

NDC Constitution & Bylaws

CONSTITUTION OF THE NEBRASKA DISTRICT COUNCIL

Revised to April 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION

WE BELIEVE:

That God's purpose concerning man finds fulfillment in a priority reason-for-being: 1) to be an agency of God for evangelizing the world, 2) to be a corporate body in which many worship God, and 3) to be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son, and 4) to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world.

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

Therefore we recognize ourselves to be a cooperative fellowship of Pentecostal, Spirit-baptized saints from local Pentecostal Assemblies of like precious faith in the Nebraska District Council of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, whose purpose is neither to usurp authority over the various local assemblies, nor to deprive them of their scriptural and local rights and privileges; but to recognize and promote scriptural methods and order for worship, unity, fellowship, work, and business for God so that results of our efforts may be established and developed along the line of our distinctive testimony; and to disapprove unscriptural methods, doctrines, and conduct, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this body shall be the Nebraska District Council of the Assemblies of God.

ARTICLE II. TERRITORY

The Nebraska District Council includes the entire state of Nebraska. For efficiency and to expedite the work, the District shall be divided into fellowship sections.

ARTICLE III. NATURE

The Nebraska District Council is a cooperative fellowship based on mutual agreements voluntarily entered into by its members.

ARTICLE IV. REASON FOR BEING

We exist primarily for the purpose of advancing God's Kingdom throughout the state of Nebraska and to the world. We will focus on this task by diligently working to develop Healthy Ministers that lead Healthy Ministries that Multiply. As we fulfill our mission we should expect . . .

- A. To encourage and promote the evangelization of our district and the world.
- B. To encourage and promote the worship of God.
- C. To encourage and promote the edification of believers.
- D. To provide a basis of fellowship among Christians of like precious faith.
- E. To supervise all the activities of the Assemblies of God in its prescribed field in accordance with the rights conferred by Article X of the General Council Constitution.
- F. To establish and maintain such sub-divisions, departments and institutions as may be necessary for the propagation of the Gospel and the work of the Pentecostal fellowship.
- G. To establish churches and provide for their development.
- H. To examine candidates for the ministry and to license and ordain as ministers those who shall meet the standards of the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and the requirements of the district and the General Council as set forth in their constitutions and bylaws. It shall be amenable to the General Council of the Assemblies of God in matters of doctrine, and the personal conduct of all ministers who are permitted to have district endorsement.
- I. To approve all scriptural teachings, methods, and conduct, and to disapprove all unscriptural teachings, methods, and conduct. As the creature of the General Council of the Assemblies of God it is subordinate thereto, and cannot be authorized in any way, to violate the principles of the General Council of the Assemblies of God constitutional agreements or bylaws. In the prosecution of the work in its prescribed field, the Nebraska District Council shall be expected to keep vigilant watch against any violation of the principles of spiritual unity and cooperative fellowship to which the Assemblies of God Fellowship is especially and unalterably dedicated.
- J. To elect its own officers and committees, to arrange for its own meetings, and to govern itself.
- K. Incidental to, or in connection therewith, it shall have the right to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of such property, real or chattel, as may be needed for the prosecution of its work.

ARTICLE V. PRINCIPLES FOR FELLOWSHIP

The Nebraska District Council shall represent, as nearly as possible, the body of Christ as described in the New Testament Scriptures, recognizing the principles inherent in that body as also inherent in this fellowship, particularly the principles of unity, fellowship, cooperation, and equality. It recognizes that adherence to these principles will enable it to achieve its priority reason-for-being, and to maintain conditions under which it can, as a Fellowship, demonstrate those principles and their consequent development.

ARTICLE VI. TENETS OF FAITH

This Nebraska District Council adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths adopted by the General Council as well as its published Position Papers. The Position Papers are available from the General Council of the Assemblies of God. The Statement of Fundamental Truths follows:

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truth is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10, Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in

this statement 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 Scripture Inspired

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

2. The One True God

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

THE ADORABLE GODHEAD

(a) Terms Defined

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

(b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

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

(c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

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

(d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

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

(e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

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

(f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and

man, is Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23, 1 John 4:2, 10, 14; Revelation 1:13, 17).

(g) The Title, Son of God

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

(h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

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

(i) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

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

(j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

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

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

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

4. The Fall of Man

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

5. The Salvation of Man

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

(a) Conditions to Salvation

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

(b) The Evidences of Salvation

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

6. The Ordinances of the Church

(a) Baptism in Water

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

(b) Holy Communion

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

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the 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 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17, 10:44-6, 11:14-16, 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39, Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

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

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

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1, 2, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of holiness without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, 16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6: 1-11, 13, 8:1, 2, 13, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 2:12, 13, 1 Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23, 2:22, Hebrews 12:23). Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, 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:

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

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

- (a) Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20, Acts 4:29-31, Hebrews 2:3, 4).
- (b) Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16, 1 Corinthians 12-14).
- (c) Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26, 1 Corinthians 14:12, Ephesians 4:11, 12, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

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

12. Divine Healing

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

13. The Blessed Hope

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

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

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

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is

not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46, Mark 9:43-48, Revelation 19:20, 20:11-15, 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

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

ARTICLE VII. RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1. To the General Council and other District Councils

The Nebraska District Council is an integral part of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, a non-profit religious corporation with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri, is subordinate and amenable to the said General Council as prescribed in its constitution and bylaws, and has a cooperative working relationship with other District Councils in matters of mutual concern.

Section 2. To the Fellowship Sections

The Nebraska District Council shall execute its activities through its District offices and Fellowship sections.

Section 3. To Local Assemblies

The local churches of the Nebraska District, which are in full fellowship with the District, shall recognize and be subject to the District Council as set forth in Article XI of the General Council Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Ministers

All ministers holding credentials from the General Council of the Assemblies of God and having their permanent residence within the boundaries of the Nebraska District are considered members of the Nebraska District Council. Residency exemptions shall be made as prescribed in the bylaws.

Section 2. Assemblies

All General Council and District affiliated churches are considered to be member churches of the District. Individual members of these assemblies are considered members of the Assemblies of God. Each assembly has the right of representation at the District Council according to the provision in the bylaws.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. District Council

a. Annual

Regular sessions of the District Council shall be held annually pursuant to a call by the District Presbytery.

b. Special Sessions

Special sessions of the Nebraska District Council may be arranged, if agreed to by a two-thirds majority of the District Presbytery.

c. Right to Initiative

The right to initiative in the matter of calling a special session shall be granted to any ordained minister of the District Council when occasion demands. A statement, setting forth the reason for the special session of the Council, and signed by not less than twenty percent of all ordained ministers of the District, may be considered sufficient reason for the call of a special session. Such statement to be filed with the District Presbytery, who shall then respond to the summons and issue the call for a special session.

Section 2. Sectional Councils

Sectional Councils shall be held prior to the Annual District Council for the purpose of conducting appropriate business.

ARTICLE X. OFFICERS

Section 1. Executive Officers

The Executive Officers shall consist of the District Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and District Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 2. Executive Presbytery

The Executive Presbytery shall consist of the District Executive Officers, the Regional Presbyters of this District, and the Non-Resident Executive Presbyter of the General Council from the North Central Region when that person is a resident member of this District.

Section 3. District Presbytery

The District Presbytery shall consist of the District Executive Officers, the Regional Presbyters, the Sectional Presbyters, the General Presbyters, and the Non-Resident Executive Presbyter of the General Council from the North Central Region when that person is a resident member of this District.

Section 4. General Presbyters

The Nebraska District Council shall be represented on the General Council General Presbytery by three members; the District Superintendent together with two others, one of whom shall be an ordained lead pastor of an Assemblies of God church located in the District. The General Presbytery is the official policy making body of the General Council when the General Council is not in session.

Section 5. Nominee for General Council Executive Presbyter

The Nebraska District Council shall nominate two ministers from its District to be presented to the General Council as nominees from its area to serve on the Executive Presbytery of the General Council.

ARTICLE XI. LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

Section 1. Membership

All true Pentecostal believers accepting the Assemblies of God tenets of faith and associating themselves in local bodies as assemblies, and accepting their full, personal share of responsibility for the maintenance of scriptural order in the local body, shall have a standard for membership which may be determined either by the local assembly itself, or by agreement with the District Council.

Section 2. Amenability to the District Council

Local assemblies shall be set in order by, and cooperate with, the District. They shall support the District organization and may send delegates to the District Council. The Bylaws further state the rights and privileges of District Council and General Council affiliated churches.

