

**Constitution and Bylaws  
of Local Church  
the  
First  
Assembly of God, Inc.**

Revised

**October 16, 2022**

Address:  
**First Assembly of God.  
1815 East Steve Owens Blvd  
Miami, OK 74354**

Constitutional Agreement and Bylaws for  
Local Church, by the  
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 Ghost 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, whose names appear upon the assembly roster under above date, further be it resolved, that we recognize ourselves to be in cooperative fellowship with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and an active member of the Oklahoma District Council, with district headquarters at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

CONSTITUTION

Article I. Name

The name of this Assembly shall be

FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD, INC.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be:

1. To establish and maintain a place for worship.
2. To conduct under the guidance of the Holy Scriptures the work of evangelizing both the home and foreign field in obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus, (Matt. 28:19, 20); and in harmony with the teaching and practice of His servants, the apostles (Acts 8:4, 5, 25, 35, 40; 13:14, 16:6, 10; Rom. 15: 18-21; 2 Cor. 10:16; Rom. 10:12-17).
3. To establish such departments as may be necessary for the propagation of the gospel and the support of missionary activity.
4. To 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.
5. This assembly shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament scripture (Eph 4:3, 13).

Article III. Affiliation

This assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith associated in the Oklahoma District Council, and The General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

Article IV. Tenets of Faith

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 Cor. 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 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

## 2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternal 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 Ghost (Deut. 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matt. 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: Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 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 Ghost, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because it is unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Cor. 1:24; Matt. 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14, 1 John 1:3, 4).

#### c. Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father, and there is that in the Holy Ghost which constitutes Him the Holy Ghost and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter, the Son is the Begotten, and the Holy Ghost 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; Zech. 14:9).

#### d. Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost 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 Ghost is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence neither Person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; John 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 Ghost. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Rom. 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 (Matt. 1:23; 1 John 4:2, 10, 14; Rev. 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 (Matt. 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Heb. 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; Heb. 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 Ghost 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 (Heb. 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Rom. 14:11; 1 Cor. 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 unspeakable joy in the Holy Ghost 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; Rev. 5:6-14; Phil. 2:8, 9; Rev. 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 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).

- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Cor. 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 Ghost, 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 (Eph. 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 in 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 Cor. 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Cor. 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He come!”

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

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost 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 endowment 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 Cor. 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 Ghost 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; Heb. 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 Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost

The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost 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 Cor. 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 (Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost 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 (Rom. 6:1-11, 13; 8:1, 2, 13; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:12, 13; 1 Peter 1:5).

## 10. The Church and Its Mission

a. 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).

b. Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason for- being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

(1) To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16).

(2) To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).

(3) 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; 1 Corinthians 14:12).

c. 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:

(1) 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).

(2) Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14).

(3) 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).

## 11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold 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).

## 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; Matt. 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 Thess. 4:16, 17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 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 (Zech. 14:5; Matt. 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; Psalms 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 (Matt. 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

- a. The ordinance of Baptism by immersion should be observed as commanded in the Scriptures, by all who have fully repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:37, 38; Rom. 6:3-5.
- b. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper should be regularly observed as enjoined upon the believer (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).
- c. Infants and small children may be dedicated to the Lord in the assembly whenever requested (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-16).
- d. The sick should be prayed for, with the anointing with oil and laying on of hands, upon their request (Mark 16:18; James 5:14).

## Article VI. Membership

### SECTION 1. LEGAL VOTERS

- a. The legal voting membership of the church shall consist of all persons born of the Spirit, in good standing, who shall have met the membership requirements of the church and subscribe regularly to its financial support and whose names shall appear on the church roster.
- b. Legal voters shall be at least 18 years of age.
- c. A junior membership shall be established for the ages of 12-17 in which they hold non-voting membership.

d. By virtue of the office, the Senior pastor and spouse shall be included as voting members of the church in all matters, with the exception of a pastoral election.

## SECTION 2. ASSOCIATE WORKERS

Persons serving in the church as associate pastor, music director, etc., shall be chosen by the pastor and the church board. Under no circumstances shall any one be chosen to fill such a position without the approval of the pastor. Any person working in any position in the church shall work under the supervision of the pastor.

Such individuals and their companions may be considered as voting members of the church upon the recommendation of the pastor and subject to the ratification of the church board. Under no circumstances should any credentialed minister participate in a pastoral election.

## SECTION 3. COLLEGIATE MEMBERSHIP

Students attending a college or university may be granted a collegiate membership provided they meet the standard requirements for membership. They shall thus qualify for all the benefits of membership with the exception of the privilege to vote.

### Article VII. Finance

The church shall be financed according to the Scriptural method by tithes and offerings of its members.

### Article VIII. Government

#### 1. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of the church shall consist of the Pastor, Secretary, and/or Treasurer, and one or two members of the Board of Deacon, recommended by the Pastor, voted on by the Official Board.

#### 2. OFFICIAL BOARD

The official board of the church shall consist of the pastor, secretary, treasurer and the deacons. The pastor shall serve as chairman of the board.

#### 3. DEACONS

The Board of Deacons may consist of three, five, or seven members.

#### 4. TRUSTEES

There may be a Board of Trustees consisting of not less than three or more than five persons.

### Article IX. Qualifications

#### 1. SECRETARY AND TREASURER

The Secretary and Treasurer shall be a person, or persons, sound in Christian faith, of a good report, and also baptized in the Holy Ghost. He shall be a person with good business judgment. He shall also qualify according to Acts 6:1-5 and I Timothy 3:8- 13. This does not exclude a woman from holding this position.



## 2. DEACONS

Deacons shall be men sound in faith and good report, who are baptized in the Holy Ghost and shall qualify according to the scriptural standards in:

### A. Qualifications:

1. a. Acts 6:1-5, “And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said, “It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word ... And the saying pleased the whole multitude.”
- b. 1 Timothy 3:8-13. “Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”
2. The reference in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 referring to “the husband of one wife” is understood to mean the candidate for deacon is to be a person in a faithful heterosexual marriage with neither partner being divorced, except where the divorce occurred due to biblical reasons. See references in Matthew 19: 1-12, 1 Corinthians 7, and Ephesians 5:25.
3. Member of this church for 1 year, having a pattern of good works, sound belief in the authority of the scriptures and faithful support of the church and its vision.
4. Integrity in all areas of life: on the job, with their family, finances and their relationship with others – having a good name in the church and community.
5. A mature Christian having followed the Lord’s example in water baptism, having been filled with the Holy Spirit and active in his devotion to Jesus Christ and His church.
6. A supporter of the Church and its mission, vision, and values by his attendance, tithes, offerings, and personal prayer life – a man of prayer, the Word, faith, wisdom and Spirit.

### B. Expectations:

1. To be a member working for the good of all the church ministries; seeing the “big picture” of what God has called this church to be and do. Let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.
2. Be a good example of “servant-leadership” in his home, community and church; a man who has a heart after God and the desire to do his part in expanding the Kingdom.
3. To be faithful in attendance to his church and ministry – being at a majority of the church services, thereby setting an example for the Body of Christ.
4. To keep confidential matters secure and not violate the integrity of his office, fellow board members, church leadership and fellow believers.
5. For their spouses to be an example of the Christian life in their communication, conduct, character, compassion and commitment to the Church.

## 3. TRUSTEES

A Trustee shall be a person of good report, sound in Christian character, and with good business judgment.

### Article X. Meetings

#### SECTION 1. REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

The time and place of the regular church services shall be determined by the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

## SECTION 2. BUSINESS MEETINGS

a. There shall be an annual business meeting of the church at the end of the fiscal year, scheduled expeditiously by the Pastor and church board.

## SECTION 3. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING

a. Meetings may be called:

(1) By the Pastor.

(2) By the secretary of the church upon the written order of a majority of the official board.

(3) By the petition of no less than one third of the members of the church exercising the right of initiative.

b. Notice must be given.

