shall have the general oversight of the activities of the same during the interim between council sessions. It shall be authorized to act for the fellowship in all matters that affect its interest while the Council is not in session, and shall make a report to the District Council, in session, as requested. It shall provide for its own meetings.

SECTION 7. DUTIES OF SECTIONAL PRESBYTERS

Each Sectional Presbyter shall be responsible for the development of his Section of the District along the following lines:

- A. He shall care for the churches in the Section. In the event some difficulty arises in a church, the Sectional Presbyter should be called by the pastor or the official board of the church. Should the problem necessitate a visit by the Presbyter or other members of the Sectional Committee the church is expected to cover the officials' travel expenses.
- B. He shall promote peace and harmony among the ministers and churches of the Section.

- C. He shall encourage the ministers to cooperate with the District program.
- D. He shall promote World and Home Missionary giving.
- E. He shall cooperate with the Home Missions Director in establishing new churches.
- F. He shall keep a record of the activities of the Section and, if called for, read same to the Sectional Council in session.
- G. He shall attend the District Presbytery Meetings.

SECTION 9. DUTIES OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE

- A. The Sectional Committee, consisting of the Presbyter, Assistant Presbyter, and Secretary shall care for the business of the Section in cooperation with the District Superintendent.
- B. The Sectional Secretary shall attend to correspondence as directed by the Presbyter. He shall take official minutes of all meetings and business.

ARTICLE V- COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees shall be appointed by the District Superintendent in cooperation with the District Presbytery, and the term of office shall continue from the date of appointment to the adjournment of the next regular meeting of the annual meeting of the District Council.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees may be created by the District Council in session or by the District Presbytery between sessions as may be required.

SECTION 3. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEES

There shall be a District Credentials Committee of a minimum of seven Ordained ministers including the Executive Leadership Team who shall administer the written examinations and oral interviews for ministerial candidates at a location to be determined by the Executive Leadership Team. These applications shall upon recommendation by the Credential Committee be submitted to the General Council Credential Committee for its approval and issuance of certificates.

ARTICLE VI – FINANCES

SECTION 1. MINISTERS TITHE AND OBLIGATION TO THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- A. The District Headquarters operation shall be supported by the tithes and offerings of the ministers of the District and any other sources.
- B. All credentialed ministers, Ordained, Licensed and Certified are expected to pay 85% of their ministerial tithe to the District.
- C. All credentialed ministers, Ordained, Licensed and Certified are expected to pay 50% of secular tithe to the District.

SECTION 2. DISBURSEMENTS

The Secretary-Treasurer shall disburse all funds under the supervision of the Executive Leadership Team.

SECTION 3. MINISTER'S BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

The Mississippi District Council endorses Minister's Benefit Association (MBA) and recommends it as a retirement plan for Certified, Licensed, and Ordained ministers. It is recommended that ministers invest 6% of their income each month in MBA and that churches invest an equal amount each month for their pastor's retirement.–The District Superintendent or other officials shall introduce the plan to the churches when called upon.

SECTION 4. DISTRICT CONTRIBUTION TO MINISTER'S MBA ACCOUNTS

The District Secretary shall contribute 2% of the tithes received from those ministers who have MBA accounts and notify his office of their account providing all information needed to make this contribution.

ARTICLE VII- MINISTRY

SECTION 1. MINISTRY DESCRIBED

- A. 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). We understand God's call to these ministry gifts is totally within His sovereign discretion without regard to gender, race, disability, or national origin.
- B. Three classifications of ministry are recognized and transferable among all Assemblies of God districts: the ordained, licensed, and certified minister.
- C. All ordained, licensed, and certified ministers holding current ministerial credentials are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church, and those holding a local church credential as provided below.
- D. A fourth classification of ministry, a local church credential, may be provided by a local General Council Affiliated church. The local church credential shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church) and shall be limited to 2 years, unless the credential is solely required for active and ongoing local ministry in a prison, hospital, or institution (renewable by the local church for an additional 2 years). A person holding a local church credential can perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church if authorized in writing by the senior pastor of the local church issuing the credential.