Section 3. Self-government

The District recognizes that each General Council affiliated local assembly has the right to self-government under Jesus Christ, its living Head, and shall have the power to choose its pastor, elect its official board, and transact all other business pertaining to its life as a local church.

Section 4. Discipline and Property Rights

It shall have the right to administer discipline to its members according to the Scriptures and its Bylaws. It shall have the right to acquire and hold title to its own right either through trustees or in its corporate name as a self-governed church.

Section 5. Sovereignty

The sovereignty of a local assembly is never disrupted even by the fact that the General Council church affiliates itself with the District and General Council, other than what is stated in this document, (such as in Article VI Local Assemblies of the Bylaws of the Nebraska District Council). The local assembly shall recognize that the District Council has the right to approve Scriptural doctrine and conduct. When in need of counsel or advice, the local assemblies may appeal to the District Council for help. It may appeal the decision of the District Council to the General Council where it may be questioned whether or not there has been proper help from the District.

Section 6. World Missions

Local assemblies are expected to have an active interest in world missions.

ARTICLE XII. DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

In the event this District Council shall cease to function for the purposes herein set forth, then all property, real or chattel, and all assets remaining after satisfying debts and obligations, shall revert to the parent body, THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, a Missouri, not-for-profit, corporation, with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri. The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall have full authority to sell such property and to use the proceeds derived there from for the extension of the work of the Assemblies of God.

In the event of cessation of this District Council, its Board of Trustees (or directors) shall transfer all properties and any remaining assets, in accordance with the foregoing provisions, within one year after the date of such cessation.

If such transfer is not made within the time prescribed above or if the aforesaid General Council shall be unable or unwilling to accept the aforesaid transfer, then disposition thereof shall be made by the court of the county in which the District Council headquarters is located, distributed to organizations having purposes nearest the purposes of the Assemblies of God.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may be made at any regular or special meeting of the District Council provided the proposed amendment has been submitted to the District Presbytery first for consideration, and then mailed to each member of the District Council at least two months prior to the time of the meeting at which the amendment shall be considered. A two-thirds majority vote of all members present shall be necessary for adoption.

Section 2. Conformity with General Council Bylaws

The Executive Presbytery is empowered to make necessary editorial changes to our constitution so as to keep it consistent with the General Council Constitution, with regard to rights and responsibilities, changed terminology, and references to the General Council Constitution that change due to revision.

BYLAWS

(Amended to September 2020, April 2022)

ARTICLE I. PARLIAMENTARY ORDER

Section 1. Rules of Order

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

Section 2. Order of Business

The regular order of business for the District Council shall be:

1. Devotional
2. Report of Superintendent
3. Report of Secretary/Treasurer
4. Report of Committees
5. Unfinished Business
6. Election of Officers
7. New Business
8. Adjournment

Section 3. Courtesy of the Floor

Visiting ministers from other Districts and others may be granted this consideration at the discretion of the Chair or by action of the body.

ARTICLE II. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Voting Constituency

The voting constituency shall consist of all ordained, licensed and certified ministers of the District and one appointed delegate from each General Council Affiliated and Parent Affiliated Church.

Section 2. Quorum

All ordained, licensed and certified ministers and delegates of the District Council who are present and registered by the Roster Team at a duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. Executive Officers

a. Named

The Executive Officers shall be: the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Secretary-Treasurer.

b. Qualifications

The officers of the Nebraska District Council of the Assemblies of God shall be elected at one of its regular meetings, according to the manner of election as provided. They shall be ministers of mature experience and ability, whose lives and ministry are above question, who have held credentials and ministered as ordained ministers for at least three consecutive years in our Assemblies of God Fellowship, and shall have been members of the District for at least one year prior to their election and who fully cooperate with all its policies.

c. Terms of Office

The term of office for the District Superintendent shall be for four years and all others two years. The District Superintendent shall be elected on uneven years and all others on the even years. All executive officers shall take office 60 days following election.

d. Voting Procedure

(1) The District Superintendent shall appoint a nominating team consisting of a minimum of three people including a Presbyter, the District Secretary Treasurer and up to two more ordained ministers. Their assignment will be limited to validating the Bylaw qualifications of each candidate, confirming the person's willingness to allow him/herself to be a candidate for that office, and requesting germane information. They will prepare each candidate's information to be distributed at District Council.

(2) All candidates for executive office shall be nominated by secret ballot. Because of the responsibilities associated with these offices, the nomination process will be as follows:

(a) Ninety days before a regular or specially called District Council that will include the election of a District Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent or Secretary Treasurer, a letter and nomination form will be sent to all Nebraska credentialed ministers.

(b) Each credentialed minister will have the opportunity to nominate an ordained minister for each position by submitting the form to the District office on or before the date indicated in the letter. The administrative assistant to the Superintendent shall receive nominations to pass on to the nomination team.

(c) Each nominee will be processed by the nomination team to validate the Bylaw qualifications of each candidate (proper credential, no ongoing investigations, etc.). Nominees will be contacted so they can:

- (1) Receive a description of the duties for the office.
- (2) Have the opportunity to ask questions about the office for which they have been nominated.

(3) Express their willingness to serve.

(4) Share basic biographical information, relevant ministry experience and additional qualifications.

(d) The list of qualified nominees who are willing to serve and have submitted the required information indicating their willingness to serve will be compiled and presented with prayer at District Council.

(e) Executives currently serving shall automatically be nominated unless they request, 90 days before the election, that their name be withheld.

Should unusual or unexpected circumstances prevent the process that is described, the traditional method of receiving nominations from the floor at a properly called meeting of the District Council may be followed.

A two-thirds majority is required for election. If no such majority shall have been reached after the second electoral ballot, the two candidates having the highest number of votes shall be the only nominees to be further voted upon.

Section 4. Regional Presbyters

Three Regional Presbyters shall be nominated in even numbered years from the ordained ministers by the Executive Officers. They shall serve in conjunction with the Executive Officers as the Executive Presbytery. Names and relevant personal information of the nominees from the respective regions shall be presented to be ratified at District Council.

A two-thirds majority shall be necessary for ratification. These individuals shall not serve in any other elected office in the Nebraska District. The Western Regional Presbyter shall be chosen and ratified from the area west of Highway 83, the Central Regional being chosen and ratified from the area east of Highway 83 and west of Highway 81, and the Eastern Regional Presbyter being chosen and ratified from the area east of Highway 81. The term of office shall be for two years beginning immediately after District Council. Should a Regional Presbyter move from the region, the office shall automatically be declared vacant, and the District Presbytery shall fill the vacancy by ratifying another person nominated by the Executive Officers.

Section 5. Sectional Presbyters

- a. Nomination for Sectional Presbyters shall be made in odd numbered years by each section at a meeting prior to the annual District Council. The nominee shall be selected from the ordained ministers who are residents of the section, are connected with an Assemblies of God Church in the section and are generally held in high esteem by the members of the section. Nominations are to be made by ordained, licensed and certified ministers of the section and an official delegate from each assembly of that section. The presiding officer shall appoint a roster chairman who will present the number of voting constituents before the balloting period.
- b. The District Superintendent or one appointed by the Superintendent shall preside at the said business meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority is needed to nominate. If, after the fourth ballot, there is still no nomination, the fifth ballot will determine an election by a simple majority. In the case of a tie, the responsibility of choosing a nominee for the section shall be the business of the Presbytery.
- c. The names of the nominees shall be presented to the Executive Presbytery for ratification and advancement to the District Council to be voted upon. A ballot containing the names of the nominees of the respective sections shall be passed to the voting constituency. A two-thirds majority shall be necessary for an election. Should any further voting be necessary it shall be done by secret ballot in the customary manner. Other nominations may be made by the Council by secret ballot.
- d. The newly-elected Sectional Presbyter shall sit in with the District Presbytery in the ordination service, when possible, and in all further business of the Council in session. His/her term of office shall begin immediately after Council and shall continue for two years.

- e. When a vacancy occurs, a District Official or a Regional Presbyter, shall coordinate a sectional meeting to be held as soon as possible to nominate a sectional presbyter That nomination is to be presented to the District Presbytery which shall make a final appointment to complete the term of office.
- f. The nominee shall have been a member of the District for at least one year prior to his/her nomination.

