

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

(Revised 2007)

PREAMBLE

In gratitude to Almighty God for the gift of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ; and believing that, to the glory of God, the task of the church of Jesus Christ is three-fold, i.e., the worship of God, the edification of the saints, and the evangelization of the world; and believing further that there is a definite need among congregationally governed churches of historic Biblical persuasion for an association to assist them in the performance of said task: We therefore as autonomous churches declaring our unqualified belief in the entire Word of God written, humbly invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have covenanted together to form such an association.

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be: THE CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE, hereinafter called the Conference.

Article II - Purpose

1. To promote the worship of God in our churches.
2. To deepen and extend the fellowship of our churches.
3. To encourage a steadfast, Biblical witness by our churches.
4. To facilitate cooperation and counsel among our churches with regard to evangelism, edification, Christian education, stewardship, missions, church extension, Christian action, women's and men's fellowships, youth activities, the pastoral ministry, and other related concerns.
5. To preserve and promote the Scriptural principles of the autonomy of the local church and the freedom of the believer in Christ.

Article III - Statement of Faith

1. We believe the Bible consisting of the Old and New Testament, to be the only inspired, inerrant, infallible, authoritative Word of God written.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for salvation of lost and sinful man regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by Whose indwelling power and fullness the Christian is enabled to live a godly life in this present evil world.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in Christ.

Article IV - Statement of Polity

1. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Head of His body, the Church universal, and of each local church.
2. We believe that each local church is in itself a complete church, and therefore autonomous and possesses all rights and responsibilities of the church by the Holy Spirit as set forth in the Holy Scriptures.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ exercises His authority in each local church by the Holy Spirit and through the Holy Scriptures.
4. We believe that each local church is ultimately answerable only to Jesus Christ, and not to any association, conference, council, synod or any other ecclesiastical body.
5. We believe that it is proper and beneficial for each local church to seek fellowship and counsel of other such local churches.

Article V - Membership

1. Membership in this Conference shall be attained by the voluntary association of churches, ministers or individual lay members who find themselves in full accord with the Statement of Faith and Statement of Polity (Articles III,IV) of this Constitution, the Code of Ethics for Ministers and Churches, and with the general principles of this Conference as set forth in the Constitution and By-laws. Conference membership, whether of church, minister or lay members, may be subject to review by the ensuing Annual Meeting of the Conference. Ministerial membership shall be accorded on the basis of the approved ministerial standards of the Conference, as set forth in the By-laws of this Constitution. Churches are not necessarily barred from membership because of other affiliations so long as they adhere to the Statement of Faith and the Statement of Polity and the workings of the Conference. Individual Lay Membership may be held only by members of congregationally governed churches which are not members of this Conference. In the event that a non-member church joins this Conference, the individual lay membership of any of its members ceases.
2. A church, minister or individual lay member may withdraw from membership in this Conference at any time by its or his* own action, and will be removed from the membership when written notice of such action is given to the Chairman of the Credentials Committee.
3. A church, minister or individual lay member may be dismissed from membership in this Conference for continued inactivity, at the decision of the Credentials Committee and the ratification of the Conference.
4. In the event that there is received a written statement that a member church, minister or individual lay member has departed from the standards of faith and practice set forth in this Constitution and By-laws or in the Code of Ethics for Ministers and Churches, the Credentials Committee shall make a careful investigation of the matter. If the charge appears to the Committee to be justified and is received in accordance with I Timothy 5:19 from at least two or three witnesses, the Committee shall report the matter to the Conference for appropriate action. The right to appeal to the Conference by the party accused is presupposed.

Article VI - Associated Relationships

1. The Conservative Congregational Christian Conference encourages the forming of local fellowships, conferences or associations of churches and ministers who are in accordance with Article V, Section 1 of the Constitution and who are in sympathy with the Statements of Faith and Polity of this Conference.
2. Fellowships, conferences, or associations, whether state or area, may be recognized in this associated relationship upon request to and approval by the Credentials Committee. Such action will be subject to review by the ensuing Annual Meeting of the Conference.
3. Recognition by the Conference does not bestow membership in this Conference upon churches or ministers of the respective groups. Churches, ministers, or individual lay members may attain voluntary membership according to Article V - Membership, of this Constitution.
4. Fellowships, conferences or associations, recognized by this Conference, will be represented in the Conference business meetings by the delegates of their member churches which are also members of this Conference.

*All gender references, except for those pertaining to the Diety, are generic and refer to both males and females unless otherwise indicated.

Article VII - Meetings

1. ANNUAL MEETING. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Conference at such time and place as determined by the Executive Committee, unless the same are specifically designated by the Annual Meeting of the previous year.
2. SPECIAL MEETINGS. These may be called at the direction of the Executive Committee, or upon written request of members representing one-fifth of the total membership of the Conference.
3. REPRESENTATION. Churches becoming members of the Conference shall be entitled to representation at various meetings of the Conference by the pastors and two lay delegates who shall be members of that local church for the first 100 members or fraction thereof and thereafter one delegate who is a member of that local church for each 500 members or fraction thereof.

