

## BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I. ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES

## Section 1. Qualifications

- a. **District Officers** - The qualifications for the elected district officers in Article VIII of the constitution shall be ordained credential holders, with the exception of the treasurer, of mature experience, sound judgment, recognized ability, and Christian character, who have ministered in our Assemblies of God fellowship for at least five consecutive years immediately preceding their election. They shall be chosen from the membership and shall have ministered in the district for one year immediately preceding their election. The district presbyter, representing a section, shall have resided in that section at least six months immediately preceding this election. *[Refer to Article VII in the constitution regarding exceptions on residency. For a more detailed breakdown of offices, refer to Constitution, Article VIII, and Bylaws, Article II.]*
- b. **Sectional Officers** - The presbyters and assistant presbyters shall be ordained credential holders of mature experience, sound judgment, recognized ability, and Christian character who have ministered for at least five consecutive years in our Assemblies of God fellowship immediately preceding their election. Secretary-Treasurers may either be ordained or licensed credential holders of mature experience, sound judgment, recognized ability, and Christian character who have ministered for at least two consecutive years in our Assemblies of God fellowship immediately preceding their election. All sectional officers shall be chosen from the membership and shall have ministered in the district for the year immediately preceding their election. *[For nominations and elections, see Article VI, Section 3(d) and (e) in the bylaws. Refer to Article VII in the constitution regarding exceptions on residency.]*
- c. **Sectional Departmental Representatives** - The elected and appointed representatives from each section shall be persons of mature experience, sound judgment, recognized ability, and Christian character who have served for at least one year in our Assemblies of God fellowship. The sectional Youth representative shall have ministered for at least one year in our Assemblies of God fellowship and must be licensed or ordained. *[For other sectional representatives see individual departmental information for nominations and elections.]*
- d. **Ethnic/Language Fellowship Representative** - A representative shall be appointed by the ethnic groups in consultation with the Executive Presbytery of the New Jersey District and shall meet periodically with the entire Presbytery body for the purpose of exchanging information, facilitating evangelism, establishing churches, and for greater understanding of our working relationship with these groups. A representative shall be a credentialed minister with the New Jersey District of the Assemblies of God.

## Section 2. Nominations and Elections

- a. **District Officers** - Candidates for the offices of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and secretary shall be nominated by secret ballot. The specific electoral process for these offices is outlined in the New Jersey District Assemblies of God Policy and Procedure Manual. All names thus presented shall be balloted upon until a candidate shall have received two-thirds vote of all votes cast. If any election is not declared on the third electoral ballot, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes on the third ballot shall be the only nominees to be voted upon until an election is declared.
- b. **District Treasurer** - The district treasurer shall be appointed by the District Presbytery. The office of treasurer shall be separated from the office of the secretary of the district.

- c. **District Presbyters** - They shall be nominated biennially at the Sectional Council by a secret ballot two-thirds vote of their respective sections, and shall be declared elected by ratification at the following District Council. In the event that ratification does not occur, members of the respective section, present at the Council, shall caucus and present another name for nomination. The term of office for district presbyters shall be two years and shall begin immediately upon ratification by the Council in session. The total amount of consecutive terms a Presbyter may serve once ratified by the District Council shall be limited to four (4) terms for a total of eight (8) consecutive years. Once a Presbyter has left office, having served the maximum number of consecutive terms allowed, and having not been in office for at least one (1) full term, he may again be considered for the position of Presbyter. Elections will be conducted on alternate years with half of the presbyters elected each year. A newly nominated presbyter may meet with the District Presbytery during the interim between the Sectional Council in which he is nominated and ensuing District Council, but may not have the right to vote on any issue as a member of the Presbytery until after the adjournment of the session in which he is ratified.
- d. **General Presbyters** - The superintendent, assistant superintendent, and executive secretary by virtue of their offices shall serve as general presbyters.
- e. **Ethnic/Language Fellowship Presbyter** - They shall be nominated biennially at the Ethnic/Language Fellowship Council by a secret ballot and two-thirds vote of their respective fellowship. The term of office of Ethnic/Language Fellowship presbyters shall be two years and shall begin immediately upon ratification by the District Council. The qualifications for the Ethnic/Language Presbyter shall be the same as those Presbyters elected from the various sections.
- f. **Nonresident Executive Presbyters** – The New Jersey District Council shall, at its annual meeting, during the General Council year when the Northeast Area executive presbyter is being elected, and prior to the General Council session, nominate two ordained ministers, one of whom is not an elected full time District official. A two-thirds vote shall be required to nominate to the General Council. On a rotating basis, three additional individuals shall be nominated: one who is an ordained minister under forty years of age at the time of election, one ordained female (no age requirement), and one ordained African-American minister (no age requirement). Said nominee for each pertinent position regarding under forty, female, and African-American ordained ministers, shall come from a name forwarded from the NJMN Presbytery according to procedure outlined in the Policy and Procedure manual. Said nominee must be ratified by the District Council in session by a majority vote. Should ratification of said nominee not take place, the Presbytery will caucus to bring forward another name for ratification.
- g. **Honorary Presbyters** - The position of honorary presbyter shall be filled by recommendation of the District Presbytery and approved by the District Council. The honorary presbyter shall be elected by a majority vote.
- h. **District Departmental Directors** - All district departmental directors shall be nominated by the District Presbytery biennially in the month of April. The names of the nominees shall be submitted on a ballot sheet at the opening of District Council during the time of registration. A ballot will be provided for additional nominations, if desired by the district constituency, and placed in an appropriate ballot box prior to noon of the first day of business. One ballot will then be compiled which will include all nominees for each department and all positions will be voted on at the same time. A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to each office. In the event there is no election in any given department, it shall be voted on singularly until there is an election.

- i. **Nominating Ballot** - No nominating ballot at the District or Sectional Council level shall constitute an election. All elections will be by secret ballot unless otherwise provided for in the bylaws.

### Section 3. Terms of Office

#### a. District Officers

- (1) The term of office for all executive officers shall be for four years from the time of election; beginning with the executive secretary, followed by the superintendent, and assistant superintendent.
- (2) The term of office for the district youth director, who by virtue of this office serves as a presbyter, shall be four years.
- (3) The term of office for all other district presbyters shall be two years as directed in Article I, Section 2 (c), of the bylaws.
- (4) The term of office for the honorary presbyter shall be for life.

- b. **Sectional Officers** - The term of office for the assistant presbyter and the secretary-treasurer from each section shall be two years. The election of said officers will be on an alternating basis from that of the sectional presbyter.

- c. **Sectional Departmental Representatives** - The term of office for all elected or appointed departmental representatives from each section shall be one year.

### Section 4. Vacancies

#### a. District Officers

- (1) Should a vacancy occur in any office through resignation, removal from the district, death, or disqualification, power is vested in the District Presbytery to fill the office until the next District Council. It may, if it chooses, call a Special District Council to fill the office.
- (2) In the event a vacancy is created during a District Council or Special Council, there shall be an amended vetting and election process to fill the unexpected vacancy. This amended vetting and election process shall require that the presiding executive/chairman of the regular or special District Council open nominations by secret ballot for the vacant office. All potential nominees receiving 10 or more ballots will be eligible for an amended vetting process, which will commence during a called recess of the Council. In the case of the District Youth Director, the election process would follow the Bylaws, Article XI, Section 4.a. The vetting (interviewing) of such individuals would take place as outlined in the Policy and Procedures manual (page 21, Section 4, g.).
- (3) The Presbytery shall become the Eligibility Committee charged with vetting potential nominees. When the Council is called back to order, the Eligibility Committee will present the vetted nominees to be voted upon by way of secret ballot and will commence voting until an election is declared. All names thus presented shall be balloted upon until a candidate shall have received two-thirds vote of all votes cast. If any election is not declared on the third electoral ballot, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes on the third ballot, shall be the only nominees to be voted upon until an election is declared. In case there is only one eligible individual after the vetting process is completed, that individual's name will be

presented as the nominee and would be elected by way of a yes or no vote. In all cases a two-thirds majority is required for election.