Section 6. General Presbyters

The Nebraska District Council shall be represented in the General Council General Presbytery, the official policy making body of the General Council when it is not in session, by three members; ministers of mature experience and ability whose lives and ministries are above reproach. They shall represent the Fellowship in all phases of its work and interest in their respective field. The District Superintendent, Assistant District Superintendent, and Secretary/Treasurer shall serve by virtue of their office, provided that one of them is a lead pastor. In the event that one of the three Executive Officers is not a lead pastor of a church, the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent shall serve as General Presbyters and an election process will be undertaken to choose the third General Presbyter from qualified lead pastors in the District.

Section 7. Nominee for General Council Executive Presbyter

At the District Council prior to General Council, two nominees from the Nebraska District shall be selected to be presented to the General Council along with nominees from other Districts in the North Central area, for election as non-resident Executive Presbyters. The District Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent shall be the nominees from the Nebraska District as long as at least one of these officers is not a full-time employee of the District. Should both of these officers be full-time employees of the District, a nominee will be chosen from qualified candidates in the traditional way. Election shall be by two-thirds vote.

Section 8. Vacancies

a. District Officers

Should a vacancy occur in any office through resignation, removal from the District or Section, death, or disqualification, power is vested in the remaining members of the District Presbytery to fill the office until the next regular or special meeting of the District Council.

b. Office of Non-Resident Executive Presbyter

Should the office of an incumbent non-resident Executive Presbyter from the Nebraska District become vacant through death or other cause, the General Council Executive Presbytery shall fill the office by appointment until the next meeting of the General Council.

ARTICLE III. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. District Superintendent

- a. To preside at the meetings of the District Council.
- b. To be the head of the District Office and to supervise the work of that office during the interim between session of the District Council. To act as President of the Corporation in all legal matters.
- c. To preside at all meetings of the District Presbytery, and to receive all communications directed to that body.
- d. To preside at all meetings of the Credentials Team and to sign all District Credentials.

- e. To be General Superintendent of all the work in the District and to administer discipline in all cases when requested to do so by the Credentials Team.
- f. He/she shall be empowered to hire the necessary persons to effectively administer the work of the District.
- g. To perform any other functions usual and customary for the presiding officer, or such as may be directed by the District Presbytery or District Council. He/she shall be ex-officio member of all teams.

Section 2. Assistant Superintendent

- a. To be a member of the District Presbytery.
- b. To assist the District Superintendent in the supervision of work on the field, and to perform any other functions under the supervision of the District Superintendent, or such as he/she may be directed to perform by the District Council and Presbytery.
- c. To act as Vice President of the corporate body.
- d. To assume the duties of Superintendent in case of a vacancy until a special or regular election can be called to duly elect a Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent shall be ex-officio member of all teams.

Section 3. Secretary/Treasurer

- a. The Secretary shall make and keep the records of the proceedings of the District Council and shall publish the same as approved and directed by the District Presbytery.
- b. He/she shall be the custodian of the official seal of the District and shall keep a record of all District matters relating to the ministers and assemblies of the Fellowship.
- c. He/she shall take minutes at all Presbyters Meetings. A summary copy of these minutes will be made available to Nebraska's credentialed ministers 30 days after the meeting occurred. Such minutes shall include a summary of all decisions. Matters of discipline and personal matters shall be excluded from such report.
- d. He/she shall be authorized to sign all official and legal documents and to perform such other functions as are customary, or as may be directed by the District Council or Presbytery. He/she shall be considered an ex-officio member of all Teams.
- e. To be custodian of the District Council funds.
- f. He/she shall give a report from time to time as may be requested by the District Presbytery.
- g. He/she shall furnish the District Council each year with a statement of assets, which is to be included in the annual financial report.
- h. A compiled report shall be made of the total annual individual contributions of all active ministers and evangelists holding accredited Fellowship Certificates with the Nebraska District Council.
- i. The District financial records shall be audited by an authorized auditing firm at the close of the fiscal year. A report of the auditor shall be included in the District minutes.

Section 4. Regional Presbyters

When meeting with the Executive Officers, they serve as the Executive Presbytery. While they especially serve ministers, churches and Sectional Presbyters in a region of the District, their service is not limited to that region. They will:

- a. Meet regularly with the Executive Officers or at the call of the District Superintendent.
- b. Serve with the Executive Officers in taking the lead in credential interviews, financial oversight, managing governance issues, accountability, ministerial discipline and church intervention.
- c. Collaboratively work with a Sectional Presbyter in mentoring ministers.
- d. Work with the Healthy Ministries team and Sectional Presbyter to find good pastoral candidates to fill open churches.
- e. Model leadership by being a part of a Vital Function team of their choice.
- f. They will collaborate with Sectional Presbyters in their region and Executive Officers in dealing with complex cases with ministers and/or churches.

Section 5. Sectional Presbyters

The primary focus of Sectional Presbyters is to fulfill the core values of the Nebraska District to provide for the ongoing **relational care and equipping of sectional pastors**. The secondary focus of Sectional Presbyters will be to collaborate with the Executive Presbytery in the governance of issues in their section and ultimately finalize major decisions for the Nebraska District Council, including the final approval of the Policies and Procedures Manual.

a. Sectional Leadership:

The Presbyter is tasked with creating a culture of friendship and mutual accountability. As Hebrews 10:24 says, we are to “consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” This effort may take the form of regular, recurring gathering of the sectional ministers in order to

- Communicate our District vision
- Encourage one another in ministry development
- Practice peer accountability
- Offer practical support for their marriages and family relationships of the ministers in the section
- Grow in love for one another and for God

b. District Statutory Duties:

1. Collaborate with the Executive Presbyter and Superintendent in appointing and empowering an Assistant Presbyter for their section.
2. Serve on the District Presbytery that periodically meets to finalize all District business between councils.

Section 6. Assistant Presbyter:

Their primary responsibilities shall be to work with the Sectional Presbyter and serve with him/her in developing healthy ministers who lead healthy ministries that multiply in his/her section.

Section 7. General Presbyters (See General Council Bylaws)

ARTICLE IV. EXPENSES AND OPERATIONS

Section 1. Expenses

(a) Salaries

All District salaries and expense accounts shall be fixed by the District Presbytery.

(b) Traveling Expenses

The expenses of officers and presbyters traveling to do District business shall be paid from General Operations.

(c) District Vehicles

The Nebraska District Council, under the direction of the District Executive Presbytery, shall be empowered to purchase necessary vehicles to be used by the District Superintendent, the District Director of Youth and Christian Education, or other District leaders to be used in the work of the District. The operating expenses, maintenance and replacement of these vehicles shall be under the direction and supervision of the Executive Presbytery.

Section 2. Operations

(a) Policies and Procedures Manual - A Policies and Procedures Manual shall be established that outlines the details of the operation of the Nebraska District Council.

ARTICLE V. TEAMS

Section 1. Standing Teams

Standing Teams shall be established or appointed as necessity may indicate. They shall be appointed by the District Superintendent in cooperation with the District Presbytery, and the term of office shall continue from the date of appointment to the adjournment of the next regular meeting of the District Council.

Section 2. Special Teams

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

Section 3. Credentials Team

The District Presbytery shall constitute the Credentials Team.

ARTICLE VI. LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

Section 1. Qualifications for Recognition

a. Minimum Membership

An adult membership of not less than 20 persons. This requirement may be waived by the District, in compliance with the General Presbytery policy and provided that the church has demonstrated the capacity for self-governance.

b. Statement of Fundamental Truths

An acceptance of the Assemblies of God tenets of faith.

c. Acceptable Standards of Membership

A scriptural standard of membership determined by the local assembly in agreement with the District Council.

d. Acceptable Standards for Church Officers

A scriptural standard shall be the acceptable standard for deacons and other officers in positions of leadership in the local assembly. Since the New Testament restricts divorced and remarried believers from the church offices of bishop, or elder, and deacon, we recommend that this standard be upheld by all our assemblies (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:12), except when the divorce occurred prior to conversion (2 Corinthians 5:17), or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9), or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15), or in the case of domestic violence by a spouse to a spouse or child (Psalms 11:5; 146:5-9; Proverbs 6:16; Isaiah 1:16-17; Ephesians 4:1-3, 31-32; Ephesians 5). In these cases, a person's ability to hold an office of leadership shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by the local Pastor in consultation with appropriate local leadership. They should prayerfully consider and shall use every available means, including seeking the counsel of the Sectional Presbyter or their Regional Presbyter or other District Officers, to determine the individual's eligibility to hold an office of leadership. This recommendation does not exclude the individual from any other consideration for opportunities for Christian service for which the individual may be qualified.

e. Standards for Divorce and Remarriage

(1) *Membership for those having marriage entanglements*

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

(2) *Common-law Marriages*

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

(3) *Remarriage*

Low standards on marriage and divorce are very hurtful to individuals, to the family, and to the cause of Christ. Therefore, we discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. We positively disapprove of Christians getting divorces for any cause except fornication and adultery (Matthew 19:9). Where these exceptional circumstances exist or when a Christian has been divorced by an unbeliever, we recommend that the question of remarriage be resolved by the believer as he/she walks in the light of God's Word (1 Corinthians 7:15, 27, 28).

f. Organization and Recognition

(1) *Constitution and Bylaws*

An affiliated assembly shall be set-in-order under the jurisdiction of and/or with the approval of the District and with a recommended or approved constitution and bylaws.