Voting privileges at Conference meetings shall also be extended to ministerial members who are without a charge, to individual lay members of the Conference, with the understanding that not more than one lay member from any non-member church shall be entitled to vote, and to all Conference Officers and members of the Board of Directors.
4. PROCEDURE. The guide for parliamentary procedure in all meetings shall be Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, in all cases not covered by special rules of this Constitution and By-laws.

Article VIII - Board of Directors

1. The business of the Conference shall be conducted and the property of the Conference shall be managed by a Board of Directors, numbering not fewer than twelve nor more than thirty members, and shall include the elected officers of the Conference. The initial Board having been elected in three equal groups, for one year, for two years, and three years, respectively, one-third of the membership of the Board of Directors (exclusively of the Conference Officers named in Article VIII who are ex-officio members of the Board with full voting rights) shall be elected annually for a term of three years in future Annual Meetings of the Conference. No Board member may be elected to two full consecutive terms without a minimum of a one year lapse, after which eligibility will be restored. No Board member,

elected to that position, may serve concurrently as a Conference officer. In the election of Board members, consideration shall be given to geographic representation and to representation from the Conference committees.

2. The Board of Directors shall establish an Executive Committee, to consist of the officers of the Conference. The Board may delegate to the Executive Committee such of its powers and authority as may be deemed necessary for the proper functioning of the Conference.

3. The Board of Directors shall fill any vacancy arising among the officers of the Conference, the Committees or in the Board itself, until the next Annual Meeting of the Conference at which time the Conference shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

4. The Board of Directors shall appoint annually an Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplains who shall represent the Conference on the Chaplaincy Commission of the National Association of Evangelicals. All military endorsements are subject to review of the Board of Directors.

5. The Board of Directors shall establish Foresee Publications as the Christian Education supply and publication arm of the Conference; such operation to be under the direction of the Board of Directors.

6. Any action of the Board of Directors may be subject to review and ratification by the Conference at its Annual Meeting or any special meeting.

Article IX - Officers

1. The elected officers of this Conference shall be:

A. A President, a Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, a Conference Minister, a Treasurer and a Controller.

B. The term of office for each of the above officers shall be three years, and for the duration of their tenure they shall be ex-officio members of the Conference Board of Directors with full voting rights.

C. The terms of the President and the Vice-President shall expire simultaneously; the following year the terms of the Conference Minister and the Controller shall expire; and the third year the terms of the Recording Secretary and the Treasurer shall expire.

D. The office of the Conference President and the Conference Vice-President shall be limited to one full term, but following a one year lapse, their eligibility for re-election shall be restored. No Conference officer, except for the Conference Minister, may serve more than nine consecutive years in Conference offices without a lapse of at least one year between those offices.

2. The duly elected officers of the Conference shall hold their office until their successors are chosen and installed in their stead which shall be at the Annual Meeting at which they are elected.

3. If for any reason an officer chooses to resign, a letter of resignation shall be directed to the President, who in turn shall call it to the attention of the Board of Directors, which Board will have the power to accept such a resignation between the meetings of the Conference. This procedure shall also be followed if any members of the Board of Directors choose to resign. In the event that the President resigns, the letter of resignation shall be directed to the Conference Minister, who shall present it to the Board of Directors for action.

Article X-Incorporation

This revised Constitution and By-laws shall become the Constitution and By-laws of the Corporation established under the Constitution and By-laws replaced by this instrument.

Article XI-By-Laws

The Conference shall adopt such By-laws as it shall deem appropriate and necessary for the operation of the Conference. The By-laws shall provide for the manner of amendment thereof.

Article XII-Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution shall be proposed in writing by submitting the same to the Recording Secretary at the Annual Meeting preceding their consideration for adoption. These amendments shall be read to the Annual Meeting and copies of the same shall be mailed as soon as possible after the Annual Meeting at which they are first proposed to each of the Conference members (churches, ministers, and individual lay members). A two-thirds favorable vote of the delegates duly elected, and of others entitled to vote (See Article VII, paragraph 3), shall be required for adoption; and the orderly numbering, lettering, capitalization and spelling of the Articles shall be cared for by the Constitution Study Committee.

Article XIII- Dissolution

No part of the net earnings or other assets of this Conference shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, or officer of this Conference, or of any private individual. No donor, member, individual committee, associate or affiliate member or officer of this Conference shall be entitled to be a recipient in the distribution of any assets of this Conference upon dissolution. Any assets of said Conference must be distributed or given to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one organized exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes.

ADDENDUM

CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINISTERS

In My Own Life

I will always devote time to seeking the will of God through reading the Scriptures and prayer.

I will endeavor to keep myself physically and emotionally fit.

I will seek in all ways to be Christ like in my attitude and conduct.

I will seek mutual accountability and spiritual friendship with fellow Christians for personal encouragement and nurture in order to ensure faithfulness to my calling as a steadfast follower and competent servant of my Lord Jesus Christ.

In Relationship to My Family

I will consider each member of my immediate family as precious gifts from God, and will carefully, lovingly and responsibly meet their needs as a sacred obligation before Him.

I will give spiritual leadership in my home.