- (4) The District Council shall determine the term of office for said vacancy in either a special or regular session.

**b. Sectional Officers and Representatives** - Should a vacancy occur in the office of secretary-treasurer or any office, other than the office of assistant presbyter, through resignation, removal from the district, death, or disqualification, the sectional committee shall be empowered to appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term of that office.

**c. All Other Positions** - Should a vacancy occur in any other elected or appointed position, other than the above, for any reason, the position shall be filled in the same manner as the original election or appointment by the District Presbytery.

**Section 5. Assuming Office**

All elected district officers shall assume their responsibilities at the close of the Council session. The exception being, however, when someone other than the incumbent is elected; namely, the superintendent, assistant superintendent, secretary, or district Youth director, who shall take office three months after the date of election. In the event that this latter plan is not deemed practicable, the District Presbytery is authorized to set another date.

**Section 6. Quorum**

All accredited ministers and delegates of the District Council who are present and registered by the Roster Committee shall constitute the voting constituency, or quorum. The courtesy of the floor will be granted to visiting ministers from neighboring districts; however, the privilege to vote during the Council session will be withheld.

**ARTICLE II. DUTIES OF OFFICERS****Section 1. Superintendent**

- a. To act as president of the corporation in all legal matters.
- b. To preside at all meetings of the District Council, Executive Presbytery and Credentials Committee.
- c. To be the head of the district office, and to supervise the work of that office during the interim between sessions of the District Council. The superintendent shall be an ex officio member of all committees.
- d. To have executive oversight of the mission of the District, and to act in a supervisory capacity over all the work of the district.
- e. To serve as general presbyter by virtue of his office. *[See Article VIII, Section 4, in the constitution]*

**Section 2. Assistant Superintendent**

- a. To assist the superintendent.
- b. To preside at meetings in the absence of the superintendent.
- c. To serve as a member of the Executive and District Presbytery and the Credentials Committee and shall act as vice president of the corporation, and shall be an ex officio member of all district and sectional committees.
- d. By virtue of this office, to serve as a general presbyter. *[See Article VIII, Section 4, in the constitution.]*
- e. The pastor elected as general presbyter/assistant superintendent shall serve on the District Presbytery, represent the district at the General Presbytery meetings, and give a written report at the annual District Council, and may also be assigned portfolios at the discretion of the District Presbytery

**Section 3. Secretary**

- a. To make and keep true records of the proceedings of the District Council.
- b. To be the custodian of the official seal of the district and shall issue credentials under the direction of the Credentials Committee.
- c. To be the executive secretary of the district, and as such shall serve as a member of, and act as secretary of, the meetings of the Executive and District Presbyteries, the Credentials Committee, and as secretary of the corporation.
- d. To be authorized to sign all official and legal documents and to perform such other functions as are customary, or as may be directed by the District Council. Said secretary shall be an ex officio member of all district and sectional committees.

**Section 4. Treasurer**

- a. To be the custodian of all the district funds in accordance with standards as set forth in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.
- b. To prepare and submit a quarterly financial report to the District Presbytery.
- c. To prepare and submit an annual financial report to the District Council.

**Section 5. District Presbytery**

- a. The District Presbytery shall have the general oversight of the activities of the district during the interim between Council sessions. It shall be authorized to act for the district in all emergency matters that affect its interests and to execute its decisions. It shall arrange for its own meetings, and its decisions shall be final unless reversed by the District Council in session. A majority present at any meeting of the District Presbytery shall constitute a quorum.
- b. Before final action can be taken by the District Presbytery on vitally important matters pertaining to the whole district, each section, through its district presbyter, shall be given opportunity to discuss and make recommendations concerning said action. A summary report of all important actions taken by the District Presbytery pertaining to the interests of the district shall be sent to each credential holder by the district office within one month from the date of the meetings of the District Presbytery.

**Section 6. District Presbyters**

- a. The district presbyter shall by virtue of this office be the chairman of the fellowship section and the Home Missions Committee, and shall be a member of the District Presbytery.
- b. Any pastor or assembly desiring advice or aid shall be required to appeal to the district presbyter who will investigate and, if possible, bring about an adjustment. In the event that the district presbyter is unable to satisfactorily settle a matter, it shall be referred to the district superintendent and the District Presbytery for final action.

**Section 7. Executive Presbytery**

The Executive Presbytery shall act in between the sessions of the District Presbytery in an advisory capacity to the superintendent and shall conduct such other business as may be assigned by the District Presbytery or the District Council.

**Section 8. Honorary Presbyters**

The honorary presbyter shall be a member of the New Jersey District Council. Their duties shall be outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

**ARTICLE III. COMMITTEES****Section 1. Standing Committees**

Standing committees shall be appointed as necessary. They shall serve for the designated time or until their purposes are accomplished. In the event a vacancy shall occur in a standing committee, the District Presbytery shall be authorized to fill such vacancy.

**a. Resolutions Committee**

1. Procedure for presentation of resolutions - A Resolutions Committee shall be appointed by the District Presbytery. All resolutions for presentation to the District Council, except emergency measures, shall be presented to the executive secretary's office at least 100 days prior to a District Council session. The Resolutions Committee shall prepare the resolutions in printed form and mail them to the District Council ministers and churches at least 30 days prior to the District Council, with the understanding that this does not apply to business growing out of District Presbytery meetings just prior to the District Council, and that resolutions of an emergency nature shall be decided by a two-thirds vote of the District Council.
2. Sponsorship policy - All resolutions presented to the Resolutions Committee shall be signed by the author or sponsor. When a resolution is presented for the consideration of the District Council in session, the author, sponsor, or a spokesperson appointed by the author or sponsor shall be expected to be the first speaker on behalf of the resolution.
3. Scriptural interpretation - Except for resolutions submitted by the District Presbytery, resolutions that involve scriptural interpretation shall be forwarded to the Doctrinal Purity Committee appointed by the District Presbytery when in the judgment of the Resolutions Committee such an action is needful.
4. Appropriateness of resolutions - The Resolutions Committee shall, by a two-thirds vote, determine the appropriateness of proposed resolutions. Inappropriate resolutions may include those that, if adopted, would conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws, or whose substance is not in keeping with appropriateness for discussion by the District Council.
5. Right of sponsor - If the Resolutions Committee determines that a resolution is inappropriate, it shall so advise the author and shall apprise the author of his or her right to present the proposed resolution to the District Council in session for a determination as to appropriateness.
6. Format of presentation - The Resolutions Committee shall:
  - a. Put resolutions in proper form.
  - b. Eliminate duplication of similar resolutions relating to a specific subject.
  - c. Present resolutions in a logical sequence.

- b. Benevolence Committee** - A standing committee called the Benevolence Committee shall be appointed biennially by the District Presbytery in April.

### Section 2. Credentials Committee – District Presbytery

The Credentials Committee shall meet as often as deemed necessary, the time and place of the meetings to be announced by the district superintendent. It shall examine all applicants for the ministry and shall provide for the ordination of all accepted candidates. It shall examine all applicants for credentials, and recommend to General Council for their final approval. The secretary shall contact the General Council office to certify who shall be ordained to the full time ministry by the laying on of hands by the District Presbytery.