(2) *Incorporation*

An affiliated assembly shall request assistance and guidance from the Nebraska District for forming a proper religious, non-profit corporation under the laws of the state. Particular attention shall be paid to the reversionary clause.

g. Membership Certificate

Upon notification by the District of the action, the General Secretary's office shall issue a certificate of affiliation to each church coming into the Fellowship, and which has been approved for General Council affiliation. The certificate shall be appropriate in size and appearance for framing.

h. Reversion of General Council Affiliated Assembly to District Affiliated Status

When an annual questionnaire for a General Council affiliated church reflects or it is otherwise found that its active voting membership has dropped below 20, the church will be notified by the General Secretary of the General Council, that unless the membership is increased to the minimum number of required voting members within one year, the church shall revert to District affiliated status.

The church shall remain in a District affiliated status, operating under the District Affiliated Bylaws, until sufficient growth and maturity has been demonstrated to qualify for General Council affiliation. A second option is the Parent Affiliated Church. An application for a change in status shall be filed with the District Secretary and approved by the District Executive Officers. This will not be enforced if the membership requirement had been properly waived by the District in accordance with General Presbytery policy, having demonstrated the capacity for self-governance.

i. Assemblies with District Affiliated Status

Any church in need of administrative assistance for any reason may apply to the District for aid. The congregation shall come under District affiliated status until such time as they are able to return to their former status.

Section 2. Prerogatives and Privileges

a. Autonomy

The right of self-government, under Jesus Christ its living Head, which includes 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.

b. Available Ministers

The right to request the assistance of the District Officiary in appointing interim pastors, filling a pastoral vacancy, and to benefit from other approved ministries. Each assembly is urged to exercise this right.

c. Discipline

The right to administer discipline to its members according to the Scriptures and its Bylaws.

d. Property

The right to acquire and hold title to property, either through trustees or in its corporate name as a self-governing unit.

e. Appeal

- (1) To District Officiary: The right of the pastor, the board, or the church body, by petition, to appeal to the District Officiary for help when in need of counsel or advice.

- (2) To General Council Executive Presbytery: The right to appeal a decision by the District Officiary to the Executive Presbytery of the General Council of the Assemblies of God when there is a question whether the assembly has received proper help from the District.
- (3) To General Council General Presbytery: When exceptions are taken to the decisions of the Executive Presbytery, either by the local assembly or by the District Presbytery, appeal may be made to the General Presbytery.

f. Representation

The right of representation at the meetings of the General Council by one officially appointed and registered delegate, and at meetings of the Nebraska District Council according to provisions of such in Article II, Section 1.

g. Other Business

The right to benefit from approved General Council institutions such as colleges, divisional and departmental ministries, publications, etc.

Section 3. Responsibilities

a. Adherence to General Council Principles and Doctrines

It shall be the duty of local assemblies to support by every means possible the basic principles upon which the Fellowship is founded, including that of "voluntary cooperation" and strict adherence to the Statement of Fundamental Truths.

b. Maintenance of Scriptural Order and Conduct

Local assemblies shall accept their full share of responsibility for the maintenance of scriptural order in the local body and uphold a scriptural standard of conduct.

c. World Missions and World Ministries Support

(1) *World Missions*

Local assemblies are expected to have an interest in the missionary enterprise, and to plan for regular contributions to its support.

(2) *World Ministries Giving*

In order to support and develop the work and ministries of the Assemblies of God at home and abroad, all its churches shall be encouraged to send offerings therefore at regular intervals.

d. Annual Reports

Each church of the Assemblies of God shall be requested to keep an up-to-date record of its membership and a report of the same shall be sent annually, on forms provided, to the office of the District Secretary and the General Council Secretary.

e. Safeguarding the Assemblies from Unapproved Ministries

(See General Council Bylaws).

f. Transfer of Local Church Membership

- (1) It is recommended that the member shall request a letter of introduction from the church of which he/she is a member to

be sent by mail to the church with which he/she wishes to affiliate.

- (2) It is recommended that the receiving church shall give an acknowledgment of transfer to the former church.

g. Support

It is recognized that for any organization to survive and serve effectively, it must have the moral and financial support of its constituency.

- (1) District

The entire District program should be supported by the affiliated minister and local assembly, and financial support should be according to the policies of the Nebraska District.

- (2) General Council

Logically, support of the General Council follows support of the District Council. If practicable, let each assembly take one offering each year for the upkeep of the National Leadership and Resource Center and the travel expense of the executive officers.

Section 4. Intervention of District in a Local Assembly

a. Circumstances Requiring Intervention

While the right of a local assembly to self-government is a basic General Council principle, it is also recognized that the assembly has a responsibility to the District Council and General Council, and both have a responsibility to the assembly. Some of the circumstances which require intervention by the District Officiary are as follows:

- (1) Division resulting in disruption.
- (2) Assumption of dictatorial authority by the pastor or board.
- (3) Prolonged absence of pastoral leadership.
- (4) Deviation or departure from Assemblies of God principles and practices.
- (5) Attempt to disaffiliate from Assemblies of God Fellowship.

b. Intervention Initiation

The intervention process may be initiated in any one of the following ways:

- (1) By action of the District Executives.
- (2) By request of the pastor.
- (3) By the action of the board.
- (4) By petition of the congregation according to any local bylaw provision for such.

Section 5. Discipline of Assemblies

Since the approval of an assembly is the prerogative of the District and General Councils, and is indicated by the issuance of appropriate certificates of affiliation, the Nebraska District has the right to request a meeting with the assembly if for some valid reason its status is in question. The General Council of the Assemblies of God has the right to withdraw its certificate of membership if deemed necessary.

Section 6. New Assemblies Resulting from a Division

a. Criteria for Recognition

When efforts to maintain unity and harmony in an assembly have failed, and a division results in a congregation being formed, the District should exercise strong and wise leadership in ascertaining the facts, and seek to preserve Assemblies of God adherents for the Fellowship. Within the bounds of ethical principles, sound doctrine, and District policy, the District should seek to retain any meritorious group within the Assemblies of God.

b. Criteria for Discipline of Pastor Who is Involved

Circumstances of the occasion determine whether the minister should be disciplined or denied ministry in either the original church or the dissident group, or even residency in the area where the division occurred. If a minister is guilty of wrong conduct and wrong attitudes resulting in a split, the District Presbytery shall deal appropriately with him as provided in, Article X, Section 3, of the General Council Bylaws.

Section 7. Private Ownership of Church Properties Disapproved

The General Council disapproves of the ownership of any church properties by other than the entire church body through its duly elected trustees.