I will be faithful and loyal to my family members, loving them as Jesus Christ loves His Church.

In Relationship to the Church

I will remember that I am called to lead, but also to serve.

I will never violate a confidence given to me.

I will be diligent in my duties as pastor, never lazy, but with God as my judge and my Shepherd.

I will be Biblical in my preaching, presenting the whole counsel of God, speaking the truth in love.

I will strive to introduce people to Christ, and to build His Church.

I will consider my call to the church a sacred responsibility and stand by the decision.

I will seek the unity of the church and resist any attempts to divide.

In Relationship to Other Ministers

I will be a brother in Christ to my fellow ministers.

I will not seek to build my church at the expense of another church, nor my ego at the expense of another minister.

I will not speak uncharitably of either my predecessor or my successor.

I will refrain from pastoral contacts with former parishioners except with the knowledge of the present pastor.

In Relationship to the Conference

I will participate in the larger fellowship of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, and seek to support through prayer and action its aims and objectives.

In Relationship to the Community

I will seek to be responsible in my personal finances.

I will seek to build a positive relationship with the community without sacrificing my ministry to the church.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR CHURCHES

The Christian Church is the Body of Christ and is destined to be His Bride. In as much as every local church is an expression of the whole Body it is needful for her to be committed to vigilance in all of her relationships:

In Relationship to Christ

Believing that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church...

We will honor and exalt Him in all of our relationships and ministries. We will keep ourselves free from all policies and practices which might tend to mar the beauty of the Bride of Christ.

In Relationship to Fellow-Members

Believing that the local church is an expression of the family of God...

We will promote unity among the members of the congregation, resisting all jealousy, rivalry, self-seeking and division which would disturb that unity.

We will "... make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." (Romans 14:19)

In Relationship to Other Churches

Believing that the Church is a universal body...

We will attempt to maintain honorable relationships with other churches in the community.

In Relationship to the Community

Believing that the witness of the church in the community affects the ministry of that church to the community and reflects on Christ, the Head of the Church...

We will endeavor to keep our dealings with agencies, businesses and individuals in the community honest and above reproach.

In Relationship to the Conference

Believing that our membership in the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference is not only a privilege but also involves responsibility...

We will fulfill our fellowship, ministry and financial obligations to the Conference to the best of our ability.

We will uphold the doctrines and principles of the Conference.

In Relationship to the Pastor and Other leaders of the Church

Believing that the pastor and other spiritual leaders are shepherds of Christ's flock...

We will love, honor and submit to them as they, by example and word, watch over our souls.

We will support the pastor financially so that he may be able to meet his obligations without bringing reproach upon himself or us.

We will not allow anything among us that would undermine the pastor's ministry or rob him of the confidence of the church and the community.

We will endeavor to respond to all criticism dealing with the pastor, other spiritual leaders, or their families in an honorable manner, not tolerating subversive or clandestine meetings.

Whenever legitimate criticism or charges against anyone arise, we will follow Scriptural direction for church discipline, always with a desire for reconciliation and restoration and always making use of the cloak of love.

BY-LAWS

I - Board of Directors

1. The **Board of Directors**, numbering not fewer than twelve nor more than thirty members, and including the elected officers of the Conference, shall be responsible to conduct the business of the Conference and manage the property of the Conference. Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at such times and place as shall be determined by the Board, but not less than once a year. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Conference President on one month's notice to each Board member. Such meetings may be also called by the Conference Minister in like manner upon written request of any five members of the Board. A business quorum shall be any majority of the members of the Board. They shall keep written minutes of each meeting, which are to be made available to the Conference upon request.
2. An **Executive Committee** shall be established by the Board of Directors, which will consist of the officers of the Conference: the Conference Minister, the President, the Vice-President, the Recording Secretary, the Treasurer and the Controller. Because of their responsibilities they are ex-officio members of the Administration Council. The Board may delegate to the Executive Committee such of its powers and authority as may be deemed necessary for the proper functioning of the Conference.
3. An **Advisory Board** of past Presidents of the Conference and past Conference Ministers shall be granted voice representation at any and all Board meetings but without the right to vote.
4. The **Board of Directors** or the Executive Committee may appoint in addition to the offices provided for in the Constitution such assistant secretaries, assistant treasurers and other subordinate officers and agents as may be deemed necessary. Such appointed officers shall hold office for the terms of, and exercise the powers and perform the duties assigned to them by the action of the appointing body. They are not, however, members of the Executive Committee.
5. The **Board of Directors** may employ or cause to be employed such other persons as the needs of the Conference may require. Such persons shall generally serve under the Conference Minister.

II - Officers

1. The **Conference Minister** shall be the Executive Director and Pastor of the Conference. He shall promote and represent the Conference to both members and non-members, in order to accomplish the purpose of the Conference as stated in Article II, Sections 1-5 of the Constitution. He shall be responsible for the functioning of all councils and committees, and shall appoint the Director of Conference Services, the Director of Conference Outreach, and the Director of Conference Regional Activities. He shall have an advisory relationship with the various regional fellowships associated with the Conference. He shall conduct the official correspondence of the Conference, and shall give notice of all meetings of the members and of the Conference committees.