### Section 3. District Council Committees

The following committees shall be appointed by the district superintendent, with the help and advice of the Executive Presbytery, two months before each District Council session, and their names published for the purpose of properly planning and conducting the business of the Council in session: Program Committee, Roster Committee, and such other committees as may be necessary for the conducting of the Council business.

## ARTICLE IV. ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Section 1.

In order to expedite the work of the Council and to avoid confusion in its deliberations, this Council shall be governed by accepted rules of parliamentary procedure, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship. A qualified parliamentarian shall be appointed by the chair for each District Council session, and said parliamentarian shall be governed by “**Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised,**” latest revision.

### Section 2.

For resolutions, please see Article III, Section 1 (a). Any motions that arise to the body during business sessions and resolutions not included in the District Council packets, shall be in written form and given to the Resolutions Committee Chairman or Chairperson of the Council in session.

### Section 3.

The regular order of business for the District Council can be found in the New Jersey District Policy and Procedure Manual.

## ARTICLE V. MINISTRY AND CREDENTIAL MATTERS

### Section 1. Ministry Described

Christ’s gifts to the church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (*Eph. 4:11*), exhorters, administrators, leaders and helpers (*Romans 12:7,8*). A call to missionary service shall be accepted as a call to the ministry.

In terms of maturity of ministry, four classifications of ministry are recognized; namely, the ordained minister, the licensed minister, the certified minister, and the provisional certified minister.

**Section 2. Basic Qualifications**

The following qualifications pertain to all applicants, male and female, for ministerial recognition:

- a. Testimony to having experienced the new birth (*John 3:5*).
- b. Testimony to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable the fulfilling of the threefold mission of the church [*Article V, paragraph 10, of the General Council Constitution*].
- c. Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidenced by a personal conviction, confirmed by the work of the Spirit, and the testimony of fellow ministers.
- d. A blameless Christian life, and a good report of those who are without (*Titus 1:7; I Tim. 3:7*).
- e. A thorough understanding of, and agreement with, our doctrinal position as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.
- f. A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices, and purposes of the fellowship through a study of the General Council and District Council Constitutions and Bylaws.
- g. An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older brethren and those in positions of authority.
- h. An evident determination to study the Word of God, taking advantage of every means available for the improvement and development of one's ministry (*II Tim. 2:15*). Any certain extent of academic education shall never be a requirement for credentials, but it shall be required of applicants that they complete the prescribed study courses of the Berean College of the Assemblies of God, or equivalent training in an approved school, and pass written and oral examinations for each level of credential, together with other training as may be prescribed by the New Jersey District Council Credentials Committee.
- i. We disapprove of any married persons holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God if either marriage partner has a former spouse living, unless the divorce occurred prior to his/her conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (*Matt 19:9*), or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (*1 Cor. 7:10-15*), except as hereinafter provided.
- j. The Executive Presbytery of the General Council shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant's annulment of a former marriage is consistent with the scriptural position of the fellowship relating to the granting or holding of ministerial credentials; or, in the case of a divorce or a dissolution, whether the circumstances would more appropriately be classified as calling for an annulment. The application must be accompanied by clear and satisfactory evidence of an illegal marriage through deception or fraud. Appeals from the decisions of the Executive Presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.
- k. If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the Credentials Committees of both the General Council and the District Council are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate on his or her own merits as to the level of credential to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

- (1) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
- (2) Complete an application for ministerial recognition and complete any recommended Berean courses by the General Council credentialing committee.
- (3) Submit a recommendation from the body with which he/she was formerly affiliated. If such is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry.
- (4) Take a credential examination.
- (5) Meet with the Credentials Committee.
- (6) Be recommended by the District Credentials Committee for the approval of the General Council Credentials Committee.
- (7) All so approved shall not be re-ordained, but shall have the hands of the District Presbytery laid upon them as they enter this new phase of ministry.
- (8) Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition will relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization.

### Section 3. Credential Qualifications

- a. **Provisional Certified Ministers** - A certificate of ministry may be issued on a provisional basis to a person who has not met all the credentialing requirements, but who is deemed by the district credentials committee to be essential to the continuity of a church or a ministry outreach for which a duly credentialed and qualified minister is unavailable. The reason for such a provisional issuance must be ministry driven, and the justification of its use is terminated when the minister ceases to be involved in the ministry for which it was initially granted, unless he accepts another qualifying assignment. **Other limitations are:**
  - (a) The ministry certificate (on a provisional basis) will be issued for 1 year and shall not be renewed more than two times, and
  - (b) A person who has been granted the Certificate of Ministry on a provisional basis must meet the qualifications for a ministry certificate within a 3 year period.
- b. **Certified Ministers**
  - (1) *General Requirements.* They shall show promise of usefulness in the Gospel work. They shall devote full or part-time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the District Credentials Committee, may remain under the supervision of a pastor or a ministry coach or mentor. They shall show evidence of a divine call and be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry and proclamation of the Gospel, except in the case of ill health or advanced age.
  - (2) *Pastoral Requirements.* In the event a certified minister is serving in a position as the pastor, he or she shall be expected to advance to the ministry license level within two years of acceptance of the pastorate. This shall not apply to any minister who has reached the age of 65 or older, or whose certificate has been issued on a provisional basis. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the District Credentials Committee.

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

The New Jersey District Council Credentials Committee shall approve Licenses, Certified Ministers certificates and Provisional Certified Ministers certificates to properly qualified applicants. The Credentials Committee is not bound to issue a license to preach to those holding Certified Minister's papers until the candidate's fitness shall justify the action.

- d. **Ordained Ministers** - Those who are of mature experience, and are qualified and able to undertake the responsibilities of the full gospel ministry, and whose ministries are acceptable generally.

The right of initiative in requests for ordination shall be placed in the hands of the district presbyters. The presbyter shall observe the work and ministry of those within his section. When he deems ordination advisable, the presbyter shall make the request for ordination to the district Credentials Committee. All ordinations shall take place annually at District Council. Ordination is official only when a Certificate of Ordination is issued by the General Secretary's office through the recommendation of the District Presbytery.

**Qualifications for ordination** are outlined in the New Testament Scriptures (*1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9*). In addition:

- (1) Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
- (2) They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
- (3) Those who may be ordained to the ministry shall have held a license to preach for at least two years. They shall have been engaged in active work as a pastor, evangelist, or some other recognized full-time ministry for at least two full consecutive years immediately prior thereto. The Credentials Committee is not bound to grant ordination to those who have held a license to preach for two consecutive years.
- (4) Applicants must be residents of, or hold credentials in, the district where they make application and appear before its Credentials Committee. District Councils are required to refrain from approving applicants for ordination who may have been licensed in another district until such licensed ministers shall have been a member of a district in which they are seeking ordination at least one year. If the applicants have not been a member of the district where they apply for ordination for two full consecutive years, they must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officary of the district in which they were previously licensed, as well as the district of their residence.
- (5) In the event that applicants have qualified and been approved for ordination by the district of their former residence before being publicly ordained, the district where they reside may waive the one-year residency requirement and ordain them upon the request or approval of their former district.
- (6) In order to maintain active status, ordained ministers shall be engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the Gospel except for cases of disability, retirement, or other valid circumstances as determined by the General Secretary of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

**Section 4. Pastoral Transitions/Interim Pastors  
- 2000/2001 Resolution -**

- a. When a pastoral transition becomes known or is pending, the outgoing pastor and/or current board should immediately contact the superintendent's office to arrange for a meeting on how to proceed with a pastoral transition. The superintendent shall then arrange for an appropriate person to meet with the church board or pulpit committee. This provision should be placed in the local church's Constitution and Bylaws.
- b. Local churches should be encouraged to include the option of having an interim pastor placed during a pastoral transition period. The option as such, should be included in the local church's Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section 5. Ministerial Relationships**