Section 8. Affiliated Assemblies

District Council Affiliated (DAC)

- a. A District Council affiliated assembly is defined as one having less than 20 active adult members or is designated as such by the District Presbytery. An exception may be granted by the District in accordance with General Presbytery policy and provided that the church has demonstrated the capacity for self-governance.
- b. The membership requirements shall be the same as for an organized church as it appears in the suggested constitution and bylaws for local assemblies. At such a time as the church shall become an affiliated church, the active membership roll shall become the charter members.
- c. The Pastor, Sectional Presbyter, and another Minister (preferably an Ordained Minister residing in or near the section where the District Affiliated Assembly is located), shall serve as the official board of the District church. The Sectional Presbyter in consultation with the Pastor shall choose this third board member. Should the Sectional Presbyter also serve as the Pastor of the District Affiliated Church, then the Regional Presbyter will appoint the other two members of the Board.
- d. When and where it is deemed advisable by the official board, an advisory board shall be established. Recommendation for appointment to the advisory board may be made to the pastor by the congregation. Appointment will be by action of the official board.
- e. In case of a vacancy in the pastorate, the Superintendent and Presbyter shall select a qualified person for consideration as Pastor.
- f. The title to the property of a District affiliated assembly shall be held by the Local Assembly unless, in the judgment of the District Officers, the church is not qualified to hold title to its own property.
- g. The church shall adhere to the Nebraska District Council Bylaws and their discipline.
- h. The affiliated church shall pay their tithe to the support of the Pastor and also cooperate in backing sectional and state meetings.
- i. Since District affiliated churches should have the privilege of representation at District Council, each affiliated church may

be represented by one, duly elected or appointed delegate; the appointment to be made by the Pastor and registered with the Roster Team.

Parent Affiliated Churches (PAC)

- (1) A Parent Affiliated Church is an outreach of an existing General Council Affiliated Church or a duly authorized District Council Affiliated Church resulting in a worshipping community with a congregational life distinct from a Parent Church (PC). Its purpose is specifically directed toward individuals who are restricted by language, social group, geography or other reasons from meaningful participation in the existing congregation.
 - (a) It is not an overflow service intended to create more seating room in the same location as the main worship service of an existing church.
 - (b) It is not a different worship style to create worship options for members of the existing congregation.
- (2) A PAC is subject to the ecclesial supervision and authority of a PC, in such a manner, and upon such terms and conditions, as are determined by the PC.
- (3) The PC is legally and otherwise responsible for the PAC.
- (4) The governance of the PAC shall consist of the PC governing board or a subcommittee delegated with this responsibility plus the pastor of the PAC.
- (5) For a PAC to be officially “chartered” a completed Parent Affiliated Church Charter form must be submitted by a PC to the District, signed by the District Secretary and sent to the National Office.
- (6) Transition of a PAC to a District Council or General Council Affiliated Church.
 - (a) Upon mutual agreement of the PC, the PAC, and the District Council, in accordance with District Council and General Council Constitutional and Bylaw provisions, the PAC may be transitioned to a District Council or General Council affiliated assembly.
 - (b) Once transitioned, the governance of the PAC shall be transferred from the PC to the newly recognized General Council Affiliated church.

ARTICLE VII. MINISTRY

Section 1. Ministry Described

Christ’s gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11), exhorters, administrators, leaders, and helpers (Romans 12:7,8). We understand God’s call to these ministry gifts is totally within His sovereign discretion without regard to gender, race, disability, or national origin. Three classifications of ministry are recognized and transferable among all Assemblies of God Districts: the ordained minister, the licensed minister, and the certified minister.

All ordained, licensed, and certified ministers holding current ministerial credentials, as well as those holding a local church credential as provided below, are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church.

A fourth classification of ministry, a local church credential, may be provided by a local General Council affiliated church under basic guidelines adopted by the General Presbytery and such additional guidelines adopted by the Nebraska District Council. The local church credential shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church) and shall be limited to 2

years (renewable by the local church for an additional 2-year term). A person holding a local church credential can perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church if authorized in writing by the senior pastor of the local church issuing the credential.

No other classification of ministry shall be recognized other than those described in this section.

Section 2. Basic Qualifications

The following qualifications pertain to all Ordained, Licensed and Certified applicants for ministerial recognition:

a. Salvation

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

b. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Testimony to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable a minister to fulfill the fourfold mission of the church (Article V, paragraph 10, of the General Council Constitution).

c. Evidence of call

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

d. Christian character

A blameless Christian life and a good reputation with those outside the church (Titus 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:7).

e. Doctrinal position

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

f. Assemblies of God polity

A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices, and purposes of the Fellowship through a study of the General Council and Nebraska District Council Constitution and Bylaws.

g. Commitment to the Fellowship

An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older mature Christians and those in positions of authority.

h. Basic education requirements

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

- (1) All applicants are required to be interviewed by the District Credentials Team and, in preparation for the interview, pass a standard exam approved by the General Presbytery whereby they demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Assemblies of God doctrines, and ministerial practices, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee or permitted by General Presbytery policy; and either

- (2) Successfully complete equivalent training to that indicated in paragraph (3) below, preferably, in an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school; or in a seminary, college, Bible college, or school approved by the District Credentials Team consistent with criteria established by the General Council Credentials Committee; or
- (3) Successfully complete courses, prescribed by the General Presbytery, offered in correspondence through Global University of the Assemblies of God, or pass the final examinations in the prescribed courses; or
- (4) Be recommended by the District Credentials Team as qualifying for credentials through self-study and ministerial experience. Such candidates shall have a proven and fruitful ministry of substantial duration. Requests from the Nebraska District for such a candidate shall be presented to the General Council Credentials Committee and may be granted on a case by case basis.

i. Marriage status

We disapprove of any married persons holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God or District councils granting credentials to such, if either marriage partner has a former spouse living, unless the divorce occurred prior to his or her conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital faithfulness, or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever, except as hereinafter provided.

j. Annulments, marriage dissolutions, and divorces

The Executive Presbytery 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; or if the divorce occurred prior to conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness, or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever or in the case of domestic violence by a spouse to a spouse or child. In cases involving pre-conversion divorce, they shall be decided on an individual basis just as those that deal with annulments are decided. The application for an annulment must be accompanied by clear and satisfactory evidence of an illegal marriage through deception or fraud. Appeals from the decisions of the Executive Presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.

k. Eligibility of women

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

l. Ministers from other organizations

If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the credentials Teams of both the General Council and the Nebraska 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 credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

- (1) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
- (2) Complete an application for ministerial recognition.
- (3) Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or the sectional presbyter for the applicant's area.

- (4) Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister 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, two of whom should be with the applicant's former credentialing body.
- (5) Take the credential examination.
- (6) Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credentialing bodies.
- (7) Meet with the District Credentials Team for an oral interview.
- (8) Be recommended by the District Credentials Team for action by the General Council Credentials Committee.

All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers with the laying on of hands by the District Presbytery. All other applicants so approved shall receive the appropriate level of credential recognition.

Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition shall relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee upon recommendation of the Nebraska District Council Credentials Team for a minister serving as a missionary in this country who holds a credential with a member body of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship.

Section 3. Specific Qualifications

a. Residency requirements of applicants

Applicants for all credentials must be residents of or hold credentials in the Nebraska District and appear before its Credentials Team.

b. Local church credential

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

c. Certified minister

(1) General requirements

They shall show promise of usefulness in the gospel work. They shall devote a part of their time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the District Credentials Team, 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 the proclamation of the gospel, except in case of ill health or advanced age.

(2) Pastoral requirements

In the event a certified minister is serving in a position as the pastor, he or she shall be expected to advance to the ministry license within 2 years of acceptance of the pastorate. This shall not apply to any minister who has reached the age of 65 or older, or whose certificate has been issued on a provisional basis. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the District Credentials Team.

(3) Exception for provisional issuance

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

- (a) The ministry certificate on a provisional basis will be issued for 1 year and shall not be renewed more than two times.
- (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.

d. Licensed minister

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

e. Ordained minister

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

- (1) Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
- (2) They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
- (3) No person may be ordained to the ministry until he or she has shown evidence of a divine call and has held a ministry license and has been actively engaged in ministry and proclamation of the gospel for at least 2 full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.
- (4) Residency requirements of applicants

Applicants must be residents of or hold credentials in the Nebraska District and appear before its Credentials Team. The Nebraska District Council is required to refrain from approving any applicant for ordination who may have been licensed in another District, until such licensed minister shall have been a member of the Nebraska District at least 1 year. Applicants who have not been a member of the Nebraska District for 2 full consecutive years must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officers of the District in which they were previously licensed, as well as the Nebraska District.

- (5) Exceptions to requirements

The General Council Credentials Team, upon request by the Nebraska District Credentials Team and where exceptional circumstances exist, may waive the requirements for an applicant holding a ministry license for 2 full consecutive years or being a member of the Nebraska District for at least 1 year.