He shall be responsible for the registration for the Annual Meeting. He shall maintain an official record of the Conference membership and have custody of the Conference seal which he shall apply with his signature to any documents requiring it when authorized by the Board of Directors, Executive Committee or the President. He shall receive and process all money received by the Conference according to procedures developed in conjunction with the Treasurer and the Finance Committee. He shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee or the President under whose supervision he shall be.

2. The **President** shall be the Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, and shall preside at all their meetings, as well as at the meeting of the Conference as a whole. He may, with the consent of the Board of Directors, delegate to other elected officers of the Conference such presidential authority and power as may be deemed necessary and appropriate to facilitate Conference operations. He shall, under authority of the Board of Directors, have general oversight over the ministry of the Conference. The President's specific area of responsibility pertains to the Conference Administration of which he is the Director.

3. The **Vice-President** shall, in the absence of the President, perform the duties and functions of his office, and in addition thereto such other duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time prescribe.

4. The **Recording Secretary**, or a temporary substitute, shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Conference and cause to be recorded all the votes and minutes of all proceedings in a book to be kept for that purpose. He shall perform all such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee.

5. The **Treasurer** shall have custody of the corporate funds and securities of the Conference, and shall cause the same to be kept in a safe deposit box as directed by the Board of Directors. He shall cause to be kept full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the Conference, and shall deposit all monies and other valuable effects in the name of and credit of the Conference, in repositories indicated by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors are to see that the Treasurer's books be audited annually by an approved certified public accountant, the report of which will be made directly to the Board of Directors and be made available to the Conference membership. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee.

6. The **Controller** shall approve the expenditures of all monies in accordance with the adopted budget. He shall assist the Treasurer in the preparation of the budget for presentation to the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting. He shall make such recommendations to the Board of Directors for the handling of funds that he deems necessary for proper stewardship.

III - Ministries

1. The Conference is organized under four ministry divisions, each with a director, a council, and respective committees. The four areas are: Administration, Services, Outreach, and Regional Activities. The Chairman of each Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Committees, while subject to the Board of Directors, shall function under the supervision of the Conference Minister. The Board of Directors shall appoint such other Committees as deemed necessary.

A. A pastor of a member church, who does not hold his standing in the Conference, may serve on any committee, with the exception of the Credentials Committee, as long as he is pastor of a member church. If he ceases his relationship to a member church, he is automatically dropped from the Committee membership, unless he is called to another member church. He may not be elected to the Board or a Conference office.

B. Associate members may serve on any committee with the exception of the Credentials Committee. They may not be elected to the Board, a Conference office, or appointed to Committee chairmanship.

C. Each Committee shall prepare a written report of progress to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference and at such other times as the Board of Directors shall request it.

2. The **Conference Administration** ministry focuses on constitutional study, credentialing of members, Conference finances and the nominating process.

A. The **Conference Administration Director** shall be the President of the Conference. He shall chair the Administration Council and shall oversee and liaison with the chairmen of the committees making up that Council.

B. The **Administration Council** shall be made up of its Director, the members of the Executive Committee and the chairmen of each of the following committees: Constitution Study Committee, Credentials Committee, Chaplains Committee, Finance Committee and Nominating Committee. The purpose of the Council is to provide administrative support and credentialing to the Conference churches and individual members.

C. A **Constitution Study Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall annually review the Constitution and By-laws, offer for consideration any appropriate revisions or amendments, and take necessary procedural steps to bring them before the Conference. This Committee shall study also the constitutional problems for local churches at the request of the same, and recommend suggestions for improving the constitution thereof. The Committee shall appoint the Parliamentarian for the Annual Meeting.

D. A **Credentials Committee** of five shall be appointed by the Board of Directors on a rotating basis for three year terms; the Conference Minister shall be an ex-officio member of this Committee without vote. This Committee shall have the following duties:

- 1) The Committee shall receive and review all applications for membership in the Conference. In making such a review, the Committee shall make every reasonable effort to investigate and interview all individuals making application to the Conference. The investigation should include, if at all possible, a personal interview by a member of the Committee or by a Board member, or by a member of the Conference, if the first two are impractical. They shall either approve or disapprove the application, or refer it to the Board of Directors for review. In the event of approval, the Committee has power to grant membership subject to approval by the next Annual Meeting of the Conference.
- 2) The Committee shall take action with regard to requests for transferal or dismissal, such action being subject to approval by the next Annual Meeting of the Conference except where dismissal has been requested by the party in question.
- 3) All applications for membership, transfer, or dismissal, either approved or disapproved by the Committee and all such applications then in process are to be listed and circulated by the Committee to the entire membership of the Conference not less than thirty days before the Annual Meeting. Only those so listed and circulated shall be presented to the Annual Meeting for ratification.
- 4) The Committee shall have the power to renew ministerial licenses granted by the Conference upon application by the licensee.
- 5) The Committee shall have the power to receive applications from prospective students who wish to prepare themselves for some form of the Gospel ministry and who desire to come under Conference Care. Such action will be subject to approval by the Conference at the Annual Meeting.
- 6) The Committee, through the Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplains, shall report to the Board of Directors regarding the endorsement of any ministerial member seeking to enter the military chaplaincy.
- 7) The Committee shall make an annual review of the ministerial activities of those with full memberships or licenses to determine the current outreach of the Conference and the propriety of continued ministerial status of the members.
- 8) The Committee shall make a careful investigation of those cases where discipline may be necessary as ordered by the Constitution (Article V, Sections 3-4).