- a. All credential holders shall be amenable to both the General Council of the Assemblies of God and the District Council in matters of doctrine and conduct. In the case where a minister resides in one district but pastors a church located in another district, that pastor shall be required to be a member of the district in which the church is located. The exception being if both districts agree to permit said minister to live in other than the district where the church is located.
- b. All discourteous conduct is disapproved, and all credential holders are advised against interfering with pastors in charge of assemblies, whether it be by going in upon their work without consent, or by such correspondence with members of the assembly as will hurt the influence of the leader. All correspondence which concerns the whole assembly shall be addressed to one in charge and not to private members. Where there is no pastor, letters concerning the work shall be addressed to the officers of the assembly. Any credential holder who so offends shall be subject to scriptural treatment as an offender by the District Presbytery, or by the Executive Presbytery of the General Council. Such discourtesy will seriously affect the granting of annual fellowship certificates and may be the basis for their recall.
- c. A two-thirds vote of the Credentials Committee shall be necessary to disfellowship any member of the district, and said decisions shall be regarded as final unless the party adjudged guilty shall avail himself of the rights of appeal. Notice of appeal must be filed within thirty days after decisions shall have been given, in accordance with the provisions in the General Council Bylaws [*Article X. Discipline*].
- d. All ministers moving into the district to reside shall be required to file a transfer with the district secretary, to affiliate with the District Council, and to work and cooperate with the same.

The Assemblies of God fellowship is founded on the principles of voluntary unity and cooperation. Ministers of other faiths are not solicited by its members. All applicants ought to feel that the fellowship of the Assemblies of God is their fold, that they belong there, that they are one with these people, that they are of the same precious faith, that their principles, purposes, and practices are theirs and, therefore, they are in full accord with them. They should come to this conclusion without any pressure from any of its members. If this be their motive, they will not only receive benefit themselves, but they will be an asset to the fellowship as well. There will be no question but that they can be depended upon to cooperate with their fellow ministers and to labor with them in full accord and harmony for the development of the field as a whole.

### Section 6. Credentialing and Renewing Procedures

The Credentials Committee has the right to interview any credential holder either at Sectional Council, or any meeting of the District Presbytery.

- a. **Recognition** - All applications for ministerial recognition shall be obtained and processed through the district office in accordance with the procedures adopted by the Credentials Committee.
- b. **Renewal**
  - (1) **Expiration date** - All fellowship certificates are valid only until December 31 of each year and must be renewed annually. The renewing of credentials is the responsibility of the individual minister. In the event a minister does not receive the renewal form by December 1, the district office should be notified.
  - (2) **Grace period until January 15** - All who shall have failed to renew their fellowship certificates on or before December 31, or who shall have failed to indicate their purpose to do so, shall be considered as delinquent and shall be required to pay a late fee of \$50, up until January 15, to be divided equally between the District and General Council.
  - (3) **Reinstatement required after January 15** - Ministers who have not renewed by January 15 shall be recorded as lapsed as of the expiration date of December 31. They must make application for reinstatement and pay a \$100 fee in order to be reinstated, to be divided equally between the District and General Council. (*Note: Any former credential holder at any level who has been out of the Fellowship for seven years or more must retake the written examination.*)
- c. **Upgrading** - Should Certified Ministers desire upgrading to license, they shall request the same of their presbyter and pastor. Then said pastor shall send a letter of recommendation to the district executive secretary before any decision can be made. It is further understood that should the Presbytery body consider a licensed credential holder for upgrading to ordination, a letter of recommendation will be required from the present leadership under which the licensed minister is serving, and a reference will be sent to the leadership under which former service took place.

### Section 7. Discipline

For specifics regarding the discipline of our credentialed ministers, please refer to the General Council Bylaws, Article X.

### Section 8. Rehabilitation & Restoration

For specifics regarding the NJ District's policy regarding these processes, please refer to the Policy and Procedure Manual.

### Section 9. Termination

Credential terminations may occur in the following manner:

- a. On the initiative of the credential holder by resignation.
- b. On the initiative of the district resulting from disciplinary action by dismissal.
- c. As a result of affiliation with other church organizations.  
[See General Council Bylaws, Article X. Discipline, Section 7.]

## ARTICLE VI. DISTRICT FELLOWSHIP SECTIONS

### Section 1. Purpose

The district shall be divided into district fellowship sections to promote inter assembly fellowship, unite sectional activities, afford opportunity for fellowship, and mutual counsel for the ministry of the section.

### Section 2. Boundaries

The boundaries of the district fellowship sections shall be set or changed by the District Presbytery as the need may arise.

### Section 3. Organization

- a. **Sectional Councils** - Sectional Councils shall be held during the month of March. At that time the sections shall hold their annual business meeting and the election of their officers and those sectional department representatives not ratified by the District Presbytery. The Credentials Committee has the right to interview any credential holder, either at Sectional Council or any meeting of the District Presbytery.
- b. **District Presbyter** - Each section shall nominate a district presbyter by secret ballot who shall serve as sectional and home missions chairman. He shall be elected biennially by a two-thirds majority vote at the annual Sectional Council. The district presbyter shall be ratified by the District Council in session.
- c. **Ethnic/Language Fellowship Presbyter** - Any ethnic/language group having 12 or more General Council, district Affiliated non-supervised and Parent Affiliated Church (PAC) churches shall be entitled to a sitting Presbyter on the New Jersey District Presbytery body. A duly authorized fellowship is one that has been endorsed by the General Council Executive Presbytery having met the criterion for the ethnic/language groups (see General Council Bylaws, Article V, Section 8. Language/Ethnic Fellowships; see New Jersey District Council Bylaws, Article I. Elections And Vacancies, Section 2, paragraph e. Ethnic/Language Fellowship Presbyter).
- d. **Assistant Presbyter** - The assistant presbyter shall preside at the meetings of the sectional fellowship in the absence of the presbyter. The assistant presbyter shall represent the sectional fellowship on the District Presbytery, in the absence of the district presbyter, with the right to vote. By virtue of his office, he will be the Home Missions representative from his section. He shall assist the district presbyter in any other areas of work that may affect the section. The assistant presbyter shall be chosen biennially by **secret ballot** and a **two-thirds majority** vote. He shall assume office immediately upon election.
- e. **Secretary-Treasurer** - The names of **at least two candidates** for sectional secretary-treasurer shall be selected by a Nominating Committee before election by their respective constituencies. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the district presbyter from that section and two others appointed by the district presbyter, one of whom shall not be a present office holder. The secretary-treasurer shall be elected biennially **by majority vote**, and assume office immediately upon election.
- f. **Sectional Departmental Representatives** - The department heads shall have the option of having either an elected sectional representative or a representative appointed by the director and ratified by the Presbytery. *[See individual departmental information regarding nominations and elections.]*
- g. **Sectional Home Missions Committee** - The sectional Home Missions Committee shall consist of the district presbyter, assistant presbyter, and the secretary-treasurer.

- h. Privileges** - Each section shall have the right to govern itself and pass resolutions relating to various needs such as collecting dues, scheduling activities and fellowship meetings, etc. The sectional decisions shall be in keeping with the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council and the District Council of the Assemblies of God.