## SECTION 4. NOTICES

a. Notice on all regular or special business meetings of the church shall be published or announced at least one time in each of three different regular services prior to the date of the proposed meeting. Such notice shall be posted in writing.

b. In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the Church Board shall declare the church, once in session, to be in a continuous session of business until a pastor is elected.

## SECTION 5. QUORUMS

a. No record of any regular or special business meeting of the assembly shall be made unless one third or more of the voting membership of the assembly is present at a meeting which has been announced in accordance with ARTICLE IX, Section 2, 3.

b. Except in cases of extreme or unusual circumstances which would prevent attendance, a vote may be called for by the voting membership to establish a quorum if one third of the body of voting membership is not present.

## SECTION 6. BOARD MEETINGS

a. The Board of Deacons, Secretary and Treasurer, with the Pastor, called the church board, shall meet monthly for the transaction of routine business for the assembly, time and place, to be announced by the Pastor.

b. The Pastor, and one or two members of the board of deacons, with Secretary and Treasurer, called the executive board, shall meet twice a year to review church affairs. They shall also carry out issues of expeditious nature by meeting whenever the Pastor deems necessary.

## Article XI. Right of Initiative

Any member may exercise the right of initiative in the calling of a special business meeting of the church by presenting a request signed by at least one-third of the membership of the church to the pastor or secretary of the church who shall proceed to issue a call for said meeting as prescribed in Art. 9, Sec.3, of the Constitution. In the event that the pastor or secretary refuses to honor a legal petition for such a meeting, an appeal may be made to the Sectional Presbyter for help in securing such a meeting. Any such petition must contain a clear statement of the purpose and agenda for the meeting.

## Article XII. Amendments

Amendments to the constitution may be made by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the church present in any of its regular or special business meetings subject to the review of the District Board.

## BYLAWS

### Article I. Order

In order to facilitate the conduct of business in an orderly and satisfactory manner, business meetings shall be governed by the accepted rules of parliamentary procedure.

### Article II. Membership

#### SECTION 1. THE STANDARD OF MEMBERSHIP

The standard of membership of this church shall be:

- a. Evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration, the new birth (John 1:12, 13; 3:3-8; I Peter 1:18-25).
- b. Evidence of a consistent Christian life (Rom. 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13, 14; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1, 2, 15; 1 John 1:6, 7).
- c. To fully subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in Article 3 of the Constitution.
- d. Willingness to contribute regularly to the support of the church according to his or her ability.

#### SECTION 2. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

- a. Persons desiring to become active members of the church shall make the fact known to the pastor, who shall examine the applicant according to the standard for membership (See Art. 2, Sec. 1).
- b. The pastor shall present the names of those who apply for membership with his recommendation to the official board who shall act upon said recommendation. All persons who shall have met the membership requirements and have passed on favorably shall be received into the church publicly at any of the regular church services and their names inscribed in the church roster. A minimum of 30 days shall expire following the public reception of a member until that individual is eligible to vote in any business meeting and a minimum of six months before holding an elected office.
- c. In the event of the resignation of the pastor, the church roster shall be closed until a pastor is elected.

#### SECTION 3. DISCIPLINE

- a. Any member of the church who shall willfully absent himself from the regular services for a period of three consecutive months or who shall be under charges shall be temporarily suspended from active voting membership pending investigation and final decision in his case. Inactivity in church membership shall be determined by the records of the church or by the District Executive Board and the official board of the church.
- b. Any member of the church who begins regular attendance at another church without transferring membership shall be placed on the inactive list of the former church.
- c. Unscriptural conduct or radical departure from the tenets of faith held by this church (See Art. 3 of the Constitution) shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which such person may be disqualified as a member (Matt. 18:15-18; Rom. 16:17, 18; 1 Cor. 5:11; Gal. 1:8, 9; Titus 3:1-15).

d. Any individual or individuals who call a special meeting of the church board or the church without going through proper procedures set forth under CONSTITUTION, Article IX: Meetings, SECTION 2. BUSINESS MEETINGS, paragraph b, shall be subject to dismissal or suspension from active voting membership.

e. When a church member is placed on inactive membership or dismissed from membership, they must be notified by letter giving the reason of such action.

f. Reinstatement to active membership and voting privileges must be approved by the church board. Reinstatement shall be considered only after said inactive member has shown faithfulness in attendance and financial support. Such reinstatement must occur at least 30 days prior to any business meeting.

#### SECTION 4. LOCAL CHURCH STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

a. We recommend that assemblies correspond with the District Superintendent for information in regard to deeding and transferring church property.

b. We recommend that all our pastors make thorough investigation of the deeds of their church properties and promote such changes in the deeds as may be necessary, and conform to Article IV Property Rights.

c. We recommend that in the event a church is without a pastor for a reasonable time that the Sectional Presbyter make the necessary investigation.

d. We recommend that an annual Missionary Convention be held in each local Assemblies of God church in the Oklahoma District to promote World Missions and to challenge each church to fulfill its responsibility in raising the yearly budget for missions.

e. We recommend that each of our assemblies and ministers send an offering once a year to the District Office for the District Campground.

f. We recommend that all local pastors seek to find out where our people are going to reside when changing residence and that he notify the local pastor of the Assembly of God church nearest their new residence.

g. We recommend that churches continue their pledged support to missionaries who are home on furlough as long as they are under appointment by the Foreign Missions Board and engaged in missionary activities.

h. We recommend that all church officials, Christian Education officers and teachers obey Malachi 3:10 and that they be chosen from among those that are Spirit-filled when such material is available. We further recommend that no one who is affiliated with any secret order be considered to hold any leadership position within the local church.

i. We recommend that each church write into its budget a minimum of \$10.00 per month, or \$120.00 per year, to be sent to the District Youth Camp Fund for the purpose of acquisition and upkeep of District Youth Camp facilities.

j. It is recommended that all communications from the General Council and the District Council be presented to the church board by the pastor or church secretary.

k. Before any constitution and bylaws, other than the District Constitution and Bylaws of the Oklahoma District Council, are used in any of our local churches, a copy of the proposed constitution and bylaws shall be filed with the District Executive Board. The District Executive Board shall examine the proposed constitution and bylaws to see whether or not they conflict with the District Constitution and Bylaws. Their findings and their recommendations shall then be forwarded to proper representatives of the local church. In no case shall any local church be recognized as an Assembly of God Church, or set in order until they have complied with these provisions. Also, when new churches are beginning they are not to be granted

recognition or financial assistance unless they have accepted the District Constitution and Bylaws as the proper form of government for such an assembly and the property shall be deeded according to district policy.

l. We recommend that a training class shall be held at least once each year by the pastor on the responsibilities of the local church board members, secretaries, treasurers, trustees, and any other officers of the local church. Such training course should be based upon the constitution and bylaws for the local church of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God.

m. We recommend that all Assemblies of God churches in the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God endeavor to conduct at least one service during the year with emphasis on the Light-for-the-Lost program.

n. We recommend that where a church has qualified personnel, no one individual shall hold more than one official position in the church such as Deacon, Trustee, Christian Education Superintendent, church Secretary-Treasurer or other major offices.

o. It is recommended that pastors and churches review individual missionary pledge annually and if possible, the monthly support of each individual missionary should be raised at least commensurate with the increased cost of living.

p. It is recommended that pastors and churches prayerfully consider their past performance in missionary giving and that new goals for the church missionary program be set annually. This would serve as an incentive to the church to increase their missionary giving.

q. It is recommended that pastors of our churches review their church giving to missions and encourage their churches to give according to the World Missions Plan if they have not been doing so.

r. It is recommended that each church designate two or more people to be responsible for the proper collection and accounting of funds.