E. A **Chaplains Committee** of four, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors to serve on a rotating basis for three year terms. The chairman of the Committee shall be the Endorsing Agent for Conference Chaplains and shall be appointed annually by the Board of Directors. The Committee shall be concerned with the support and spiritual well-being of all currently assigned Conference chaplains and their families. They shall assist the Conference in the recruitment, processing and endorsing of new chaplains. Their work shall be supportive and advisory with all action subject to the approval of the Conference Minister, the Credentials Committee and/or the Board of Directors.

F. A **Finance Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. In addition, the Treasurer and Controller shall serve as ex-officio members of this Committee. This Committee shall devise ways and means of providing for the financial needs of the Conference, and shall make such financial needs known to the constituency. They shall be the Conference's Auditing Committee.

G. A **Nominating Committee** of five, two appointed by the Board of Directors and three to be elected by the Conference, shall serve on a rotating basis for three year terms. This Committee shall provide a slate of candidates for the various offices and committees with the exception of the first term of a new Conference Minister who shall be nominated by a special search committee appointed and instructed by the Board of Directors for that purpose. This Committee shall submit a preliminary slate of nominations to the Conference Minister who shall publish the slate to all Conference members and churches no less than thirty days in advance of the Annual Meeting.

3. The **Conference Services** ministry focuses on education, publication, ministry support and spiritual life within the Conference.

A. The **Conference Services Director** shall be appointed by the Conference Minister and shall serve for a one year term. He shall chair the Services Council and shall oversee and liaison with the chairmen of the committees making up that Council.

B. The **Services Council** shall be made up of its Director and the chairmen of each of the following committees: Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Education Committee, Editorial Committee, Ministry Committee, Spiritual Life Committee and Women's Ministries Committee. The purpose of the Council is to provide support services to those involved in local ministries throughout the Conference.

C. An **Annual Meeting Planning Committee** of ten shall be under the supervision of the Board of Directors. The Board shall appoint an Annual Meeting Coordinator for a three year term who shall serve as Chairman of the Committee. In addition the Board shall appoint three other members, one of whom shall serve as Local Arrangements Chairman, one as Registrar, and one as Local Arrangements Chairman for the following Annual Meeting. The Conference minister, the Treasurer, the Chairman of the Education Committee and the Chairman of the Women's Ministries Committee shall all be ex-officio members. The Committee shall also receive assistance from its two auxiliary committees whose chairmen shall be members of the Planning Committee.

- 1) A **Children's Committee** of three shall be appointed by the Board for each Annual Meeting. This Committee shall be responsible to provide meaningful activities and nursery care for children twelve and under during the Annual Meeting sessions. The chairman of the Committee shall be a member of the Program Committee.
 - 2) A **Youth Committee** of three shall be appointed by the Board for each Annual Meeting. This Committee shall plan for annual youth sessions concurrent to the Annual Meeting and for such other Conference-wide youth activities that may be feasible. The chairman of the Committee shall be a member of the Program Committee.
- D. An **Education Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall make available a continuing education program for member ministers serving our churches who are in need of additional training. It shall encourage the mentoring of less experienced ministers by those who are more experienced and mature. The Committee shall seek to promote a better understanding of Congregationalism in general within the Conference. This Committee shall administer the Conference Care program, including the scholarship fund. The Committee shall, upon request, make recommendations as to theological schools, Bible colleges or other accredited institutions and render such other counsel and assistance as is necessary. The Board shall appoint an Historian for a three-year term to be an ex-officio member of this Committee. The Historian shall assure that the Conference office is a repository for materials of historical interest, maintain an historical account of the Conference from its inception, and promote an interest in the churches in the details of their own histories and anniversaries. The Chairman of the Education Committee shall be an ex-officio member of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee.
- E. An **Editorial Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall publish a Conference Yearbook annually, a Conference Periodical, informational brochures and other necessary and desired literature. The Board shall appoint both an Editor and a Media Manager, each for a three-year term, to be ex-officio members of this Committee.
- F. A **Lay Ministry Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall have the goal of encouraging, equipping, and enhancing lay ministry in our Conference and its churches. This goal will be pursued by developing and distributing lay ministry resource material, by providing consultation services to local churches interested in or engaged in lay ministry and by keeping the important role of lay ministry in our churches, both small and large, before the Conference.
- G. A **Ministry Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall be concerned with the general well being of our member ministers, encouraging their participation in such things as opportunities for personal growth and spiritual nurture, mentoring and continuing education, and sound health terms.
- H. A **Church Redevelopment Committee** of five, three to be elected by the Conference and two to be appointed by the Board of directors, shall serve on a rotating basis for three-year terms. The Committee shall promote Church Redevelopment in the Conference and work with the Director of Church Redevelopment to oversee the revitalization of member churches. The Committee shall administer the Church Redevelopment Fund.
- I. A **Spiritual Life Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall promote the spiritual life of the Conference by encouraging the practice of spiritual disciplines that contribute to dynamic Christian living. The Committee shall publish the Conference Prayer Calendar and other items they deem appropriate.
- J. A **Women's Ministries Committee** of a minimum of three and maximum of six shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall seek to promote the growth and spiritual welfare of the women of the Conference through the planning of the Annual Meeting Ladies' Luncheon and special sessions, through enlisting the assistance of regional resource people, and through a yearly outreach project. The Committee will seek to provide avenues for publications, correspondence, information for ideas and programs, and adequate funding for its own separate budget through contributions from women's groups and individuals. The purpose of this Committee shall be to unify in Christ, encourage, strengthen, network, and minister to the needs of the women in member and other churches. The Chairman of the Women's Ministries Committee shall be an ex-officio member of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee.
4. The **Conference Outreach** ministry focuses on Conference growth, fraternal relations and missions.
 - A. The **Conference Outreach Director** shall be appointed by the Conference Minister and shall serve for a one year term. He shall chair the Outreach Council and shall oversee and liaison with the chairman of the committees making up that Council.
 - B. The **Outreach Council** shall be made up of its Director and the chairmen of each of the following committees: Conference Growth Committee, Church Multiplication Committee, Fraternal Relations Committee, Micronesia Ministries Committee, and Missions Committee. The purpose of the Council is to encourage local Conference ministries to be involved in efforts that impact the world for Christ.
 - C. A **Conference Growth Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall encourage and stimulate the growth of the Conference as a whole by providing the Conference constituency with information concerning needy churches to whom assistance and counsel would