#### **Section 4. Voting Constituency**

- a.** All persons holding credentials with the district and residing within the section shall comprise the voting constituency in all business sessions, together with accredited delegates in the same ratio of representation from the local assemblies as at the annual District Council. All credential holders residing in one section and pastoring and/or ministering in another section shall be included in the voting constituency of the section in which they pastor and/or minister.
- b.** A quorum shall consist of all members present at any duly-called meeting of the section.
- c.** Credential holders not having ministry in a given section, and wishing to vote in a section other than that of their residence, must file a letter of request with the Executive Presbytery at least a month prior to Sectional Council. The decision of the Executive Presbytery shall be final.
- d.** Credential holders ministering in more than one section shall be limited to holding office and voting in the section in which they reside. If they wish to be a member of another section they must file a letter of request with the Executive Presbytery at least one month prior to Sectional Council. The decision of the Executive Presbytery shall be final. If the request is granted, the right to vote or hold office shall be forfeited in any other section.

#### **Section 5. Home Missions**

Each section of the district shall be given full opportunity to receive and use home missions offerings for the opening and development of new assemblies in its respective section. The sectional Home Missions Committee shall expedite this work, in harmony with District Home Missions.

### **ARTICLE VII. FELLOWSHIPS**

There shall be a Hispanic Fellowship and Filipino Fellowship of the New Jersey District Council to facilitate the needs of our Hispanic and Filipino constituencies, respectively.

### **ARTICLE VIII. ASSEMBLIES**

#### **Section 1. Organization of Assemblies**

Assemblies shall be entitled to the help of the district officary for the procurement of proper organizational structure. Arrangements for a meeting to set the assembly in order shall be made through consultation with the district superintendent. At this meeting a declaration of affiliation with the Assemblies of God shall be made, officers shall be provided for and elected, and an adequate constitution and bylaws adopted for the future guidance of the church.

### Section 2. Privileges

It shall be the privilege of all assemblies to have the advice and help of the District Presbytery in all vital matters which affect it. It shall have the privilege of representation at the District Council according to the standards set forth in the constitution. It shall have access to all the benefits that have been created by the Council fellowship.

All assemblies, with the exception of district affiliated home missions assemblies which are governed by a separate district constitution, shall have the privilege of securing the services of accredited pastors, evangelists, and missionaries. They shall have the right to elect their own officers and choose their own pastor. They may hold and control their own property, receive offerings, and transact all other business pertaining to the life of a local church.

### Section 3. Duties

- a. It shall be the duty of all assemblies to maintain scriptural order in doctrine and conduct, and to be amenable to the district in all matters affecting the peace and harmony of the fellowship.
- b. Assemblies shall be expected to assume their share in the expense of the district work in accordance with Article XIII, Section 3.
- c. It shall have a standard of membership which shall be determined by agreement with the District Council. It shall be the duty of the assembly to seek the help and advice of the district officary should difficulties arise within the assembly which would threaten its peace and welfare.

### Section 4. General Council Affiliated Assemblies [Sovereign Churches]

In making application for affiliation it is understood that the assembly shall have full recognition as sovereign, entitled to all the privileges granted by the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council. It shall have the right of self-government under Jesus Christ, its living Head, and shall have the power to choose or call its pastor, elect its official board, and transact all other business pertaining to its life as a local unit. It shall have the right to receive into its fellowship members who shall qualify for membership according to the standards determined by the District Council in cooperation with the local assembly, and shall be empowered to administer discipline to the same. It shall have the power to acquire and hold title to property in its own right, either through trustees or in its corporate name as a self-governing body.

It shall be the privilege of the assembly to send properly accredited delegates to both the General and District Council meetings. It shall have access to the general oversight and pastoral care of district officers who shall lend their assistance and give advice when called upon for that purpose. It shall also be entitled to district aid in the preparation and adoption of a constitution and bylaws for the assembly, the conducting of special business meetings, the election of officers, and the choice of a pastor.

The assembly shall be entitled to avail itself of all the avenues of cooperative effort provided through the fellowship such as General Council meetings, District Councils, camp meetings, fellowship meetings, prayer conferences and conventions, etc. The General Council publications including tracts, books, Sunday school literature, periodicals, etc., are all available for the use of the fellowship.

It is understood that the assembly shall recognize its obligation to the fellowship as a whole to maintain proper standards of doctrine, church order and conduct. It agrees to participate in the cooperative program of the General and District Councils for the propagation of our distinctive

testimony in both home and foreign lands, and to share in such provisions as may be made in General or District Councils for the maintenance of the fellowship on financial or other practical lines.

In the event an application for affiliation is declined by the New Jersey District Presbytery, appeal may be made by the church to the General Council Executive Presbytery whose decision shall be final.

**Guidelines for Minimal Membership for General Council Affiliated Assemblies:** If a General Council affiliated church is unable to meet any of the criteria for affiliation as set forth in the General Council Constitution, Article XI, Section 1, paragraph a, it shall seek the assistance of the district officers for help in maintaining the minimal requirement for General Council affiliation. The district may use any means prescribed by its bylaws to assist the church in returning to a position of strength. If the minimal requirements have not been attained, the church shall revert to district affiliated status until the minimal requirements for General Council affiliation have been attained. *General Council Bylaws, Article VI, Section 5.*

**Organizational Assistance:** The services of both the General Council and District Council are available to assist the General Council affiliated church in dealing with any of its problems, either internal or external, when requested by the pastor or a majority of the official board of the church or a petition signed by 30 percent of the voting members, with the petitioning process and delivery to the district council taking no more than 30 days in total to complete. When District officers receive such requests, it is recommended they first verify that scriptural principles of reconciliation, such as those found in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19, have been reasonably attempted by the requesting party in situations involving interpersonal conflict. District officers shall respond by investigating problems and, if necessary, recommending remedial actions to the responsible District governing entity, (e.g., District Presbytery or District Executive Presbytery). At its discretion, that governing entity may act to provide organizational assistance to the church and, when necessary, revert it from General Council Status to District Affiliated Status until the governing entity considers the problem resolved. *General Council Bylaws, Article VI, Section 4.c.*

**Preservation of Affiliation:** In the event the termination of affiliation with The General Council of the Assemblies of God is under consideration by an affiliated assembly, the Pastor or Board shall invite the District Officers to participate in a specially called business meeting where such matters will be discussed and voted upon for the express purpose of giving the District Officers the opportunity to present the case for continued General Council affiliation. A decision to disaffiliate shall require a two-thirds vote of the membership, or a more restrictive rule prescribed by the governing documents of the church or District. In the case of a previously existing church which later affiliated with the Fellowship through a vote of its membership, the percentage required to disaffiliate shall not exceed the percentage required when the church voted to affiliate. *General Council Bylaws, Article VI, Section 4.d.*

### **Section 5. District Affiliated Assemblies**

Any assembly that is not a General Council Affiliated Assembly or a PAC shall be a District Affiliated Assembly and shall make provision for a pastor who is a credentialed minister in good standing with the General Council and the New Jersey Ministry Network. Further information concerning District Affiliated Assemblies is found in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

### Section 6. Parent Affiliated Churches

Pursuant to the General Council's Constitution, Article XI, Section 3, Parent Affiliated Assemblies shall be under the supervision of a parenting church, in accordance with the parenting church's Constitution and Bylaws. They are directed toward individuals who are restricted by language, social group, geography or other reasons from participation in the existing congregation. Further information concerning Parent Affiliated Churches (PACs) can be found in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

### Section 7. Cooperative Assemblies / Not-Affiliated

A Cooperative Assembly is an independent assembly, interested in fellowship within the District, but has not become officially affiliated with the District.

An Assemblies of God minister may be permitted to pastor a Not-Affiliated / Cooperative Assemblies of God church with the provision that the church agree with our doctrines and district policies. It is expected that pastors of Not-Affiliated / Cooperative churches endeavor to lead their churches toward affiliation. Only General Council Assemblies shall have representation at General Council; however, District Affiliated Assemblies can have representation at the District Council. Not-Affiliated / Cooperative churches may not have representation at District Council.