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 him to fulfill the fourfold mission of the church (Constitution Article V, paragraph 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; 1 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 and District Council Constitution and 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 is expected of all ministers carrying a current fellowship card.
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 forth and 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.

SECTION 3. NONDISCIPLINARY CREDENTIAL TERMINATIONS

A. On the initiative of the minister.

1. Lapsed. Ministers who do not renew their credentials shall be listed as lapsed, provided there is no cause for disciplinary action. Their names shall be published as lapsed in the minister's letter published by the General Council.
2. Resigned. Ministers who elect to remove themselves from the Fellowship shall submit a letter of resignation to the district with which they are affiliated. If there is no cause for disciplinary action, their resignation shall become effective after having been approved by both the District Council and General Council Credentials Committees. Their termination shall be listed in the minister's letter as resigned.
3. Neither of the options in 1. and 2. shall be available to a minister who may be under investigation by the District or General Council Credential Committees for actions which violate ministerial ethics until such time investigation has been completed.

B. On the initiative of the District. (See General Council Bylaws Article X, Section 4.)

If in the opinion of the Executive Leadership Team, a minister's credentials should not be renewed, short of disciplinary action, the minister's name shall be published as not renewed in the Ministers Letter.

C. As a result of affiliation with another church organization. In the event a minister shall identify with another organization granting ministerial credentials, and shall have received such credentials, his credentials with The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall be terminated.

D. Surrender of Credentials. In all cases the minister shall be requested to surrender his credential (Certificate of Ordination, License to Preach, Certificate of Ministry) and current fellowship card to the District Office. The District shall forward these to the office of the General Secretary of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Refusal to surrender his credential and current fellowship card shall be considered insubordination and may result in placing a charge against the minister.

SECTION 4. MINISTERIAL STATUS CHANGES

All changes in a minister's status are to be reported immediately to his District Office, which in turn is to report this information to the office of the General Secretary of the General Council, on the Ministerial Status Report form provided by that office.

SECTION 5. PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS

Assemblies of God ministers are encouraged to respect as sacred and confidential information confided to them while they are functioning in their ministerial capacities as spiritual counselors and are encouraged not to disclose such confidential information except with the permission of the confidant, to prevent the commission of a crime, or if required by law.

ARTICLE VIII DISCIPLINE

All discipline shall be administered according to the General Council Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX-- LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

SECTION 1—District Affiliated (DA) Assemblies

A. Guidelines for District Affiliated

1. New Assemblies—Local groups desiring recognition and affiliation as members of the Mississippi District Council may apply to the District through the Presbyter of the Section

in which they are located. Instructions shall be given from the District Office as to the process involved.