be helpful. The Committee shall seek to interest non-affiliated congregationally governed churches in Conference membership and shall also administer the Conference Relief Fund and the Cornerstone Corps.

D. A **Church Multiplication Committee** of five, three to be elected by the Conference and two to be appointed by the Board of Directors, shall serve on a rotating basis for three year terms. The Committee shall promote church multiplication in the Conference and oversee the establishment of new churches. The Committee shall administer the Church Multiplication Fund.

E. A **Fraternal Relations Committee** of three shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three year terms. This Committee shall carry on discussions and relations with other like-minded bodies in this country and throughout the world.

F. A **Micronesia Ministries Committee** of a minimum of three and a maximum of six shall be appointed by the Board of Directors on a rotating basis for three year terms. This Committee shall have the responsibility for the planning and promoting of the Brother to Brother ministry in cooperation with the Congregational Churches of Micronesia.

G. A **Missions Committee** of a minimum of three and a maximum of six shall be elected by the Conference on a rotating basis for three-year terms. This Committee shall encourage and stimulate missionary interests in the local churches by assisting in the development of local missionary programs as requested, by suggesting special missionary projects to the Conference such as a united offering for world relief, and by encouraging the prayer and financial support of our member missionaries.

5. The **Conference Regional Activities** ministry focuses on communication and pastoral support throughout the Conference.

A. The **Conference Regional Activities Director** shall be appointed by the Conference Minister and shall serve for a one year term. He shall chair the Regional Activities Council and shall oversee and liaison with the Regional Ministers, the Area Representatives and all the Regional Fellowships.

B. The **Regional Activities Council** shall be made up of its Director and the Regional Ministers, the Chairman of the Area Representatives, and the Moderators of all the Regional Fellowships. The purpose of the Council is to provide a consistent line of communication and support between the national office and the local churches.

C. **Regional Ministers** may be hired or appointed by the Board of Directors for three year terms to serve within specific geographic areas and to work with the Area Representatives in those areas. The Regional Minister shall serve under the direction of the Conference Minister and in consultation with the Regional Activities Director. They shall be considered members of the Conference staff as regional assistants to the Conference Minister.

D. A **Committee of Area Representatives**, the number to be determined by the Board, shall be appointed by the Conference Minister for one year terms. The duties of the Committee shall consist of acting in the capacity of regional assistants to the Conference Minister. Each member shall be assigned a specific area of the country and be responsible for promoting, encouraging, and overseeing the work of the Conference in that area. The Committee shall serve under the direction of the Conference Minister.

E. **Regional Fellowships**, which shall be self-governing, whether state or area, are encouraged by the Conference. Those that have been recognized and approved by the Credentials Committee shall be represented in Conference business meetings by the delegates of their member churches that are also members of the Conference. They shall also be represented on the Regional Activities Council by their respective Moderators.

IV - Standards and Membership for Ministry

1. General Membership Information

A. A person who applies to this Conference as an Ordained Minister, Licensed Minister, Commissioned Christian Worker, student under Conference Care or Lay Preacher shall be required to provide a one-time application fee of an amount determined by the Board of Directors.

B. Full standing for Ministers and Commissioned Christian Workers shall require their attendance at an Annual Meeting.

C. For applicants seeking Ordained Ministerial standing and having no previous relationship with this Conference, a one-year waiting period shall be required. The Credentials Committee may grant a ministerial license in the meantime.