### Section 8. Reverter Clause

When a church has been built with district funds, the deed to said property can be transferred only if it is subject to the restriction that the property described shall be used for worship, according to the constitution and bylaws of the New Jersey District Council of the Assemblies of God, within the State of New Jersey. In the event said property should cease to be used for such purposes, due to lack of membership, failure of organization, or any other cause, or in the event the congregation should sever its affiliation with the General Council of the Assemblies of God and the New Jersey District Council, said property shall become the property of the New Jersey District Council of the Assemblies of God, and the District Presbytery of said New Jersey District shall have the right to use and hold said property and dispose of same for the furtherance of the gospel within the district.

## ARTICLE IX. MISSIONS

### Section 1. District Home Missions

a. **Authorization** - There shall be a New Jersey District Home Missions Department. It shall establish its own policies which shall be approved by the Presbytery.

(1) **Purpose** - To develop, propagate, and effect a master plan for a comprehensive strategy to reach the State of New Jersey with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This shall be further detailed in the District Policy & Procedure Manual.

b. **Personnel**

(1) **Officers**

- (a) The director of the New Jersey District Home Missions Department shall be the Administrative Assistant/World Missions Director.
- (b) The officers shall be the District Superintendent, Administrative Assistant/World Missions Director, the District Executive Secretary, and the Assistant Presbyter (or a person chosen by the Sectional Presbyter in his place) from each section. These officers shall constitute the District Home Missions Committee.

(c) The Presbyter, Assistant Presbyter (or the person chosen by the Sectional Presbyter in his place), and the Secretary-Treasurer from the section shall form the sectional Home Missions Committee. The Presbyter of the section shall be the chairman of this committee.

(2) **Qualifications** - District and Sectional Officers shall qualify by virtue of their offices. A person chosen by the Presbyter shall meet the qualifications of the Assistant Presbyter.

**c. Elections and Vacancies**

**(1) Elections**

(a) **District Director** - The appointed World Missions Director shall carry out the Missions responsibilities under the supervision of the District Superintendent.

(b) **All Other District Officers or Sectional Home Missions Committee Officers** - All other district officers or sectional home missions committee officers shall be elected to the Home Missions Committee by virtue of their elections to their respective offices with the exception of the Assistant Presbyter. (See Section 1 b. Personnel (1) Officers (b) & (c) above.)

(c) **Vacancies** - Should a vacancy occur in the office of the home missions director, district or sectional officers, the procedure that governs their individual offices shall be followed.

**d. Duties**

**(1) District Home Missions Director**

- (a) The District Home Missions director shall be appointed by the Superintendent, ratified by the presbytery for an indefinite period and may serve as the chairman of the district Home Missions Committee at the discretion of the Superintendent.
- (b) Shall, with the district superintendent and in consultation with the sectional presbyter, appoint the church planting missionaries.
- (c) Shall be an ex officio member of each sectional committee when the said committee acts upon or discusses home missions activities.

**(2) District Home Missions Committee**

(a) Is responsible for overseeing the spending of Home Mission Funds. Further clarification can be found in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

**(3) Sectional Home Missions Representatives**

(a) Shall fulfill the job description of their office as approved by the District Presbytery and as outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

**(4) Sectional Home Missions Committee**

(a) Shall fulfill the job description of their office as approved by the District Presbyters and as outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

**e. Finances****(1) Disbursements**

- (a) Financial disbursements and sources for District Home Missions funds are outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Section 2. Chi Alpha**

**a. Authorization** - There shall be a program for collegians called *Chi Alpha College Ministries*.

**b. Purpose** - The purpose of this program shall be to evangelize college campuses, and develop Christian growth and leadership in those reached through the efforts of this ministry.

**c. District Chi Alpha Representative**

(1) **Appointment** - The district representative shall be appointed in the month of April by the district presbytery upon the recommendation of the District College Ministries Committee. The term of office shall be two years.

(2) **Qualifications** - The district representative shall be a licensed or ordained minister of the Assemblies of God fellowship. Said representative should evidence significant involvement and familiarity with Chi Alpha college ministries.

**d. Vacancies** - Should a vacancy occur on the district level, the position shall be filled in the same manner as the original election or by appointment of the District Presbytery.

**e. Finances** - The district Chi Alpha Department shall work within the limitations of its own budget.

Further information concerning Chi Alpha is outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Section 3. Deaf Missions****a. Authorization**

There shall be a ministry to the deaf people of New Jersey called the New Jersey District Council Deaf Ministry.

**b. Purpose**

Its purpose shall be to evangelize the deaf, as well as establish churches for the deaf and fellowship groups within the district churches where the deaf may receive ministry.

**c. Personnel**

(1) **Officers** – There shall be a District Deaf Ministries Director. The officers of the district deaf ministry shall be a district deaf director, chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer. These shall comprise the district Deaf Committee. There shall be no dual holding of any office within the same department.

(2) **Qualifications** - The director shall be an ordained minister of the district with special abilities to minister to the deaf. The chairperson shall be a presbyter with the deaf ministry portfolio. One of the other officers shall also be an ordained minister. Two lay

people in good standing with the district, and with a genuine concern for the deaf ministry, shall fill the remaining offices.

**d. Elections and Vacancies**

**(1) Elections**

- (a) The district director shall be nominated by the District Presbytery in the month of April, and the name of the nominee shall be ratified by the District Council. The term of office shall be two years.
- (b) The committee shall be appointed by the District Presbytery biennially in the month of April.
- (c) It is to be understood that the appointment of non-credential holders to District or Sectional Ministries receive the endorsement of their pastor.

**(2) Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy occurring in any of the above named offices, power is vested in the District Presbytery to fill such offices as prescribed in Article I, Section 4, of the bylaws.

Further information concerning Deaf Missions is outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Section 4. World Missions**

**a. Authorization**

There shall be a World Missions Department of the New Jersey District Council of the Assemblies of God.

**b. Purpose**

- (1) To reach the great unevangelized peoples of the world and to foster this purpose by urging our assemblies to provide regular offerings through the various departments of the church, and to cooperate with the Missions Department of the General Council of the Assemblies of God in its world outreach program.
- (2) To encourage our assemblies to cooperate with the yearly missionary tour either through conventions or individual missionary services, and to keep the importance of world missions before the people.
- (3) To encourage missionaries, pastors, and churches to cooperate with the district policy on missionary activities.

**c. Personnel**

- (1) **Director** - The Administrative Assistant / Missions Director shall direct the World Missions Program. The Administrative Assistant / Mission Director shall be in good standing with the district council and sufficiently acquainted with the overall world missions program.
- (2) **Sectional Representatives** -There shall be sectional representatives elected or appointed to serve with the Missions Director.

**d. Finances**

- (1) All assemblies of the district shall be encouraged to adopt the World Missions Standard for giving. This offering plan provides for both foreign and home missions as follows:

- 70% Foreign Missions*
- 20% District Home Missions*
- 5% National Home Missions*
- 5% Foreign Missions Office Expense*

- e. Emergency Fund / World Missionaries** - It is recommended that each church be encouraged to write in their monthly World Missions budget, a pledge to be sent to the District office to be used exclusively for the aforementioned fund.

Further information concerning World Missions is outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Section 5. Local Assembly Home Missions**

- a.** Individual initiative by ministers and assemblies in sponsoring new efforts is endorsed and encouraged. We recommend that every established church with mature and capable members endeavor to open new efforts in neighboring communities.
- b.** Ministers or assemblies contemplating a new effort should advise the district Home Missions Committee of their plans, thus insuring fellowship and support, and avoiding possible duplication or overlapping.