#### SECTION 5. DISTRICT STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

a. We recommend each assembly cooperate with the District officials in establishing new assemblies in its own section or other sections each year.

b. We recommend that all full-time District Officials be allowed to participate in the Federal Social Security program and the Minister's Benefit Association if they so desire. The District Council shall assume the responsibility of the payments. We further recommend that if a pastor so desires to participate in the Federal Social Security program and the Minister's Benefit Association, that the church assume the responsibility for the payments. We further recommend that churches securing the services of evangelists who are members of the Minister's Benefit Association take this into consideration and endeavor through extra offerings to enable the evangelists to participate in the plan.

c. We recommend that itinerating missionaries be given offerings received at his services in our churches for his missionary project, equipment and fare. He in turn must receipt the churches for said offerings to insure proper credit.

d. We recommend that all pastors and churches support the Assemblies of God missionary program and that our ministers join together in informing our constituency of the advantages in supporting our own missionary program.

e. Solicitation of funds in any Assemblies of God church in the Oklahoma District, whether by Assemblies of God ministers or others, is disapproved unless the project has been approved by the Church Board and the pastor's permission has been given for solicitation of said funds.

f. Before evangelists or any other person solicit offerings in the local churches for foreign or home missions activities or projects, they should obtain a letter of authorization from the District Office, so pastors can be aware of their projects. We recommend that pastors refrain from using persons without a written letter of approval from the District Office.

g. We recommend that churches should have at least four missionary services per year, with more if possible, to keep the burden of missions before the people.

h. Whereas, it is extremely difficult for a missionary to raise support from the field and it would create a hardship on the missionary to lose support while in the field. Therefore, be it resolved that when a pastor or local church wishes to discontinue a missionary's support, they first notify the missionary as to their intentions and if possible, wait until the missionary has returned home for regular furlough before dropping his or her support.

### Article III. Finance

#### SECTION 1.

All monies received from offerings and all other sources shall be deposited by the Treasurer in a bank designated by the official board.

#### SECTION 2.

The disbursement of all funds shall be under the supervision of the official board.

#### SECTION 3.

a. The senior pastor, pastoral staff, and church staff shall be given regular and adequate financial support, the amount and manner of which shall be determined by agreement between the pastor and the official board.

b. The church should assume responsibility for the pastor's attendance to the District and General Council functions.

#### SECTION 4.

a. Each assembly shall at its own discretion through the church board contribute a voted upon percentage to contribute to pastor and staff retirement MBA church account

b. Each minister should accept the responsibility to provide a retirement income for himself and his family by contributing to the MBA ministers' account.

c. The Oklahoma District shall accept its responsibility to provide a retirement income for its ministers and family who have enrolled in MBA by contributing an amount equal to 5% of each ministers tithes paid to the District during each fiscal year to the MBA church account. The minister is to notify the District Secretary-Treasurer's office when they enroll and furnish their account number, so their name can be added to the annual MBA list of members.

### Article IV. Property Rights

#### SECTION 1.

All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred or conveyed in the church or corporate name.

## SECTION 2.

a. No real estate of the Assembly shall be purchased, sold, leased, mortgaged or otherwise alienated without the same shall have been authorized by at least a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a regular or special business meeting. Announcements of the pending meeting shall be made public at least three times before the business meeting. If required by law, a written notice of the meeting shall be sent to each voting member. Also, a copy of the pending transaction shall be mailed to the District Superintendent. Any property transaction otherwise effected shall be declared illegal.

b. In cases where the local Assembly desires to withdraw from the fellowship of the Assemblies of God, the church shall notify the District Office thirty days prior to such meeting and shall arrange for representatives of the District to be present at the meeting. They shall participate, and in the absence of a pastor or where necessary, they shall be in charge of the meeting. Any meeting conducted without representatives of the District Council being present, shall be considered null and void.

## SECTION 3.

The Pastor and the Secretary of the church shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized by the vote of the church. Such certificate shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

## SECTION 4.

a. In the event this local church should be dissolved and cease to function as an Assembly of God church under the jurisdiction of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. and the General Council of the Assemblies of God then the tangible property belonging to said church, real or personal and all the interest of said church, real or equitable, in any and all property shall be and thereupon become the property of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., and all property held by any person or persons of entity as trustee for said local church shall at such time as said church so cease to function as an Assembly of God church as aforesaid be and become the property of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., and the District Council may thereupon cause any such trust to be executed.

b. The title of the said District Council in and to the properties acquired by it by the provisions of the above paragraph shall be that the fee simple absolute burdened, however, with such liens as may be law have attached to said property prior to the acquisition thereof as aforesaid by the said District Council.

## SECTION 5. METHOD OF ACQUIRING REAL PROPERTY

a. To facilitate the operation of the provision of Section 4 of Article IV, real property acquired by the local church should be conveyed by the grantor thereof to the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., rather than to the real church and the District Council shall thereupon deliver to the said local church its deed of conveyance the said land “for so long as the same is used as and for an Assemblies of God church,” reserving unto the said District Council a reverter upon cessation of such use.

b. As a matter of clarification, it has been established that we are hierarchy in nature to govern over churches and properties affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

c. In cases where church property is deeded to the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., the church shall be responsible to maintain sufficient liability and property insurance.

## SECTION 6. PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF OUR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

a. The General Council approves the holding of title to all church buildings, schools, or other institutions that are supported by funds solicited for the work of God through properly constituted corporations. It

disapproves the holding title to such properties by the ministers of the Assemblies of God, through private ownership, corporation of sole, closed corporation or any other type of ownership where initiative of action or final authority is not vested in a corporation of the whole. In the event a local congregation is not incorporated or set in order by the District Council, title should be vested in properly qualified trustees. Where private ownership exists, the General Council strongly recommends that a properly incorporated body be formed and that the title to the property be transferred to it.

b. A disregard of this principle and recommendation of the General Council shall seriously affect the relationship of the General Council of members involved in such ownership.

c. A questionnaire shall be mailed out by the District Secretary gathering this information and in the future these questions be included in the annual church reports to the District. In keeping with the above General Council policy, be it further resolved that any of our ministers or individuals who hold the church property title not in keeping with the General Council policy be given six months to correct this or deed the property to the congregation. If at the end of the extended time, there be a failure to comply, any minister involved shall have his name removed from the ministerial list of the District, and the church be removed from our membership records as an Assembly of God church or a Cooperative Assembly. This action being taken in accordance with our General Council policy as set forth in forth stated article.

d. SAMPLE DEED

THIS DEED, made and entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, by and between \_\_\_\_\_, party or parties of the first part, and \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ Trustees of the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (County) \_\_\_\_\_ (State), and to their successors in office, parties of the second part. The said Assembly being an affiliate of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God with District Headquarters at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. WITNESSETH: That, for and in consideration of One Dollar, cash in hand paid, and other good and valuable consideration the receipt of all which is hereby acknowledged, the parties of the first part do hereby grant, bargain, sell, and convey, with covenants of general warranty deed, unto the said parties of the second part as such trustees, and their successors in such office, that certain lot or parcel of land situated in \_\_\_\_\_ (City), \_\_\_\_\_ (County) and described as follows: (Description) This deed is made and accepted subject to the Constitution and Bylaws of the \_\_\_\_\_ Assembly of God, \_\_\_\_\_ (City), \_\_\_\_\_ (County) \_\_\_\_\_ (State), which said Constitution and Bylaws are in full force and effect at the time of the execution and delivery of the instrument provided in part among other things as follows: "In the event the church shall be divided by doctrinal views or for other causes the members holding the original tenets of faith, standards, and practices as set forth in the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri, regardless of the majority shall retain title to the property." "Until the church becomes a sovereign Assembly, no real estate or chattel property shall be sold, leased or mortgaged or otherwise disposed of without the same shall have been authorized by the Executive Presbytery and certification to that effect issued by the District Secretary." In the event the above named assembly in this deed should be dissolved and cease to function as an Assembly of God, then the property shall revert to the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, an incorporated religious body, with headquarters at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, who shall forthwith have full authority to use or dispose of the property at its discretion. In the event of the sale of property, the proceeds derived therein shall be used by the Oklahoma District Council in furtherance of the gospel of Christ. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the following signature and seals of the parties of the first part have this date \_\_\_\_\_, been affixed.