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

Section 4. Action of Credentials Team

The General Council Credentials Committee delegates to the Nebraska District Council the authority to examine, approve, and recommend candidates who qualify as certified ministers, licensed ministers, and ordained ministers. Final approval and issuance of the ministerial credential shall be made by the General Council Credentials Committee. All ordination services, with the laying on of hands, shall take place under the auspices of the Nebraska District Council.

Section 5. Certificates

The General Council Credentials Committee is authorized to issue ordination certificates, ministry licenses, and certified minister certificates, together with the accompanying annual fellowship card, to all properly qualified and approved candidates.

Section 6. Official List

a. Active ministers

The official list of all credential holders shall be compiled by the General Council Credentials Committee and published for the convenience of the Fellowship, with the understanding it is not to be used for purposes of solicitation. This official list shall be revised annually and shall contain the names of those who are engaged in active ministry and whose credentials have been renewed by the issuance of a fellowship card for the current year.

b. Inactive ministers

All credentialed ministers who shall withdraw from active ministry or shall cease to engage in pastoral, evangelistic, or other full-time ministry, shall be expected to notify the Nebraska District Office, which shall then be authorized to transfer the names of such persons to the inactive list, maintained by the Nebraska District.

(1) Definition

All ministers who have not been actively engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel over a period of 1 year shall have their names placed upon the inactive list for the following year.

(2) Removal of inactive ministers from ministerial list

When a minister is inactive for 2 or more consecutive years, his or her name shall be eliminated from the ministerial list, unless the credentials team of the Nebraska District decides otherwise in a business session of the Presbytery. Removal of the minister from the General Council ministerial list shall be accomplished by not renewing the inactive minister at the subsequent renewal time.

(3) Exceptions

This shall not apply to those whose inactivity has been caused by infirmity; or those engaged in other aspects of full-time ministry such as the National Leadership Resource Center or District workers, educators, ministers of music, ministers of youth, and ministers of Christian education; or those who have reached the age of 60 years; or those ministers who have had 25 years of approved service as credentialed ministers, or those whose spouse is disabled or has retired giving them little opportunity for public ministry.

(4) Disabled ministers

A permanently disabled or permanently ill minister whose illness prevents him or her from engaging in active ministry shall be indicated as disabled. The credential status of the disabled minister shall remain unchanged. The annual renewal of his or her credentials shall take place in the regular manner. Disabled ministers thus approved by the Nebraska District shall not have further obligation of financial support to the General Council.

c. Restoration to active status

Should the minister at any time decide to return to active ministry, his or her name may be restored to the active list of the Nebraska District Council after being interviewed by the Executive Officers or a group designated by the Executive Officers.

Section 7. Senior Ministers

In respect and honor to those ministers who have given years of service to the Fellowship, the term *senior-retired* shall be used for those who are 65 years of age or older, and who have ceased to engage in any regular appointed ministry.

a. Application for retired category

Senior-retired status shall be granted only to those ministers who filed a request for such status with the Nebraska District office. The District Secretary shall forward annually to the General Secretary a list of those ministers who have made these requests.

b. Guidelines

(1) Reports

Senior-retired ministers shall file an abbreviated annual report to maintain a correct address.

(2) Designation in publications

Senior-retired ministers shall have this status indicated in the Official List of Assemblies of God Ministers.

(3) Support of General Council Headquarters

Senior-retired ministers shall be free to distribute as they desire the portion of their tithes previously paid to the General Council.

(4) Other financial responsibility not circumvented

No part of Section 7 is intended to modify the responsibility of ministers to the Nebraska District nor to terminate the biblical responsibility for tithing.

Section 8. Ministerial Relations

a. Amenability

All certified, licensed, and ordained ministers shall be amenable to both the Nebraska District Council and The General Council of the Assemblies of God in matters of doctrine and discipline. (See Bylaws Article VIII.)

All local church credential holders shall be amenable to their local church under guidelines established by the General Presbytery and District Council in matters of doctrine and discipline.

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

b. Affiliation with District of residence

All credential holders within the boundaries of the Nebraska District shall be expected to affiliate and work in cooperation with the Nebraska District Council.

(1) Exception

Ministers who pastor a church located in the Nebraska District but reside in another District shall be required to be a member of the Nebraska District.

(2) Nationally appointed U.S. missionaries

Nationally appointed U.S. missionaries shall become members of the District in which they serve and shall be listed on the ministerial roster of that District by the office of the General Secretary. They may also retain honorary membership in their home District, be listed as a missionary under national appointment in the home District's yearbook, and be extended voice and vote in their home District while on official furlough.

(3) *Church-planting ministries*

Ministers who serve in a trans-District ministry related to church-planting efforts may do so provided:

- (a) They have a scope of ministry which reaches beyond District boundaries; and
- (b) Both Districts agree to the assignment; and
- (c) If the assignment involves a language/ethnic group, they follow the guidelines provided by the Executive Presbytery of the General Council and adhere to these Bylaws governing inter-District relations. (See General Council Bylaws, Article V, Section 6.)

Church planters holding credentials may obtain affiliation with the District they intend to serve and retain honorary membership in their home District be listed in the home District's yearbook, and be extended voice and vote in their home District for such time as they serve in another District. The financial responsibilities shall be the same as those of a nationally appointed U.S. missionary. [See General Council Bylaws, Article VII, Section 8, paragraph c, subparagraph (3).]

c. Cooperation with other Districts

Ministers shall be expected to cooperate with other District councils in which they may labor temporarily. It is recommended as a standard of proper practice that all ministers conform to the financial policy of the District with which they are affiliated with the following exceptions:

(1) *Financial responsibility of world missionaries*

World missionaries credentialed with the Nebraska District will be obligated to pay \$25 per month to the Nebraska District when resident in the U.S. and \$10 per month when resident on their fields.

(2) *Financial responsibility of chaplains*

All chaplains credentialed with the Nebraska District, military and institutional, will be obligated to the Nebraska District in the amount of 10 percent of their tithes from income earned from the chaplaincy. All chaplains are also encouraged to make voluntary contributions to the District in which they fulfill their assignments.

(3) *Financial responsibility of nationally appointed or approved U.S. missionaries*

Nationally appointed or approved U.S. missionaries credentialed with the Nebraska District shall contribute 25 percent of their tithe to their member District where they serve and 25 percent of their tithe to the Nebraska District if they are listed as honorary members. Missionaries credentialed with the Nebraska District who minister in the Nebraska District shall contribute a minimum of 50 percent of their tithe to the Nebraska District.

d. Local Church Affiliation

- (1) Credentialed ministers who wish to become members of a local church that they attend but do not serve as Pastor are free to make application at that local church. It is recommended that they be granted membership upon the unanimous vote of the church board, including the Pastor. In order to provide for the development of lay people to the fullest extent possible,

the District Council encourages the churches to choose their governing boards from among the non-credentialed members who otherwise qualify.

- (2) We recommend that all retired Assemblies of God ministers and spouses be offered a full membership in the Assembly which they make their church home.
- (3) It is understood that a pastor of a church is a member of that church by virtue of his/her office. The pastor's spouse may become a member upon application and approval by the local church board in keeping with the local constitution and bylaws.

Section 9. Transfer of Credentials

a. Certificate of transfer

When a minister credentialed with the Nebraska District takes up residence in another District, a certificate of transfer shall be issued within 60 days by the Nebraska District, unless there are charges pending against the minister. The certificate of transfer shall be accepted by the District into which the minister moves. Exceptions may be made for the following:

- (1) Ministers moving to serve at the Assemblies of God National Leadership Resource Center.
- (2) Those who have attained the age of 60 and are no longer engaged in active ministry and those who have attained the age of 65 and are not pastoring a church.
- (3) Those who are in the Armed Forces currently on active duty.
- (4) Those who are serving on the staffs of schools affiliated with the General Council and District council or non-affiliated schools acceptable to the General Council and the District council in which the school is located.
- (5) Those who are appointed U.S. missionaries or world missionaries who are on furlough or on temporary assignment in the United States and reside in a District other than the Nebraska District.
- (6) Ministers having membership in the Nebraska District and a mailing address only in another District.
- (7) Students in schools outside the Nebraska District.
- (8) Those who are serving in a non-Assemblies of God institution providing:
 - (a) They have a regular scope of ministry which reaches beyond District boundaries.
 - (b) Both Districts agree to the exception.
 - (c) The institution is acceptable to both Districts.
- (9) Church planters involved in trans-District ministry.

b. Transfers from Assemblies of God World Fellowship

A minister holding ordination (or equivalent) with a member group of the Assemblies of God World Fellowship, may transfer his or her ordination to The General Council of the Assemblies of God if the following criteria are met:

- (1) A letter of recommendation from the executive Team of the national church or equivalent letter of recommendation.
- (2) Acceptable equivalency between our governing bodies.
- (3) A course on history and polity of U.S. church.
- (4) Application completed in the same form as U.S. applicants in the language of the applicant, if possible, at the discretion of the general secretary.

c. Transcript

In order to assist a minister credentialed with the Nebraska District who is transferring into another District, a transcript giving helpful information concerning the minister and his or her spouse should accompany the certificate of transfer.