**Section 6. Sectional Home Missions**

- a.** The sectional Home Missions Committee shall sponsor and encourage new efforts within its borders, providing moral and material support as may be agreed upon by the committee in accord with district policy.
- b.** Each section of the district shall be given full opportunity to receive and use their home missions offerings for the opening and development of new efforts in its respective section. The sectional committee shall expedite this work in harmony with District Home Missions.

Further information concerning Missions is outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

**ARTICLE X. VALLEY FORGE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE REGIONAL SCHOOL**

**Section 1. Relationship**

The New Jersey District Council of the Assemblies of God is in cooperative agreement with other districts of the Northeast Region to establish and maintain an educational institution known as Valley Forge Christian College. This relationship includes representation from the district on the Board of Regents and the Board of Directors.

**Section 2. Finances**

- a. **District** - The district shall contribute a fixed amount of two percent (2%) of its annual General Fund to Valley Forge Christian College.
- b. **Churches** - It is recommended that each church of the New Jersey District Council write a designated amount into its budget for Valley Forge Christian College, or be encouraged to give an annual gift to the school.

**ARTICLE XI. DEPARTMENTS**

**Section 1. Authorization**

The departments of the New Jersey District Council shall include, but not be limited or restricted to:

- (a) Youth
- (b) Men's Ministries (with auxiliaries such as Light for the Lost)
- (c) Women's Ministries
- (d) Girls Ministries
- (e) Christian Education
- (f) Royal Rangers

**Section 2. Qualifications of Departmental Directors**

Though qualifications may differ between directors, the differences, the specifics and necessity of which are outlined in the NJ District Council's Policy and Procedure manual, all directors shall nonetheless be persons of ability and mature experience whose lives and Christian testimony are above reproach.

**Section 3. Duties of Departmental Directors**

He/She shall be the director of a department of the NJ District Council and shall both supervise and direct the activities of their respective department as outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Section 4. Selection of Departmental Directors**

- a. A departmental director shall be selected by the District Presbytery and ratified by majority vote of the District Council in session. The Youth and Christian Education Director shall also be selected by the District Presbytery (up to three nominees) and shall be presented at District Council and elected by a two-thirds secret ballot vote of the District Council in session.
- b. The term of office for each departmental director shall be two years, except for the Youth and Christian Education Director which shall be four years.

**Section 5. Selection of other Departmental Staff and Auxiliary Directors**

- a. Auxiliary directors shall be selected by the district superintendent in consultation with the department director.
- b. The term of office for each departmental director shall be two years.

### Section 6. Lay Leadership

It is to be understood that the appointment of non-credential holders to District or Sectional Ministries receive the endorsement of their pastor.

All provisions of this article shall be understood as having been made only as a means whereby the district leadership may foster and aid the development of various aspects of the local work. All district departmental leaders are required to present their programs to the District Presbytery annually.

## ARTICLE XII. SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES

### Section 1.

Each specialized ministry shall have its constitution and bylaws approved by the District Presbytery and shall have a sectional representative on its board.

### Section 2.

The District Presbytery will approve or disapprove the various ministries. The approved list will be submitted to the District Council annually, and publication will follow its endorsement.

Further information concerning Specialized Ministries is outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

## ARTICLE XIII. FINANCES

### Section 1. General and Departmental Funds

- a. The financial needs of the district shall be coordinated under one general heading, to be known as the New Jersey District Council General Fund. This fund shall be available for the support of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, executive secretary, district office, travel, and other necessary district expenses. It shall be disbursed under the supervision of the District Presbytery.
- b. All district activities and departments shall have their own budget and the responsibility for raising that portion of their budget not subsidized by the general fund. Each department will present a proposed annual budget to the Finance Committee. In no sense shall the department be freed from the supervision of the District Presbytery. Each department is expected to operate within its budget.

### Section 2. Credential Holders' Tithes

- a. It is required as a standard of proper practice that all credential holders contribute **three-fourths** of their **tithes from all sources of income**, (it is recommended to use the gross amount reported for social security for credential holders who participate in the Social Security system; or alternatively, for credential holders opting out of the Social Security system, amounts from a properly completed W-2 and/or 1099 which includes benefits for a housing allowance), sending it once a month to the district treasurer. Regarding the value of benefits received by a credential holder, he or she shall determine as a matter of conscience the amount of the tithe in accordance with the following scriptures:

*“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, “In what way have we robbed You?” In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed*

*Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,' says the LORD of hosts, 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,' says the LORD of hosts;" Malachi 3:8-11 NKJV*

*"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD...And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD." Leviticus 27:30, 32 KJV*

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone." Matthew 23:23 NKJV*

It is recommended that New Jersey District credential holders ministering outside the district contribute the balance of what is not required of them by the district in which they are ministering, and at no time shall it be required that their combined giving exceed three-fourths of their tithe to the New Jersey District Council. It is further recommended that visiting credential holders such as evangelists ministering in our district leave part of their tithe with the New Jersey District.

- (1) There shall be an annual review of all financially delinquent credential holders at the October Presbytery meeting. If no satisfactory explanation has been given to the Presbytery by a delinquent credential holder, the credentials of any non-cooperative credential holder shall not be renewed.
- b. Senior-retired ministers (those who have ceased to engage in any regular appointed ministry) shall be free to distribute as they desire the portion of their tithes previously paid to the New Jersey District Council.

**Section 3. Assembly Offerings**

In recognition of our like precious faith and our united vision to reach the vast needs of the state of New Jersey, it is strongly encouraged that each local assembly affiliated with the New Jersey District Council be faithful to contribute between 1% and 2% of their undesignated funds (commonly, the General Fund) to the support of the many ministries of the New Jersey District Council.

**Section 4. Retirement Program [MBA]**

It is the proper concern of the District to encourage every credential holder to participate in this retirement program [MBA]. An amount for the first five years after receiving their Licensed Minister credential equal to 10% of the credential holder's ministerial giving to the General Fund be deposited annually by the District Treasurer in the credential holder's MBA church account. Each church is encouraged to contribute to these accounts regularly for each member of its ministerial staff.

**Section 5. Auditing and Reports**

- a. The financial records of every department, section, or committee, or of any individual who handles the funds of the district or of any division, section, or committee of the district, shall be audited annually under the direction of the district superintendent, who shall appoint a committee, or committees, to do this work, or at his discretion, he shall employ professional accountants, as further outlined in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

- b. The District Presbytery shall have the right to request a report of the financial affairs of any division, section, or committee of the district at any time it may deem advisable and shall, either directly or through its representatives, have access to all books and records at all times, as further outlined in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

#### **Section 6. Power to Obligate**

No division, section, committee, or person of the district shall be empowered to financially obligate the district in any amount whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, except as specifically provided in the bylaws, by the District Council, or by the District Presbytery.

#### **Section 7. Finance Committee**

A standing Finance Committee, comprised of credential holders and laymen, shall be appointed by the District Presbytery in the month of April. Their term of office shall be two years. The District Superintendent and Executive Secretary shall also serve as members of this Committee, as further outlined in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

Further information concerning Finances is outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

### **ARTICLE XIV. MINISTERS' EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND**

A Ministers' Emergency Relief Fund shall be established for the assistance of credential holders of the New Jersey District Council, and their immediate families, who may experience some acute emergency caused by death, accident, or other serious misfortune for which there is no provision. The district superintendent, the district executive secretary, and the district presbyter of the section concerned, shall be authorized to act as a committee to extend financial assistance under such circumstances from the Ministers' Emergency Relief Fund, as further outlined in the District Policy and Procedure Manual.