(This deed must be acknowledged in regular form before a Notary Public.) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Seal)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Seal)



## Article V. Government and Official Functions

### SECTION 1. PASTOR

a. The pastor shall be elected to office by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the church present at any regular or special business meeting or a majority to retain a pastor at any regular or special business meeting. The pastor's term of office shall be a one year term on the first vote, a three year term following the one year term. After the third year following the second term the church body can determine the term of office by a two-third majority vote.

b. Absentee ballots are not acceptable during the candidate process (initial selection) of a pastor. Unless the absentee meet the following criteria: Provide proof of attending at least one meeting in which the candidate preaches and provide at legitimate reason for not being able to attend voting meeting. Absentee ballots may be acceptable during a vote to retain a pastor provided that absentees have given proof to the presiding officer that unavoidable circumstances have prevented them from being present at such meeting. Such ballots must be signed by the absentee voter and presented in a sealed envelope.

c. The pastor is designated in the Scriptures as the head of the church under the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the early church, provision was made for bishops (overseers: Acts 20:28; I Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5-9). The terms "Bishop," "Elder," and "Pastor," refer interchangeably to the same office, the various terms describing the status and the function of the pastor. The deacons were their helpers (Acts 6:1-6; I Timothy 3:8-13). The word for deacons literally means "servants". We are admonished in Hebrews 13:7, 17, to obey those who have the rule over the church. If the early church pastors could be compared to the pastors of our modern day churches it is only reasonable to believe that the duties of deacons or trustees or any other church officer should not be one of superiority or rivalry to the pastor.

d. REMUNERATION. This is very vital and important in the relationship between pastor and church officials. In considering the pastor's salary of remuneration (I Timothy 5:17, 18), the following items should be considered carefully:

1) Salary.

(2) Parsonage or parsonage allowance.

(3) Utilities.

(4) Allowance for expense of operating his car.

(5) Moving expenses.

(6) Travel and expense to national, district, and sectional meetings.

(7) Retirement benefits such as Ministers' Benefit Association and Social Security.

(8) Consideration should also be given to enrolling the pastor in some insurance program providing adequate compensation for illness or physical disability.

(9) It is recommended that churches provide life insurance for their pastor and ministerial staff members in the maximum non-taxable benefit amount as prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service, and that the church be named as a co-beneficiary for amounts in excess of the non-taxable benefit amount.

(10) We further recommend that the District Superintendent continue to contact the churches encouraging them to expedite all the policies found in the Constitution and Bylaws that pertain to support of the ministry.

(11) There should be an annual review made of the pastor's remuneration, taking into consideration the following items:

(a) Prosperity of the church.

(b) Needs of the pastor.

(c) The length and value of his service and increase of living costs.

(d) We believe that a pastor should be fair with his church, but on the other hand, we do not believe God will bless a parsimonious board. If a comparison is made of the pastor's salary with those in the congregation, it should be compared to the higher salaries and not the least, since the demands made of him are above and beyond that of the average wage earner.

(e) The pastor shall be chairman of the official board and preside over all business meetings of the church.

(f) He shall be the general supervisor of all activities of the church and shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees and under no circumstances should anyone be invited to speak to any department of the church without pastoral approval.

(g) All General Council appointed home missionaries or workers working in any local church shall work in cooperation with and under the supervision of the local pastor.

(h) Finally, he shall perform all those duties which properly belong to the Scriptural ideal for a pastor.

(i) There shall be one Sunday each year set aside as Pastor's Annual Appreciation Day. This date should fall on the Sunday closest to the National Pastor Appreciation Day. All departments of the church should cooperate in the implementation of this program.

## SECTION 2. DEACONS

### a. Duties of the Deacons

The deacons shall act in a consultative capacity with the pastor, conferring and conversing in matters pertaining to the church in its spiritual life and in the ministry of its ordinances. They shall assist in the examination of applications for membership and also in the administration of the discipline of the church.

b. The official board shall meet monthly or as directed by Pastor and the church board to transact any business in the conduct of their church duties.

c. A special meeting of the board may be called only by the pastor. Should a condition arise that a majority of the board desire a meeting and the pastor refuse to call such meeting, only then should the majority membership of the Official Board call on the District Presbyterian and ask his help in securing a meeting.

d. Where there is no board of trustees, the diaconate shall perform all duties prescribed for the board of trustees.

## SECTION 3. TRUSTEES

The board of trustees shall be custodians of the church property and shall be responsible for the care of the same. Trustees should not be used to fill the office of deacons. (Deacons are qualified in the Word of God; trustees are not. This would have a tendency to weaken the office of the diaconate since some people may well qualify as trustees while being scripturally unqualified for the diaconate.) The office of trustee is given to us by the law of the land for the purpose of deeding and supervising property.

#### SECTION 4. QUORUM (Board and Committees)

A majority of the membership of any board or committee present at any time of their regular or special business meetings shall constitute a quorum.

#### SECTION 5. SECRETARY

- a. The Secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all business meetings of the church and the official board.
- b. He/she shall be the custodian of all legal documents and be in possession of the corporate seal.
- c. All legal documents and other papers pertaining to the church shall be kept in the church office and/or in a safe deposit box and be available to the pastor and/or church board.

#### SECTION 6. TREASURER

- a. The Treasurer shall keep an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements of all monies committed to his trust in a proper and business like manner and shall make report at the quarterly meeting of the official board and all business meetings of the church.
- b. He shall be appointed by Pastor & the Board of Deacons
- c. He shall deposit and withdraw funds in the manner prescribed in Art. 3, Sec. 1 and 2, of the Bylaws.
- d. Monies and records committed to the trust of the treasurer of the church shall be kept in a church office or safe deposit box and not in the treasurer's home.

#### SECTION 7. TERM OF OFFICE

- a. The term of pastors' office shall be for a period of one or more years or for an indefinite period as may be decided upon by the church at the time of election. (See Art. 5, Sec. 1— Pastor.) Be it further resolved, that whenever a church votes to retain a pastor this term of office shall be for a period of not less than three years.
- b. The term of office of the secretary and the treasurer shall be for a period of three years from date of board appointment or until their successors qualify. c. The board of deacons and trustees (where there is a board of trustees) shall be elected as follows:
  - (1) When the board of deacons includes three members, one shall be elected for one year, one for two years, and one for three years.
  - (2) When the board of deacons includes five members, one shall be elected for one year, two for two years, and two for three years. Subsequent elections shall be for a term of three years. (Note: When you adopt your constitution, change this section to meet your requirements.)
  - (3) After a deacon has completed their elected amount of time they must sit out 1 year between terms.

#### Article VI. Nominations and Elections

- a. All nominations shall be by secret ballot. If a candidate receives a two-thirds majority of nominating ballots cast, he shall be declared elected.
- b. All Church Officials shall be elected by a two-thirds majority of votes cast and shall be members of the local Assembly.

- c. If there shall be no election on the first two ballots cast, the two receiving the highest number of votes shall be further balloted upon until an election is declared. If after the fourth ballot, there still is not an election, the one on the fifth ballot receiving a simple majority vote shall be elected.
- d. Election of all officers other than the pastor shall take place at the annual business meeting of the church.
- e. Absentee ballots may be accepted in any election in the church which has been legally announced, and may be accepted in the vote of a new pastor with meeting the criteria of article 5 Sec 1 b. Proof shall be presented to the presiding officer that unavoidable circumstances have prevented the voter from being present at such meeting. Such ballots must be signed by the absentee voter and presented in a sealed envelope.
- f. Where a church has a Deacon Board, Trustees, and/or the Secretary and/or Treasurer, they shall be designated as Tellers in all business meetings and pastoral elections.
- g. In the event the church is under District supervision with no church board, and members are allowed to vote on their pastor, the Sectional Presbyter shall hold such a pastoral election and assist in counting the ballots.