Section 10. Credential Renewals and Reinstatements

a. Terminology

(1) *Renewed*

The term renewed shall apply to all ministers who have met the annual deadline for renewal including those who are delinquent but who renew by January 15.

(2) *Reinstated*

The term reinstated shall apply to the persons whose names have been deleted from the official ministerial list, who upon application, are approved for restoration of credentials.

b. 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. Ministers who do not receive an annual renewal form by December 1 should notify the Nebraska District Office.

c. Grace period until January 15

All who have not renewed their fellowship certificates by mail postmarked on or before December 31 shall be considered delinquent. They shall be required to pay a late fee of \$50 up until January 15, to be divided equally between the Nebraska District and General Council.

d. Reinstatement of lapsed minister

Ministers whose renewal applications are not postmarked by January 15 shall be recorded as lapsed as of December 31. They must make application for reinstatement and pay a non-refundable fee of \$100, to be divided equally between the Nebraska District and the General Council. These ministers shall not be subject to the minimal time-lapse required of those whose credentials have been terminated for other causes.

e. Reinstatement of other than dismissed minister

When a minister who is credentialed with the Nebraska District is removed from General Council rolls for any cause, except failure to renew and dismissal, and shall apply for reinstatement, he or she shall not be eligible for reinstatement until at least 6 months have elapsed after his or her name has been stricken from the General Council list of ministers. The application must be made with the Nebraska District and be accompanied with a non-refundable fee of \$100 to be divided between the Nebraska District and the General Council.

The Nebraska District shall seek a letter of clearance from the District that processed the termination and, upon receipt of the clearance, may add its endorsement and forward the application, together with the letter of clearance, to the General Council Credentials Team for its action.

Section 11. Non-disciplinary Credential Terminations

a. On the initiative of the minister

(1) *Lapsed*

Ministers who do not renew their credentials shall be listed as lapsed, provided there is no cause for disciplinary action. Their names shall be published as lapsed in the Assemblies of God Minister, hereinafter referred to as the minister's letter or disseminated electronically to ministers only.

(2) *Resigned*

Ministers credentialed with the Nebraska District who elect to remove themselves from the Fellowship shall submit a letter of resignation to the Nebraska District. If there is no cause for disciplinary action, their resignation shall become effective after having been approved by both the Nebraska District Council and General Council Credentials Teams. Their termination shall be listed in the minister's letter as resigned or disseminated electronically to ministers only.

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

(1) *Inactive*

When a minister becomes inactive for 2 consecutive years, according to the stipulations set forth in the General Council Bylaws Article VII, Section 6, paragraph b, his or her name shall be published as inactive in the minister's letter or disseminated electronically to ministers only.

(2) *Not renewed*

If in the opinion of the credentials Teams a minister's credentials should not be renewed short of disciplinary action, the minister's name shall be published as not renewed in the minister's letter or disseminated electronically to ministers only.

c. As a result of affiliation with another church organization

In the event a minister shall identify with another organization granting ministerial credentials, and shall have received such credentials, his or her credentials with The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall be terminated. An investigation shall be made to determine the proper category of termination.

d. Surrender of credentials

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

Section 12. Ministerial Status Changes

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

Section 13. Privileged Communications

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

Section 14. Prerogatives and Privileges

- a. Opportunities for ministry throughout the Fellowship, and the availability of approved ministries.
- b. Representation at District and General Councils.
- c. The extension of local ministry through the world-wide Fellowship of the Assemblies of God in fulfilling the Great Commission.
- d. Accessibility to approved Full Gospel publications and other printed materials.
- e. Accessibility to approved Full Gospel institutions such as colleges, etc.
- f. Utilization of Departmental Ministries such as camps, ministries to men, women, youth, Sunday Schools, etc.
- g. Availability of Insurance and Retirement Programs, such as Group Term Insurance, Group Hospitalization, and Ministers' Benefit Association Retirement Plan.
- h. Fellowship with those of like mind and purpose.

Section 15. Responsibilities and Requirements

a. Adherence to Sound Doctrine

A person who has a declared open change in doctrinal views inconsistent with our Statement of Fundamental Truths can no longer be eligible for endorsement as an Assemblies of God minister.

b. Representation of Our Distinctive Pentecostal Testimony

It is expected the Assemblies of God ministers shall correctly and properly represent our Distinctive Pentecostal Testimony in teaching, practice, and personal conduct.

c. Financial Responsibility

(1) To the General Council Headquarters

Since the work of The General Council of the Assemblies of God in its program of developing the spirit of cooperation and fellowship in home and foreign fields incurs considerable expense, including the financial support of executive officers and offices, credentialed ministers are required to contribute the following amounts to the General Council, to be taken from the tithes normally due to the District, as outlined in paragraph (2), subparagraph (a), below:

- (a) Ordained ministers - \$25 per month
- (b) Licensed ministers - \$20 per month

(c) Certified Ministers - \$10 per month

All who can, are strongly urged to give more than the suggested amount, either personally or through the assemblies they pastor.

(2) To the District Council Office

- (a) All Ordained, Licensed and Certified Ministers are required to support the District Office with either the tithe from their ministerial earnings or a minimum of \$20 dues per month (whichever is greater) and with voluntary contributions. In the case of a married couple that is serving in ministry together and only one has earned income, the spouse who had no earned ministerial income will not be required to make the minimum dues payment if the contributing spouse's tithe contribution is more than \$40 per month. If the minister is a nationally appointed AG world missionary, nationally appointed AG U.S. missionary or nationally appointed AG chaplain, their giving responsibilities are explained in ARTICLE VII, Section 8.c.(1)(2)(3). Senior-retired ministers are exempt from this financial responsibility.
- (b) We recommend one-half of the tithe of evangelists from other Districts working within our District, and we require one-half of the tithe of our evangelists working in other Districts, be sent to the Nebraska District.
- (c) When a minister is not actively engaged in ministry and is engaged in secular work, and attending a local church, we recommend that the tithe from the secular work go to the church. Even in these cases, however, the requirements of paragraph (a) above still apply.
- (d) If the minimum payment described above would be a hardship and inhibit the ministry of the minister and his or her family, application for exemption may be made to the Executive Presbytery.

(3) Accountability

- (a) Each minister who has not complied with the financial policy of the General Council and Nebraska District Council shall send a statement of explanation with his or her annual questionnaire.
- (b) The Nebraska District Presbytery shall carefully analyze the annual report of each minister and, in their knowledge of local situations, determine if he/she has been voluntarily cooperating with the General Council and District Council financial programs.

(4) Retirement

- (a) Each assembly should accept their responsibility to provide a retirement income for their pastor and family and ministerial staff by contributing an amount equal to 7% of the pastor's salary (over and above salary) to the minister's AG Financial Solutions MBA account.
- (b) Each minister should accept the responsibility to provide a retirement income for him/herself and his or her family by contributing an amount equal to 5% of the pastor's salary to the minister's AG Financial Solutions MBA account.
- (c) The Nebraska District shall accept its responsibility to provide a retirement income for its ministers and his or her family by contributing an amount equal to 2% of each minister's tithe paid to the District during each fiscal year to the minister's MBA account. Because of MBA confidentiality, each member must furnish the District office with their MBA Account number.

ARTICLE VIII. DISCIPLINE

The Nebraska District Council accepts Article X (Discipline) in the General Council Bylaw as its manual of jurisprudence.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCE

Section 1. Services

- a. The tithes and offerings of the ministers, as outlined in Article VII, Section 15, paragraph c, sub-paragraph 2a, Financial Responsibility to the Nebraska District Council Office.
- b. Specially designated offerings from local churches, sectional Fellowship meetings.
- c. Offerings and bequests from individuals.
- d. General Disbursements are under the District Presbytery as outlined in Article IV., Section 1, Salaries.
- e. All Home Missions Funds disbursed in the section shall be disbursed by the presbytery.