D. Prospective candidates for the ministry, the mission field, and other areas of service are encouraged to apply for Conference Care Membership.

E. Full standing for Ordained Ministers, Licensed Ministers, Commissioned Christian Workers, and students under Conference Care requires that they be a person of Christian character and conduct, evidencing a consistent personal testimony of Christian experience, expressing a godly motivation for seeking this standing, demonstrating knowledge of the Bible and Christian theology and have membership in a congregationally governed church.

F. Only an Associate Membership may be granted to those having their credentials and/or other membership in a non-congregationally governed body. This Associate Membership will carry with it all the privileges of the

Conference with the exception of holding office, serving on the Board of Directors or Credentials Committee, a committee chairmanship, and voting.

G. Membership cards for Ordained Ministers, Licensed Ministers, Commissioned Christian Workers and Lay Preachers shall be issued annually on a calendar year basis following the return of the annual questionnaire and a gift of any amount to the financial support of the Conference. Refusal to contribute in this way to the financial support of the Conference for a period of two consecutive years will result in a review by the Credentials Committee and in dismissal should it be shown to be warranted.

Ordained Ministers, Licensed Ministers, Commissioned Christian Workers and Lay Preachers who are inactive in the Conference for a period of two years, during which time they do not answer Conference or regional correspondence or questionnaires; do not attend any Conference or regional meetings; and do not make any contact whatever with this Conference, shall be contacted if at all possible by the Credentials Committee to ascertain their interest in the Conference. If there is no response or no interest indicated, the names of such members may be recommended for removal from Conference membership by the Credentials Committee at the Annual Meeting.

H. Ordained Ministers, Licensed Ministers, and Commissioned Christian Workers who for a period of two or more years (during one year for Licensed Ministers) fail to exercise the functions of the ministry for reasons other than disability or retirement and who pursue secular employment with no apparent effort to serve as a pastor or in some capacity as a minister (i.e. beyond those activities ordinarily done by laymen) shall be questioned by the Credentials Committee as to the propriety of their continued standing as a minister or a Commissioned Christian Worker. If such persons persist in the neglect of their ministry and refuse to resign from Conference standing unless there are extenuating circumstances, the Credentials Committee may recommend, to any Annual Meeting of the Conference, removal of their membership status or transferal to Individual Lay Membership within the Conference. The right to request reinstatement upon a return to proper ministry is presumed.

2. Ordained Ministerial Membership

A. A Ministerial standing in this Conference shall require:

- (1) A minimum academic attainment of a diploma from an accredited Bible institute or the equivalent in formal education or Christian service. However, this Conference considers seminary training to be desirable.
- (2) A vocational call to a specific place of service that involves the ministry of the Word.
- (3) Acceptable ordination to the Christian ministry, as determined by the Credentials Committee.
- (4) Reception into membership in the Conference in the manner provided by the Constitution (Article V).

B. Good and regular standing of ministers shall indicate that they do hold Conference membership and are not under disciplinary penalty as a result of charges against them.

3. Licensed Ministerial Membership

A. Ministerial license to preach conferring authority to perform the regular functions of parish ministry, including the solemnization of marriages where legally permissible, shall be granted by the Conference upon recommendation by the Credentials Committee and shall expire with the closing date of the ensuing Annual Meeting of the Conference. Such license is renewable at the discretion of the Credentials Committee upon application to its chairman at least thirty days before expiration of the license.

B. A Licensed Ministerial standing in this Conference shall require:

- (1) A minimum academic attainment of a diploma from an accredited Bible institute or the equivalent education or Christian service. However, this Conference considers seminary training to be desirable.
- (2) A call to a particular place of service that involves the ministry of the Word.
- (3) Reception into membership in the Conference in the manner provided by the Constitution (Article V).

C. Licensed Ministerial standing shall be recognized as valid as long as the licensee is actively engaged in an appropriate form of ministry.

D. Under special circumstances, a student in seminary may be granted Licensed Ministerial standing while performing the functions of a parish ministry.

E. Licensed Ministerial standing is normally the first step to ordination and Ordained Ministerial standing. A license should be held for one year before seeking ordination.

4. Commissioned Christian Worker Membership

A. Persons who have been commissioned into a Christian vocation such as a missionary, tent making worker, mission executive or support worker, an editor of a Christian periodical, a director of Christian education, a director of evangelism, a minister of music, or those who give service within Christian non-profit agencies as a teacher, doctor, nurse, or social worker may be received into Conference membership as a Commissioned Christian Worker.

B. Commissioned Christian Worker standing in the Conference shall require:

- (1) A competency in the chosen professional field, on-the-job experience may be considered as equivalency for formal training in certain cases.

(2) Acceptable commissioning by a local church into a particular Christian vocation, as determined by the Credentials Committee.

(3) An engagement or formal invitation to a particular position.

(4) Reception into membership in the Conference in the manner provided by the Constitution (Article V).

(5) Since commissioning is to a particular vocation, if there is a change in vocation, there must be a recommissioning. If there is a change in church membership, then the new church must endorse the commissioning.