## Article VII. Vacancies

### SECTION 1. PASTORATE

- a. When a vacancy occurs resulting from the death or permanent disability of a duly elected pastor or ministerial staff member in a local assembly, it is recommended that the church maintain identical salary, parsonage or housing allowance, and benefits for his/her surviving spouse and family for a period of no less than 60 days following the occurrence.
- b. When a vacancy in the pastorate shall occur a supply shall be arranged for by the board of deacons, until a pastor shall be chosen as arranged for in Art. 5, Sec. 1 of the Bylaws.
- c. The deacons shall arrange for a supply to fill any vacancy in office until a permanent selection shall be made in the manner herein prescribed. Sec. d., Art. 6, of the Bylaws.
- d. As soon as a pastoral change becomes evident, the out-going minister and the local church board shall immediately work out a satisfactory arrangement regarding the financial remuneration for the pastor based on service rendered until his tenure is fully expired. If an agreement cannot be reached they shall consult a district official to arbitrate.
- e. When a pastor's service to a church is terminated by the church or he is not re-elected, or resigns, the church shall pay his salary for at least a period of thirty days. The only exception will be where serious charges are proven against a pastor to the extent that his credentials are revoked.
- f. When a church board calls a minister for an interview or engaged his services, his expenses shall be paid by the church.
- g. The pastor's resignation shall be considered official upon his written presentation to the church board. Subsequently, if he changes his mind and wants to reapply for the pastorate, he must be re-elected by a two-thirds majority of the membership present at any regular or special business meeting of the church.

### SECTION 2. CHURCH OFFICERS

- a. Any office may be declared vacant by an act of a majority membership at any regular or special business meeting.

b. Ground for such action shall be:

- (1) Unscriptural conduct.
- (2) Radical departure from the tenets of faith.
- (3) Incompetence in office.
- (4) For any other good and sufficient cause.

c. A complaint may be lodged against an incumbent in office and brought before the church for action by any member exercising the right of initiative as described in Art. 11 of the Constitution, or upon the recommendation of the official board.

d. Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing of his case before the church if he so desires.

e. In the case of a pastor's removal from office, a report of such action shall be made to the District Officiary who shall immediately confer with the church officials relative to securing a pastor for the church. In no case shall a church call a pastor from another District until the church board has consulted the District Superintendent or Section Presbyterian of their Section and secured a favorable recommendation from them.

f. In the event of a vacancy in any elected position of the church, other than the pastor, the pastor shall make a recommendation to the Official Board of the church who shall ratify an individual to fill the position until the next annual business meeting of the church.

## **Article VIII. Youth Department**

### SECTION 1. ORGANIZATION

#### *a. Authorization and purpose*

There shall be a Youth Department whose purpose shall be to promote the spiritual life of the youth of the church by providing opportunities for worship, fellowship, training, and evangelism.

#### *b. Membership*

The active member shall be born-again young people living consistent Christian lives who regularly attend the youth services.

#### *c. Officers*

The Youth Department may elect their own officers, subject to the approval of the pastor and the church board.

#### *d. Meetings*

Regular meetings shall be held weekly or otherwise as determined by the Youth Department, provided such services do not conflict with nor detract from the regular services of the church.

### SECTION 2. RELATIONSHIPS

#### *a. To the Pastor*

The Youth Department shall be under the general supervision of the pastor whose counsel, advice, and direction shall be respected in all activities. He shall be considered an honorary member of the organization and an ex-officio member of all its committees.

b. To the Church

The Youth Department shall be considered a ministry of the local church and their activities shall be conducted in harmony and cooperation with the regular services of the church.

c. To the District

This organization shall cooperate to the fullest possible extent with the district youth program, including: area and sectional rallies, Speed-the-Light, and district retreats and conventions. The treasurer shall send in each month a tithe of all youth group income or a minimum of \$10.00 per month, whichever is larger, for the support of the District Youth Department.

#### Article IX. Christian Education Department

a. There shall be a Christian Education Department conducted as a branch of the church activities under the general oversight of the pastor.

b. The Christian Education Philosophy together with the Guidelines and In-Depth Self- Evaluation shall be the working policy and program of the Christian Education Department.

c. The church board shall nominate one or more candidates for the office of superintendent, assistant superintendent, secretary and treasurer of the Christian Education Department.

d. The Superintendent, Secretary, and Treasurer, together with the pastor, shall constitute the executive committee of the Christian Education Department supervising all its activities, appointing such teachers from time to time as may be deemed necessary.

e. All Christian Education officers and teachers are exhorted to obey the teaching of Malachi 3:10 and that they be chosen from among those that are Spirit-filled when such material is available.

f. All Christian Education officers and teachers shall be members of the local assembly in good standing.

g. There shall be a monthly report card furnished the Christian Education Department each month by the District Office. The local Christian Education Department in return shall report their average attendance for the preceding month to the District Office together with amount of tithes of the local Christian Education Department sent to the Department for the preceding month. The District Christian Education Department shall compile these and report them back to the pastors each month. Each Christian Education Department is urged to support the District Christian Education Department by contributing a tithe of its offerings.

#### Article X. Women's Ministries Department

##### SECTION 1. WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

a. Authorization and purpose

The local Women's Ministries group shall function as a department of the local church. Its primary responsibility shall be to act as an agency of the church in fulfilling its threefold mission — ministry to the Lord, to the church, and to the world. The group shall stimulate a spirit of evangelism outreach among the women by a systematic study of the Bible and participation in the World Ministries program of the Fellowship. They shall unify their efforts in prayer, personal evangelism, and ministry- oriented projects to contribute to the total outreach of the church.

#### b. Membership

All women who are members in good standing of the local church shall be eligible for membership. Associate membership shall be granted to women of the congregation and community who desire to attend the meetings and support the ministry and stewardship program of the organizations. Associate members shall enjoy all privileges of regular membership except the right to vote and to hold office.

#### c. Officers

All officers shall be chosen from the active membership of the Women's Ministries group. They shall be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). Officers of the organization shall be: president (or coordinator if more than one group), vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Together with the pastor, these officers shall serve as the executive board. Each officer should equip herself for effective and dependable leadership in the local Women's Ministries group by taking the Women's Ministries Leadership Training Course offered by the National Women's Ministries Department.

#### d. Meetings

Planned meetings shall be held regularly in order to give opportunity for ministry and fellowship. There shall be an annual Women's Ministries business meeting for the purpose of electing officers.

#### e. Finance

The local Women's Ministries group shall be financed through freewill offerings. Plans for additional income shall be accepted by the Women's Ministries executive board and approved by the pastor.

### SECTION 2. AUXILIARIES

#### a. Recognition and purpose

With the direction of the pastor, the Women's Ministries group shall sponsor the Missionettes, Rainbows, Daisies, Prims, Stars and Young Women in Action-Y's. The Women's Ministries group shall provide trained leadership along with financial aid (insofar as possible) and spiritual and moral support for as many clubs as the situation requires for girls and young women ages 3 through 12th grades.

#### b. Coordinator

The Women's Ministries executive board or special committee will appoint a Missionettes Coordinator with the pastor's approval. She should be a member of the local church and have completed the revised Missionette Leadership Training Course offered by the National Women's Ministries Department. She shall confer with the pastor in all matters of policy and respect the existing practices of the local church.

#### c. Sponsors

She should be a member of the local church and have completed the revised Missionette Leadership Training Course. Sponsors and co-sponsors are selected by the pastor and Missionettes Coordinator.

#### d. Finance

The local Missionettes groups shall be financed through freewill offerings. Plans for additional income (fund-raisers) shall be accepted by the Missionettes Coordinator and approved by the pastor.