Section 2. Loans

- a. The District Presbytery may establish a separate account or accounts for the purpose of creating a source of loan funds to churches or departments of the District or to the District itself.
- b. The District Presbytery shall make such rules, regulations or guidelines and administration of the fund or funds, including but not limited to loan policies, applications, collections, administration and management.
- c. The District Presbytery may receive gifts, bequests, grants, loans or any other funds, with or without interest as it deems advisable for the proper administration of any fund established under this section.
- d. The District Presbytery may appoint a loan Team for the purpose of taking, processing, approving or denying any loan application and/or to manage and administer the fund. Such loan Team shall report to the District Presbytery not less than annually.

Section 3.-District Function Budgets

An annual budget for all Nebraska District Functions shall be created by the appropriate leadership team, approved by the Executive and District Presbytery and then presented to the District Council in session. The combined budget shall be published and made available for our entire constituency, thus providing incentive for church participation in the financial program of the District.

ARTICLE X. INSTITUTIONS

Section 1. Schools

The Nebraska District Council shall help to establish schools for training of candidates for the ministry and shall cooperate with the General Council in such matters.

Section 2. Miscellaneous

The Nebraska District Council in cooperation with the General Council shall encourage the establishing and maintaining of homes for children, the aged, retired ministers and missionaries, Christian day schools and extension schools, and all humanitarian and educational work that shall be for the betterment of mankind.

Section 3. North Central University

- a. The Nebraska District Council, together with other participating Districts , shall provide representation to the North Central University Board of Regents. This representation shall include the District Superintendent or a representative of his/her

choice.

- b. Other representation of pastors, lay leaders, or at large members shall be selected by the Board Chair, President and the Committee on Regents.

ARTICLE XI. DISTRICT PROPERTIES

Section 1. Trustees

The District Presbyters shall be the legal custodians and trustees of all property, real or personal, now owned or hereafter acquired in its name or in the name of its Executive Committee, which property may be or become a part of the assets of said District Council.

Section 2. Held in Corporate Name

All such property, real, chattel, or personal, owned or hereafter acquired by the District Council shall be taken, held, possessed, sold, transferred, assigned, mortgaged or conveyed in the corporate name of the Nebraska District Council of the Assemblies of God.

Section 3. Purchases and Leases of General District Properties

- a. Real property which is for the use or benefit of the entire District, such as the District Office, Campgrounds, or District parsonages, shall not be purchased or sold unless first authorized by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any regular or special session of the District Council.
- b. Such property may be leased, mortgaged or rented as the need arises, when authorized by a two-thirds vote of the District Presbytery.
- c. In cases of government initiated eminent domain, any interest in real property which is for the use or benefit of the entire District that is required for public use, may be conveyed for reasonable compensation when authorized by a two-thirds vote of the District Presbytery.

Section 4. Purchase, Lease and Title of Other District Properties

- a. Other property acquired for the purpose of promoting the work of the Nebraska District Council and for the establishment of Home Missions churches, may be sold, transferred, leased, rented, conveyed or mortgaged in the corporate name of the Nebraska District Council when authorized by a two-thirds vote of the District Presbytery. The District Superintendent and or the District Secretary shall be authorized to sign all legal documents in these matters. The proceeds from the sale of such properties shall be disbursed at the discretion of the District Executive Presbytery.
- b. The properties of all churches which have not been set in order shall be held in the name of the Nebraska District Council, which shall have full power and authority to take and hold such property, whether gift or purchase.
- c. Upon being set in order as a General Council Affiliated Church, the title to all property, real and personal, whether gift or purchase, together with all indebtedness thereupon, shall be automatically and immediately transferred to and vested in

the church's trustees and their duly elected successors in office, without the necessity of any legal instrument in writing from the corporate office of the Nebraska District.

Section 5. Heretofore Held Property

Any property, real, chattel, or personal, heretofore held in the corporate name of said District Council which may have been heretofore sold, transferred, mortgaged or conveyed, and where said instrument of conveyance has been in substantial compliance with the foregoing, is hereby ratified, confirmed and in all respects, approved.

ARTICLE XII. INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Section 1. Ministers' Benefit Association

The Nebraska District Council recommends that all ordained and licensed ministers become members of the Ministers' Benefit Association, offered through AG Financial Solutions. It is further recommended that each minister and church should follow the recommendation outlined in Article VII MINISTRY, Section 15 Responsibilities and Requirements, paragraph c. Financial Responsibility, sub-paragraph (4) Retirement, paragraphs (a) and (b).

Section 2. Group Insurance for Assemblies

The General Council of the Assemblies of God maintains a minister's group life insurance program. It is recommended that all ministers consider the coverage.

ARTICLE XIII. STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Section 1. Social Security

We recommend that all ministers participate in the National Social Security Program.

Section 2. Insurance and Extended Coverage

Adequate Property and Liability Insurance should be carried by all churches and is required for all District Affiliated Churches. In addition, the Nebraska District Council of the Assemblies of God shall be listed as an Additional Insured on all District Affiliated Church policies.

Section 3. Suggested Constitution and Bylaws

We recommend that all churches in the District adopt the standard form of Constitution and Bylaws or Bylaws, and Articles of Incorporation which are recommended by the District.

Section 4. Historian

There is a need to preserve the history of the Nebraska District Council of the Assemblies of God and its affiliated churches for future generations. We recommend that a Historian be appointed by the District Presbytery to keep the historical records of the Nebraska District. The historical record should include District meetings, speakers, pastors and churches, dedication of churches, and any other events of historical significance.

Section 5. Surplus Funds

We recommend that all money not needed for current expense and projects be invested in short term notes.

Section 6. Approval of District Minutes

The minutes of the District Council session shall be edited by the District Executive Officers and the printing of the same shall be authorized by them.

ARTICLE XIV Emergency Bylaws

A. Unless the articles of incorporation provide otherwise, the District Presbytery may adopt bylaws to be effective only in an emergency defined in subsection E of this section.

B. The emergency bylaws may make all provisions necessary for managing the District during the emergency, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) Procedures for calling a meeting of the District Council and District Presbytery.
- 2) Quorum requirements for any meeting.
- 3) Designation of additional or substitute directors.
- 4) Modification of lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity of any director, officer, employee, or agent resulting from the emergency.
- 5) Relocation of the principal office.

During an emergency, the District Presbytery shall have the maximum authority possible to run the District's interim affairs in the manner they deem best.

C. All provisions of the regular bylaws consistent with the emergency bylaws remain effective during the emergency. The emergency bylaws are not effective after the emergency ends.

D. Corporate action taken in good faith in accordance with the emergency bylaws both binds the District and may not be

used to impose liability on a corporate director, officer, employee, or agent.

E. An emergency exists for purposes of this section if a quorum of the District's members or directors cannot readily be assembled because of any of the following events:

- 1) A natural catastrophe, including, but not limited to, a hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought, or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion.
- 2) An attack on this state or nation by an enemy of the United States of America, or upon receipt by this state of a warning from the federal government indicating that an enemy attack is probable or imminent.
- 3) An act of terrorism or other manmade disaster that results in extraordinary levels of casualties or damage or disruption severely affecting the infrastructure, environment, economy, government functions, or population, including, but not limited to, mass evacuations.
- 4) A pandemic.
- 5) A state of emergency proclaimed by a governor or by the President.
- 6) Any other condition as a result of which a quorum cannot readily be assembled.

Electronic Meetings and Action by Unanimous Consent

In the event of an emergency or other sufficient cause as determined by the District Presbytery the members of the District Presbytery or District Council/Conference may participate and act at any meeting through the use of any technology by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate simultaneously with each other, upon such terms and in such manner as the District Presbytery shall determine. Participation in such meeting shall constitute attendance and presence in person at the meeting of the member or members so participating.

Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the District Presbytery may be taken without a meeting if all members consent thereto in writing, and the writings are filed with the minutes of proceedings of the District Presbytery.

ARTICLE XV. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to the Bylaws

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

Section 2. Conformity with General Council Bylaws

The Executive Presbytery is empowered to make necessary editorial changes to our bylaws so as to keep them consistent with the General Council Bylaws, with regard to financial responsibility, changed terminology such as departmental names, and references to General Council bylaws that change due to revision.