2. Reverted Assemblies—Those churches who shall fail to maintain the minimum standards necessary for General Council Affiliation or be unable to handle the affairs of the church due to dissent within the leadership or membership of the church which threaten the viability of the church may be reverted to District Affiliation until such time as minimum standards are met and/or harmony is restored.
- B. Requirements for Acceptance by New Groups**
1. The applying group must supply for approval a Constitution and Bylaw and show possession of a Federal Employer Identification Number.
 2. Should the applying group meet the requirements in doctrine, practice, cooperation and Bylaws and agrees to be governed thereby, the same shall receive approval by vote of the Presbytery.
- C. Rights and Responsibilities**
1. The day to day operation of the assembly shall be under the guidance of the Executive Leadership Team through the office of the Superintendent, Sectional Presbyter, Pastor and, where present, Advisory Committee.
 - a. The Pastor shall serve based on an annual appointment by the Executive Leadership Team in consultation with the Sectional Committee.
 - b. An Advisory Committee of three or more approved members may serve to assist the pastor at the discretion of the Executive Leadership Team, which shall have the right to remove any officer or to make new appointments as may seem advisable. All changes and additions shall be made with consultation with the Executive Leadership Team and Sectional Committee.
 2. District Affiliated Churches shall have the right and be encouraged to send a delegate to represent its interest at the Annual District Council and bi-annual Sectional Council. A letter from the Church Secretary, or a registration stating, same shall validate the delegate's right to be seated with the voting membership.
 3. Other offices and personnel shall be filled as described in 1. b. above.
 4. The Pastor and/or Church Secretary or Treasurer shall submit a written monthly report, on the church status financially, attendance, etc. to the District Superintendent and Sectional Presbyter on the form furnished by the District Office.
 5. It is expected that all District Affiliated churches recognize their responsibility to participate in the cooperative programs of the General and District Councils for the propagation of our testimony in both home and foreign lands, and to share in such provisions as may be made for the maintenance of the fellowship on financial and other practical lines.
 6. District Affiliated churches shall be encouraged to proceed to the status of a sovereign General Council Affiliated Assembly.
- D. Reasons for reverting to District Affiliated**
1. The reverting of a General Council Church to District Affiliated is understood to be an emergency action to safeguard and preserve the church and its rightful and scriptural activities until adverse conditions are corrected. Reverting to District Affiliated status may be made in person by the District Superintendent or his designee, or by a letter to the pastor, church secretary, or official board from the District Superintendent.
 2. Failure to maintain minimum standards for General Council recognition.
 - a. A General Council church which falls below 20 adult members shall notify the District Office, who shall work with the church leadership to restore the church to the minimum standards as quickly as possible.

- b. Should the church fail to reach the minimum membership requirement after efforts have been implemented and time given to succeed, the church will revert to DA until further disposition is determined or a waiver is granted.
 - c. Should a probationary period be exhausted in which great effort has been expended without success to restore the assembly to General Council status, the church may lose its affiliation and be considered a Cooperative Assembly by definite action of the Executive Leadership Team.
3. Internal confusion
- a. A General Council church which experiences internal confusion, inability to govern itself through its elected officials, division of membership, or dictatorial leadership may request help from the District by notice from the pastor, a majority of the Official Board, or by petition signed by not less than 30 % of the active membership of the church.
 - b. The Executive Leadership Team upon receiving such a request shall investigate the matter thoroughly and, at its discretion, bring the church temporarily under District supervision or, when necessary, revert it to District Affiliated status until it considers the problem(s) resolved.
4. Loss of property
- Should a General Council church consider disaffiliation, the church may be reverted if the leadership have not provided opportunity for the District Officials to speak to the membership to advise the benefits of continued fellowship with the organization.

SECTION 2—GENERAL COUNCIL AFFILIATED ASSEMBLIES

A. Guidelines for becoming General Council Affiliated

- 1. Any assembly, which in the opinion of the Executive Leadership Team has reached sufficient maturity to govern itself according to Biblical and denominational standards, having 20 or more adult members and qualified members to serve as an official board may apply for recognition as a General Council Affiliated church through the District Office.
- 2. These assemblies shall provide proof of a corporate charter, an approved Constitution and Bylaw, and a Federal Employee Identification number.
- 3. The Executive Leadership Team shall recommend all assemblies meeting the requirements to the General Council for consideration.
- 4. Final determination of status shall be granted by the General Council in Springfield, MO.

ARTICLE X—DEPARTMENTS

SECTION 1. CREATION OF DEPARTMENTS

Departments shall be created as needed by the District Presbytery in order to enhance and facilitate the overall vision of the District. All departments shall operate under the guidance of the Superintendent and be amenable to the leadership of the District as a whole.

SECTION 2. DISBANDING OF DEPARTMENTS

Since departments are a creation of the District Presbytery, it may disband any department by a two-thirds vote at any Presbytery meeting. Any decision to disband any department shall then be submitted to the District Council in session for ratification.

ARTICLE XI – OPERATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Operational policy and procedural manuals shall be developed and maintained by the District Presbytery for the administration of the District Office as well the operations of all departments. These shall be made available to all members of this District Council. They may be amended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the District Presbytery.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE XII- AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the District Council by a majority vote of all members present.