### SECTION 3. RELATIONSHIPS

#### a. To the Pastor and Church

These organizations shall at all times work under the direction of the pastor and in close harmony with other departments of the church. Their activities shall be consistent with general policies of the local church and shall be subject to approval by the pastor.

b. To the District

These organizations shall cooperate with the District Women's Ministries and Missionettes program, including sectional rallies, district retreats and conventions. Local Women's Ministries groups shall send a tithe of all income to the District Women's Ministries Office for its support or a minimum of \$10.00 if possible per month, whichever is larger. The local groups shall also cooperate with financing the District Women's Ministries Pledge Fund. An annual pledge is made to the District Women's Ministries Department to be distributed to the following areas of ministry: Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Benevolences, District projects, and Bible Schools and Colleges. Local Missionettes groups shall send a tithe of all income to the District Women's Ministries Office for its support or a minimum of \$5.00 if possible per month, whichever is larger. Monthly report forms, mailed to each local Women's Ministries group by the District Women's Ministries Department, shall be completed and returned to the District Women's Ministries office along with the group's tithes and offerings each month. Monthly report forms, mailed to each local Missionettes group by the District Women's Ministries Department, shall be completed and returned to the District Women's Ministries office along with the group's tithes and offerings each month. An annual offering to be received on National Women's Ministries Day shall be mailed directly to the District Women's Ministries Department, where it shall be divided equally between the District and the National Departments. An annual offering to be received during National Missionettes Week shall be mailed directly to the District Women's Ministries Department, where it shall be divided equally between the District and the National Departments. A yearly contribution shall be made to the Etta Calhoun Memorial Fund on or near Founder's Day, September 19. This offering shall be sent directly to the National Women's Ministries Department.

Article XI. Men's Ministries Department

SECTION 1. LOCAL GROUPS

It is recommended to local Assemblies of God within this district that they organize the men of their churches by incorporating this article in their local church bylaws under the title the Men's Ministries Department.

a. Membership

There shall be a Men's Ministries Department in this church consisting of as many male members of the church as may wish to join. Other Christian men who believe in the doctrines of this church may also become members of the Men's Ministries Department.

b. Purpose and Objectives

In general the purpose of this department is to provide opportunity for the men of this church to have closer fellowship with each other and to cooperate in assisting the pastor in accomplishing the objectives for which the church exists. In particular, the objectives of the Men's Ministries Department are:

- (1) To win unsaved men to Christ.
- (2) To help spread the doctrines of our church.
- (3) To conduct or assist in jail services, street meetings, etc.
- (4) To promote and participate in the world missions program.



- (5) To assist in the promotion of the Sunday School, V.B.S., and other educational activities of the church.
- (6) To exercise a fatherly interest in and care for the boys of the church.
- (7) To foster and promote benevolent enterprises; such as aid to the poor, contributions for aged ministers, orphanages and the pastor's retirement fund.
- (8) To help in radio ministry.
- (9) To aid in advertising the church and its activities.
- (10) To assist the pastor and official board in carrying the financial burden of the church.
- (11) To help in maintaining the physical properties of the church.
- (12) To take care that the church is officially represented by delegates at Sectional, District and General Council meetings.

#### c. Officers

The officers of this Men's Ministries Department shall consist of a President, a Vice- President and a Secretary-Treasurer. These officers shall perform the customary duties of their respective offices and together shall constitute the Executive Committee of the organization. The pastor of the church shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee. This committee shall make all plans for the regular and special meetings of this department. It is their responsibility to see that the purpose of the department is realized and its objectives reached. They may and should delegate certain responsibilities and duties to named committees and to the various members of the organization. The Executive Committee shall hold its own meetings at least monthly at the call of the President.

#### d. Meetings

- (1) Regular meetings of the Men's Ministries Department shall be held and shall be determined by the director of Men's Ministries. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the Executive Committee of the organization. The time and place of all meetings shall be set by the Executive Committee.
- (2) Business meetings of this organization shall be held annually for the purpose of the election of officers. Voting shall be by secret ballot and a majority vote shall be required for election. All officers shall be elected for a term of one year from among the members of the department. Should the department not choose a director the Pastor may appoint a Director over Men's Ministry.

#### e. Relationships

- (1) This Men's Ministries Department shall always be loyal to and cooperate with the pastor of this church and to its program. Care should be taken not to conflict in its services with the regular services of the whole church or to launch or support any program which is not consistent or in harmony with the general program of the church as promoted by the pastor and/or the official board.
- (2) The Men's Ministries Department of this local church considers itself a part of and a unit in any Sectional, District or General Council organization of the Men's Ministries Department of the Assemblies of God which may develop and will cooperate with such larger unit.

#### f. Finances

Each church in the District should be encouraged to send an annual offering for the support of the District Men's Ministries Department.

## Article XII. Civil Government

a. Whereas, the Scriptures declare that government is of God, the powers that be are ordained of God as ministers of good to the governed. Whosoever therefore resists the power resists the ordinances of God. Wherefore we are subject not only for wrath but also for conscience sake; rendering to all their due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor (Rom. 13:7).

b. Therefore be it resolved, that this church hereby declares its loyalty to our government and to its Chief Executive, and that we do hereby state our fixed purpose to assist in every way morally possible, consistent with our faith.

## Article XIII. Amendments

Amendment to the Bylaws may be made by a majority vote of the membership of the church present in any of its regular or special meetings, subject to the review of the District Executive Board.

### Standing Recommendations

#### District, Ministerial and Local

##### I. DISTRICT

1. We recommend each assembly cooperate with the District officials in establishing new assemblies in its own section or other sections each year.
2. We recommend all visiting ministers from other districts attending our Council meetings be extended all the privileges of ministers of the District except the right to vote.
3. We advise all our ministers sponsoring camp meetings to arrange their camp meeting dates under the supervision of the Executive Board.
4. We recommend that the District Secretary-Treasurer's books be audited every year and the District Secretary-Treasurer be bonded.
5. We recommend that the Monday night service at the District Council be a Missionary Rally and an offering be taken for World Missions at that time.
6. We recommend that Home Missions offerings given directly in the Section, be reported to the Sectional Home Missions Representative.
7. We recommend that the District Superintendent shall plan and conduct an annual Ministers' Retreat each year for ministers and their spouses for the purposes of relaxation, relationship building, and spiritual renewal. We further recommend that the dress code for this retreat shall be advertised as casual for all services.
8. We recommend that all full-time officers or General Presbyters of the Oklahoma District Council have their expenses paid to the General Council meetings and these expenses be paid out of each department's funds.
9. Since the author of a good resolution should receive credit for his work, the author should sign the resolution and his name also be published in the minutes with the resolution.
10. We recommend that all full-time District Officials be allowed to participate in the Federal Social Security program and the Minister's Benefit Association if they so desire. The District Council shall assume the responsibility of the payments. We further recommend that if a pastor so desires to participate

in the Federal Social Security program and the Minister's Benefit Association, that the church assume the responsibility for the payments. We further recommend that churches securing the services of evangelists who are members of the Minister's Benefit Association take this into consideration and endeavor through extra offerings to enable the evangelists to participate in the plan.

11. Inasmuch as the expenses of the District Camp Meeting are high, the District Board recommends that each Sectional Presbyterian receive offerings in his section during the year for the expenses of the Camp Meeting.

12. We recommend that itinerating missionaries be given offerings received at his services in our churches for his missionary project, equipment and fare. He in turn must receipt the churches for said offerings to insure proper credit.

13. We recommend that the District News be sent to ministers only.

14. Whereas, a need sometimes arises for the creating of new youth areas and also the combining of already existing areas, thereby eliminating others; we recommend that the District Superintendent, District Youth Director, Sectional Presbyterian, and Youth Representative serve as a Committee to cope with such problems as they arise.

15. We recommend that copies of the annual reports of the District Officers be mailed by the District Secretary-Treasurer to secretaries of all local Assemblies of God churches of the Oklahoma District.

16. We recommend that a Sectional Missions Rally under the supervision of the District Superintendent and the District Missions Director be conducted annually in connection with the Sectional Ministers' Institutes. We further recommend that the Sectional Missions Representative and Sectional Presbyterian of each particular section shall assist in publicizing the meeting.

17. We recommend that all pastors and churches support the Assemblies of God missionary program and that our ministers join together in informing our constituency of the advantages in supporting our own missionary program.

18. Solicitation of funds in any Assemblies of God church in the Oklahoma District, whether by Assemblies of God ministers or others, is disapproved unless the project has been approved by the District Executive Board and the local pastor's permission has been given for solicitation of said funds.