### **ARTICLE XV. DISTRICT PROPERTY**

All local church property of member churches which shall be deeded to the New Jersey District Council of the Assemblies of God to be held for the benefit of the local church may be bought, sold, leased, or mortgaged upon the approval of the District Presbytery, who shall authorize the district superintendent and district secretary to exercise any legal instruments necessary to transfer title thereto. The said district superintendent and district executive secretary shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the instrument has been duly authorized and recommended by a vote of said District Presbytery, and such certification placed in the instrument shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

The deed of such properties shall be returned to the local church in such time as:

1. They meet the district requirement of being set in order as a General Council affiliated assembly.
2. They meet the state's requirements and are incorporated.
3. They meet the requirements of a lending institution to handle the financial obligation directly.

When these requirements are met, said deed shall be returned to the local church unencumbered.

All other property which is to be permanently owned by the New Jersey District Council shall be deeded to and held by the trustees legally elected by the district and to their successors in office. Such permanently held real or personal property of the district aforementioned may be purchased, sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated only by resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of the District Council at a regular meeting or at a special meeting called for such purpose. Upon such recommendation, the District Council shall authorize in said resolution the district superintendent and district secretary to execute any and all instruments necessary to carry out the transfer of title, lease, or mortgage, and shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage that the same has been duly authorized and recommended by vote of the District Council, such certification shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

#### **ARTICLE XVI. ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES**

All disputes that may arise (1) between any minister, reverend, pastor, minister in-training, evangelist or missionary who holds or held a position within this District, (herein all collectively referred to as "Minister"), and either the New Jersey District Council, including any officer, member of the presbytery, District committee member and/or sectional councilperson (collectively the "District"), or the General Council of the Assemblies of God, including any officer thereof, (collectively the "General Council"), or (2) between any General Council Church, General Council Satellite Church and/or Cooperative Church located within this District, (collectively the "Church"), and the District and/or the General Council, shall first be submitted to biblically based mediation or conciliation. If mediation or conciliation fail, the parties agree to submit to binding arbitration. Either party to the dispute may initiate the arbitration process by filing with the other party a written request for arbitration after efforts to mediate or conciliate have failed. If both parties agree, only one neutral arbitrator may be used. In instances where three arbitrators are used, the Minister and the District and/or General Council, shall each name an arbitrator and the two so selected shall name a third. All arbitrators must be ordained Assemblies of God ministers who are not executive officers of the New Jersey District. The third arbitrator chosen by the other two shall disclose, before accepting the appointment, any financial or personal interest in the outcome of the arbitration, and any existing or past financial, professional, family, or social relationships which are likely to affect impartiality, or which might reasonably create an appearance of partiality or bias. Either of the parties to the arbitration, on the basis of such disclosures, may disqualify such a candidate from serving as the third arbitrator. A third arbitrator who serves without objection from either party has a continuing duty to disclose relationships or interests which may impair his impartiality. Either party, regardless of the stage of the arbitration process, may on the basis of such disclosures disqualify such a person from further participation.

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

to arbitration shall not be revoked by the death of the minister involved in the dispute, and the decision will be binding upon his heirs and successors.

The decision of the arbitrators shall be binding on all parties. The parties understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy, claim, dispute or complaint, and expressly waive any right to a court proceeding. If any party ignores this Arbitration Clause and initiates court proceedings based upon a dispute to which this Arbitration Clause applies, without first attempting to resolve the matter through mediation, conciliation and arbitration, then such party shall not be entitled to recover attorney's fees and costs, even if fees and costs would otherwise be recoverable by that party in a court proceeding. Both parties submit themselves to the personal jurisdiction of the New Jersey federal and state courts, for the entry of a judgment confirming the arbitration award.

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

The parties agree to use the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation or another set of biblically based rules designed for Christian arbitration, as agreed upon by the arbitrators. In any arbitration proceeding, under no circumstances, shall one party discuss the matter with any arbitrator in the absence of the other party. Any matter not provided for herein shall be governed by the provisions of the Uniform Arbitration Act.

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

In the event a party to the dispute is disabled, then that party shall have the right to be accompanied by an ordained Assemblies of God minister who is not an executive officer of the New Jersey District and/or General Council. The minister accompanying the disabled party shall have the right of advocacy.

To insure full participation and preserve the integrity of the arbitration, all persons involved in the arbitration process, including, but not limited to, the District executive officers, General Council officers, presbyters, arbitrators, disabled party's advocate, witnesses, complainants and investigators shall have immunity from prosecution of complaints brought against them for their role in the arbitration, unless they have committed a chargeable offense in conscience and knowing bad faith. Any such charge must be proven by clear and convincing evidence, that the persons' actions constituted a chargeable offence knowingly in bad faith. The immunity set forth in this provision shall extend to the civil courts to the full extent permissible by the civil laws.

#### **ARTICLE XVII. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the District Council by a majority vote of the members voting for the amendment.

## STANDING RESOLUTIONS

1979

## MINISTER'S BENEFITS

**WHEREAS**, The District Presbytery and other leaders have expressed certain concerns regarding "minister's benefits" in the local church, or related agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, Local churches and related agencies are often unaware of their responsibilities in such matters; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the New Jersey District Council create a standing resolution called "Minister's Benefits," and

**RESOLVED**, That it be understood these guidelines represent the minimum in recommendations for said items; and

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this resolution, if adopted, be sent to all existing churches whose pastor or senior minister, or church or agency boards make such a request; and

**RESOLVED**, That the recommended resolution will read as follows:

The New Jersey District Council, in session May 16, 1979, conscious of its responsibility for its ministers, herein adopts this standing resolution and strongly urges its implementation on the local level. It is to be understood that the following guidelines represent the minimum in recommendation for the aforementioned ministers:

- (1) **SALARY** - It is recommended that the minister's salary be reviewed at least annually.
- (2) **INSURANCE**
  - a. **HOSPITALIZATION** - It is recommended that Blue Cross and Blue Shield, or equivalent coverage, be provided.
  - b. **LIFE INSURANCE** - It is recommended that life insurance be provided for the pastor, the minimum being equivalent to what the General Council provides in its group life insurance plan.
- (3) **SOCIAL SECURITY** - It is recommended that at least half of the minister's social security be paid, using the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Service as to the annual percentage.
- (4) **CAR ALLOWANCE** - It is recommended that a car allowance be provided in keeping with the annual minimal recommendation of reimbursement established by the federal government.
- (5) **HOUSING** - It is recommended that adequate funds be made available for home purchase or rental, or that suitable housing be provided.
- (6) **GENERAL AND DISTRICT COUNCIL RELATED ACTIVITIES** - It is recommended that the minister and spouse be sent to General and District Council activities; such as General Council, District Council, Ministers' Institute, etc., and that funds be provided to underwrite the expenses of each function.

- (7) **WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION** - It is recommended that Workmen's Compensation be provided since it is mandatory in the State of New Jersey and since it will assist in the payment of salary in the event of loss of active ministry.
- (8) **VACATIONS** - It is recommended that provision be made for three weeks vacation, with pay, and that this policy be reviewed periodically as relates to a minister's years of ministry.
- (9) **MINISTER'S RETIREMENT** - It is recommended that a retirement program such as Ministers' Benefit Association (MBA) be provided, and a minimum of 10% of the salary be sent monthly to the MBA fund in Springfield.
- (10) **RETIRING PASTORS** - It is recommended that churches that have enjoyed the ministry of a Senior Pastor for a substantial period of service show their appreciation by way of an appropriate celebration and financial consideration.
- (11) **DISTRICT AID** - It is recommended that local churches or related agencies seek the counsel of the district superintendent if additional information is needed for clarification or for help in the adopting of these guidelines.