C. Persons called to such Christian vocation other than the ordained ministry and who are received into the Conference as Commissioned Christian Workers are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Conference. This status does not grant authority to perform the regular functions of parish ministry, including the solemnization of marriages.

D. The Commission shall be recognized as valid as long as the Commissioned Christian Worker is actively engaged in the form of specific service to which he was commissioned.

5. Conference Care Membership

A. Prospective candidates for the ministry, the mission field, and other areas of service such as Christian education, church administration, ministry of music and similar areas, may be received under Conference Care for guidance in preparation. Under such care the enrollee will study the Conference Study Course. The enrollee shall have an annual personal conference with a member of the Credentials Committee or with some Conference representative appointed by them. A person who has been received under Conference Care is considered a member of the Conference under Conference Care and is entitled to vote at all Annual Meetings and special meetings of the Conference. His vote does not necessarily have to be included in the delegation from his home church, if that church is a member of the Conference.

B. Conference Care standing may be granted to candidates from foreign countries who are resident, and only for so long as they are resident, for study in the United States of America.

6. Lay Preacher Membership

A. The Conference shall provide for the status of Lay Preacher upon the application of an individual to the Credentials Committee and shall be available only to lay members of the Conference. Such status shall be granted for the purpose of recognizing an active lay witness of an individual, but it shall not include the privileges of Licensed Ministerial standing such as authority granted by the Conference to perform the regular functions of a pastorate including the solemnization of marriages, and officiating at funerals, baptisms/dedications, and the Lord's Supper.

B. The status of Lay Preacher for the individual shall expire with the closing date of the ensuing Annual Meeting of the Conference and be renewable at the discretion of the Credentials Committee upon application at least thirty days before the expiration of such status.

7. Individual Lay Membership

A. This membership shall be granted to members of congregationally governed churches which are not members of this Conference. Such Individual Lay Members shall be granted the full privilege of Conference membership in accord with the Constitution (Article V, Sections 1-4 and Article VII, Section 3).

B. An Associate Lay Membership may be granted to individuals who are members of non-congregationally governed churches which will carry with it all the privileges of Associate status (By-law VII, Section 1.f.).

8. Unprocessed Applications

Churches, ministers, or individual lay members from non-member churches, whose applications for membership have been processed too late to be circulated to the entire Conference membership before the Annual Meeting, or whose applications are still in process, may be given the right to speak from the floor and/or the right to vote at the said Annual Meeting, by a majority vote of the assembled delegates.

V. Standards and Membership for Churches

1. Churches

A. Churches applying for membership to this Conference shall make application to the Credentials Committee, and be considered under guidelines approved by the Board of Directors.

B. Leadership representatives of the applicant church shall have attended at least one Annual Meeting.

C. Churches shall honor their witness to Christ, to one another, and to the Conference in both Doctrine and Demeanor, the Statement of Faith and Code of Ethics for Churches serving as an initial guide.

D. Membership shall be for as long as the Church continues its ministry. Churches who are inactive in the Conference for a period of two years, during which time they do not participate in the financial support of the Conference; answer Conference or regional correspondence or questionnaires; do not participate in Conference or regional meetings, or do not make any contact whatever with this Conference, shall be contacted if at all possible by the Credentials Committee to ascertain their interest in the Conference. If there is no response or interest

indicated, the names of such member churches may be recommended for removal from Conference membership by the Credentials Committee at the Annual Meeting.

VI. Ordination to the Christian Ministry

1. Ordination to the ministry shall be by a local church, after examination by a council called by said church.
2. A candidate for ordination to the Christian ministry and subsequent ministerial membership in this Conference will be expected to have a life which is bearing the fruit of the Spirit, and which is marked by deep spirituality and the best of ethical practices. The candidate may be disqualified by any habits or practices in his life which do not glorify God in his body which belongs to God, or which might cause any brother in Christ to stumble.
3. Every candidate for ordination is encouraged to first apply for Ministerial License.
4. This Conference recommends that any local church which calls an unordained person to its pastorate who does not hold a Ministerial License from this Conference allow a trial period of one year before proceeding with his ordination.

VII. Finance

There is to be no per-capita assessment or apportionment levied by this Conference upon the member churches or ministers. The churches and ministers are expected to assume voluntarily a share in the financial responsibility of the Conference. This does not preclude fees for services such as an application fee.

VIII. Conference Records

All records of Conference business in the hands of Conference officials are the property of the Conference, contents of which must be made available to authorized Conference officials upon request, and which must be delivered to the Conference upon termination of the service of officials.

IX. Seal

The seal of the Conference in use at the time of this Constitutional revision shall continue as the official seal of the Conference, and shall be used by having the same, or a facsimile thereof, impressed or affixed, or reproduced otherwise.

X. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Conference shall be from January 1 to December 31.

XI. Amendments

These By-laws may be amended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Conference members present and voting at an Annual Meeting or special meeting of the Conference, provided that in writing thirty days notice of the substance of proposed amendments to the By-laws be given to all members of the Conference. Upon adoption of amendments, the orderly numbering, lettering, capitalization and spelling of the By-laws shall be cared for by the Constitution Study Committee.