19. We recommend that there be specially called meeting called by the Sectional Presbyterian annually in each section for the purpose of coordinating all the section meetings for the year, giving equal opportunity to all departments as needed. We further recommend that no section or area meeting be conducted on the same day or the day before or after a district meeting. A calendar of these meetings for the entire year shall be given to all pastors in the section.

20. Before evangelists or any other person solicit offerings in the local churches for foreign or home missions activities or projects, they should obtain a letter of authorization from the District Office, so pastors can be aware of their projects. We recommend that pastors refrain from using persons without a written letter of approval from the District office.

21. We recommend that churches should have at least four missionary services per year, with more if possible, to keep the burden of missions before the people.

22. Whereas, it is extremely difficult for a missionary to raise support from the field and it would create a hardship on the missionary to lose support while on the field, therefore, be it resolved that when a pastor or local church wishes to discontinue a missionary's support, they first notify the missionary as to their intentions and if at all possible, wait until the missionary has returned home for regular furlough before dropping his or her support.

23. We recommend that the money from the sale of a Home Missions church will revert to a Home Missions Department Fund to be used in the same field of ministry as the dissolved church.

24. Any private non-profit corporation desiring approval as a District home missions project shall provide in its Articles of Incorporation a dissolution clause declaring that upon cessation, the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., a non-profit corporation, shall be given first option to receive all property, both personal and real.

25. We recommend that the Sectional Missions Representative, along with the Sectional Presbyterian, visit the Pastor of each newly established church, at least once a quarter during the formative years of the church's existence. We further recommend that the Sectional Missions Representative report his findings, i.e., family needs, building needs, to the District Missions Director.

## II. MINISTERIAL

1. We recommend that ministers refrain from taking with them workers of the opposite sex unless accompanied by their own companion or the companions of the workers.

2. That all ministers avail themselves of the Berean College courses recommended by the General Council.

3. Should a pastor desire a change of field of labor or an assembly desires a change of pastoral oversight, due notice shall be given at least thirty days in advance.

4. We recommend that ministers coming from other Districts to pastor our churches transfer within 60 days unless they can give good reasons for not doing so.

5. We recommend that ministers attending local Assemblies be granted associate membership, if they desire, but that voting privileges not be granted them in local elections. We further recommend that no minister having credentials with the Oklahoma District serve as an officer of the local church and that they refrain from exerting an influence contrary to the policy and program of the local church and pastor.

6. Whereas many cities have more than one Assembly, we recommend that before any union meetings be held, such meetings must meet the approval of two-thirds of all the pastors of said city and if the meeting does not meet with said approval by the pastors and some wish to cooperate with such a meeting, the advertising shall not read a union meeting but only the churches cooperating will be listed.

7. All solicitation of missionary funds among our churches by missionaries of ministers of the General Council must be done in cooperation with the Division of Home Missions or the Division of Foreign Missions. Ministers of the General Council desirous of engaging in foreign ministry must do so in cooperation with the Division of Foreign Missions. General Council ministers shall refrain from agreements with independent organizations entailing the use of solicitation of funds or the ministry of persons representing these organizations when such cooperation involves the identifying of our work with or the giving of publicity to organizations over which the General Council exercises no administrative control or with which the General Council has no proper working relationship. Any exceptions to this policy should be implemented only in connection and cooperation with the proper General and District Council agencies.

8. We recommend that as many pastors as can volunteer to give one week of their ministry each year to one of our Home Missions churches at their own expense. We further recommend that the District Director send a questionnaire to our pastors who can and will cooperate in such a program. The scheduling of these meetings shall be under the supervision of the District Missions Director.

9. When there is a change in the Secretary or Treasurer in a local church, we recommend that the pastor assume the responsibility of notifying the District Secretary-Treasurer's office of such a change.

10. We recommend that our ministers comply with the General Council's reaffirmation of its strong, pro-life scriptural stance on the subject of abortion, which approves participation in the pro-life movement by all scriptural means, disapproves all unscriptural acts by its ministers, and leaves to the discretion of individual ministers the extent to which they may participate in non-violent and peaceful acts of intervention to prevent the killing of the unborn.

### III. LOCAL

1. We recommend that assemblies correspond with the District Superintendent for information in regard to deeding and transferring church property.

2. We recommend that all our pastors make thorough investigation of the deeds of their church properties and promote such changes in the deeds as may be necessary, and conform with Article IV Property Rights.

3. We recommend that in the event a church is without a pastor for a reasonable time that the Sectional Presbyter make the necessary investigation.

4. We recommend that our assemblies maintain a high standard for admission to membership and that everyone must comply with the membership guidelines.

5. We recommend that an annual Missionary Convention be held in each local Assemblies of God church in the Oklahoma District to promote World Missions and to challenge each church to fulfill its responsibility in raising the yearly budget for missions.

6. We recommend that each of our assemblies and ministers send an offering once a year to the District Office for the District Campground.

7. We recommend that all local pastors seek to find out where our people are going to reside when changing residence and that he notify the local pastor of the Assembly of God church nearest their new residence.

8. We recommend that our Christian Education Schools use our Assembly of God literature published by the Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Missouri.

9. We recommend that churches continue their pledged support to missionaries who are home on furlough as long as they are under appointment by the Foreign Missions Board and engaged in missionary activities.

10. We recommend that all church officials, Christian Education officers and teachers obey Mal. 3:10 and that they be chosen from among those that are Spirit-filled when such material is available.

11. We recommend that each church write into its budget a minimum of \$10.00 per month or \$120.00 per year, to be sent to the District Youth Camp Fund for the purpose of acquisition and upkeep of District Youth Camp facilities.

12. It is recommended that all communications from the General Council and the District Council be presented to the church board by the pastor or church secretary.

13. Before any constitution and bylaws, other than the District Constitution and Bylaws of the Oklahoma District Council, are used in any of our local churches, a copy of the proposed constitution and bylaws shall be filed with the District Executive Board. The District Executive Board shall examine the proposed constitution and bylaws to see whether or not they conflict with the District Constitution and Bylaws. Their findings and their recommendations shall then be forwarded to proper representatives of the local church. In no case shall any local church be recognized as an Assembly of God Church, or set in order until they have complied with these provisions. Also, when new churches are beginning they are not to be granted

recognition or financial assistance unless they have accepted the District Constitution and Bylaws as the proper form of government for such assembly and the property shall be deeded according to district policy.

14. We recommend that a training class shall be held at least once each year by the pastor on the responsibilities of the local church board members, secretaries, treasurers, trustees, and any other officers of the local church. Such training course should be based upon the Constitution and Bylaws for the local church of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God.

15. We recommend that all Assemblies of God churches in the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God endeavor to conduct at least one service during the year with emphasis on the Light-for-the-Lost program.

16. We recommend that where a church has qualified personnel, no one individual shall hold more than one official position in the church such as Deacon, Trustee, Christian Education Superintendent, church Secretary-Treasurer or other major offices.

17. It is recommended that pastors and churches review individual missionary pledges annually and if possible, the monthly support of each individual missionary should be raised at least commensurate with the increased cost of living.

18. It is recommended that pastors and churches prayerfully consider their past performance in missionary giving and that new goals for the church missionary program be set annually. This would serve as an incentive to the church to increase their missionary giving.

19. It is recommended that pastors of our churches review their church giving to missions and encourage their churches to give according to the World Missions Plan if they have not been doing so.

20. It is recommended that each church designate two or more people to be responsible for the proper collection and accounting of funds.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CALLING PASTORS

1. When a church finds it necessary to secure a pastor, we recommend that the official church board serve as the pulpit committee.

2. The congregation may increase the size of the pulpit committee through the selection of additional individuals who are members in good standing and filled with the Holy Spirit.

3. If such an increase is requested by the congregation, the addition of three members to the pulpit committee shall be determined by secret ballot. The three individuals receiving the largest number of votes would be declared elected. The pulpit committee shall determine its own chairman who shall coordinate the selection process and submit all applications to the committee.

4. After the pulpit committee's selection their first duty should be to make a list of pastoral applicants along with any recommended by the committee or congregation. Any suggested names for nomination by members of the congregation should be made to the committee and not presented from the floor in the business session. The committee should consider uppermost the leading of the Holy Spirit rather than requirements as to age, educational background and previous experience.

5. The pulpit committee, after surveying the applications, should limit the number to ten (10) then select three (3) from this group for consideration. Of the three, select only one at a time to be presented to the congregation to vote on. The order should be determined by the committee. Second and third choices should not be revealed to the congregation until the church has had an opportunity to vote on number one.

6. After the pulpit committee has arrived at the three persons to be considered from the applications, all applicants should be informed of the disposition of their status immediately. Be it further recommended that remaining applicants be informed immediately at the election of a pastor.
7. When a minister is invited to speak as a pastoral candidate, he should be reimbursed at an adequate rate per mile round trip, plus meals and lodging. When the pulpit committee goes to investigate a minister's field of labor they too should be reimbursed.
8. Ministers visiting church services for purposes of discussing their applications should refrain from visiting when a fellow minister is speaking at the request of the pulpit committee.
9. Salaries or other working conditions of each applicant should not be used in discussion with another applicant.
10. We recommend that a standard application form be made available by the district office to both ministers and churches, and that the forms be made in triplicate with one copy to be sent to the district office. We suggest that one standard application should include name, address, telephone number, marital status, ministerial references, date of license or ordination, along with previous pastorates, and other ministerial experience. We also recommend that highly personal questions about the minister and his family not be included.
11. All pastoral elections held in churches where there is only a Board of Trustees should be conducted by a Sectional Presbyterian or District Official. And, further, that all churches clear through the district office any ministers to be voted upon.

#### V. FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CALLING PASTORS

1. The pastor should be respected as the spiritual overseer of the church.
2. As chairman of the board, he assumes leadership over all of the church, over which the Holy Spirit has made him overseer (Acts 20:28). He is and should be a member of all church committees.
3. In order for a church to be spiritual in all areas, there must be a harmonious working relationship between the pastor and the church officials.
4. Deacons and trustees are, scripturally speaking, servants of the church, chosen by the membership to carry out the church program. There is no scriptural authority to indicate that it is their responsibility to run the church in the sense of arrogantly doing whatever they wish without regard to anyone else. There is no authority in the scriptures to indicate that they have been placed in their position to direct the activities of the pastor. They should uphold his hands in any way possible. Church officials should always remember that they are not a legislative body but have been chosen to carry out the will of the entire church body. The final court of appeal is always the church body.
5. In the early church, provision was made for bishops (overseers Acts 20:28, I Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5-17), elders (I Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5, I Peter 5:1-4) and pastors (Acts 20:28, Ephesians 4:11, I Peter 5:1-4) to whom was delegated the responsibility of leading the church (I Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17-19, Titus 1:5-9). The terms Bishop, Elder, and Pastor refer interchangeably to the same office; the various terms describing the status and the function of the pastor. The deacons were their helpers (Acts 6:1-6, I Timothy 3:8-13). The word for deacons literally means "servants." We are admonished in Hebrews 13:7, 17, to obey those who have the rule over the church; if the early church pastors could be compared to the pastors of our modern day churches it is only reasonable to believe that the duties of deacons or trustees or any other church officer should not be one of superiority or rivalry to the pastor. When such a situation exists, there is bound to be conflict or trouble.

6. It is a mistake for the church officers to consider the pastor as the hireling of the board or the church. He is to be honored and respected not because of who he is but because of what he is!

7. The wise pastor will use his authority discreetly and see to it that there is no reason for him to be called “the church boss or dictator.” It is well to seek the counsel and advice of responsible brethren in the church. The word honored in Hebrews 13:7, 17, is translated guide. In other words, he is a shepherd to lead the flock.

8. Responsibility and relegated authority may be given the board by the congregation to take care of business matters. The greatest responsibility of the true minister is his responsibility to God in fulfilling his ministry. Because in some few instances, it has seemed to some, that some pastors do not measure up to that responsibility, the church has various means at their disposal to take care of the situation. As long as he conducts himself according to God’s standards, he should be entitled to the authority given to him in God’s Word.

9. The following are just a few of the things that could produce a good relationship between the pastor and church officials:

a. Patience and self-control.

b. Mutual respect.

c. The welfare of the church should take precedence over any personal consideration.

d. They should seek to bring about unity of spirit rather than division.

e. They should never engage in malicious gossip or use deceit. Decisions made by the board should be kept in confidence and not be disclosed to their wives or anyone else. Such action of the board as may be classified as public information should be announced by the pastor during a regular or special meeting of the church.

Notes on Calling a Pastor:

1. We have a very good basic program in our own Constitution and Bylaws. However, there are a few things that would be necessary when a church board is considering a candidate for pastor. It is vitally necessary that all pastoral candidates have a thorough and complete understanding with the church board from the very beginning as to the program and policies of the church and what is expected of each other.

A. PERSONAL MINISTRY— Usually a good estimation can be obtained from a pastoral candidate when he is trying out for the church. However, pulpit ministry is only one phase of his responsibility.

B. REMUNERATION — This is very vital and important in the relationship between the pastor and church officials. In considering the pastors’ salary or remuneration (I Timothy 5:17, 18), the following items should be considered carefully:

1. Salary.

2. Parsonage or parsonage allowance.

3. Utilities.

4. Allowance for expense of operating his car.

5. Moving expenses.



6. Travel and expense to national, district, and sectional meetings.
7. Retirement benefits such as Ministers' Benefit Association and Social Security.
8. There should be an annual review made of the pastor's remuneration, taking into consideration the following items:
  - a. Prosperity of the church.
  - b. Needs of the pastor.
  - c. The length and value of his service and increase of living expense.
  - d. We all believe that a pastor should be fair with his church but on the other hand we do not believe God will bless any parsimonious board. If a comparison is made of the pastor's salary with those in the congregation it should be compared to the higher salaries and not the least since the demands made of him are above and beyond that of the average wage earner.

C. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT — If at all possible, the church should support the pastor to such an extent that outside employment is not necessary. However, if the salary of the church is inadequate to meet the needs of the pastor and his family, they should not object if the pastor finds it necessary to work. This should always be considered as a temporary expedient, with the thought in mind that, as soon as possible, the pastor should be on a full-time status in the church.

D. TERM OF OFFICE — Our Oklahoma Constitution and Bylaws state that the first election should be for the period of one year with the suggestion that the next election should be for three years or an indefinite period. If the candidate is well known or favorably known, it is well to give him a longer period of election than one year on the first election. The only thing that can come from a short term on a pastor is to give the minority group in his church the advantage of causing trouble.

E. VACATIONS — Pastors should have every consideration in this area and the church should carry the expense of paying for a supply preacher while he is away.

F. DEPARTMENTAL SUPERVISION — There should be a clear understanding that all departments of the church are a part of the church program and not entities. All departments should come under the pastor's supervision.

G. GUEST SPEAKER — It should not be required that a pastor clear invitations for special speakers or evangelists with the church board before giving them the invitation to come to his church. And under no circumstances should anyone be invited to speak to any department of the church without pastoral approval. The pulpit is the pastor's responsibility. If the pastor desires to do so, it is perfectly permissible and in order for him to ask for speakers if he considers it necessary. However, it is the initiative of the pastor to take care of the pulpit. When the pastor invites special speakers, the remuneration should be stated and settled beforehand and in no case should the pastor be expected to take care of this expense.

H. OUTSIDE MINISTRY — There should be an understanding on the pastor's outside ministry since one or two outside revivals or meetings can be a blessing to him and his ministry as well as his own church.

I. PURCHASES MADE FOR THE CHURCH BY THE PASTOR — It should not be expected that the pastor should have to call a business meeting to purchase small items that have to be purchased for the church. Matters of large expenditures or importance should be brought before the church board before the purchase is completed. However, it can be embarrassing for the pastor to have to bring every need to the church board before making the purchase. This does, in many cases, hinder the operation of the church and if a man is worthy to be pastor he should be trustworthy enough that these courtesies should be extended to him.

