

# BYLAWS

(53rd A., 1970, p. 27, 28; 67th A., 1998, p. 54; 68th A., 2000, pp. 83-86)

## ARTICLE I

### **Name**

The official name shall be Church of God (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1: 1).

## ARTICLE II

### **Temporal Nature**

The Church of God is incorporated in the state of Tennessee (U.S.A.) as a not-for-profit organization and is recognized as a 501 (c) (3) corporation under the Internal Revenue Code (U.S.A.) or the corresponding sections of any prior or future Internal Revenue Code (U.S.A.).

## ARTICLE III

### **Governance**

The current edition of the *Minutes of the Church of God General Assembly* contains a **Journal** of the most recent meeting of the International General Assembly and a **Supplement** that includes updated church polity statements, rules of church order and discipline, and these bylaws.

## ARTICLE IV

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Church of God is to communicate the full gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19, 20) in the Spirit and power of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 6, 13-18)(71st A., 2006, p. 44).

## ARTICLE V

### **Members**

The membership of the Church of God shall be composed of Christians who have accepted the teachings, doctrines, and government of the Church of God, and who have been formally received into its fellowship pursuant to the guidelines established by the International General Assembly. Procedures for excluding members shall be set by the International General Assembly upon recommendation of the International General Council.

## ARTICLE VI

### **Governing Bodies**

#### **1. International General Assembly**

##### **Members**

The International General Assembly is composed of all members and ministers of the Church of God 16 years of age and above. Members and ministers of the Church of God present and registered at the International General Assembly shall comprise its voting constituency (64th A., 1992, p. 73; 65th A., 1994, Item 1, p. 78).

##### **Meeting**

The International General Assembly shall meet biennially to consider all recommendations from the International General Council.

##### **Parliamentary Authority**

*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the official guide for the business of the International General Assembly in all matters to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the International General Assembly.

## **Elections**

The International General Assembly shall elect the general overseer, the assistant general overseers, the secretary general, the general Youth and Christian Education director, the assistant general Youth and Christian Education director, the Evangelism and Home Missions director, the assistant Evangelism and Home Missions director, the director of World Missions, and the assistant director of World Missions (58th A., 1980, pp. 29-32, (1-4).

## **Officers, Committees**

The officers of the International General Assembly shall consist of the moderator and a secretary. The general overseer shall preside as moderator. He shall also appoint parliamentarians to serve during the International General Assembly meetings. He shall also appoint members of committees called for by the International General Assembly.

The secretary general shall serve the Assembly as secretary. He shall be responsible for recording actions by the Assembly and shall be the custodian of the records of the Assembly.

## **Parliamentary Procedure**

Debate on all motions shall be governed by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Each member has the right to speak on every question. However, he cannot make a second speech on the same question as long as any member who has not spoken on the question desires the floor (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*). It is the prerogative of the moderator to recognize each speaker and to determine a balance of negative and affirmative speeches.

Debate may be limited by a proper motion (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*).

## **2. International General Council**

### **Members**

The International General Council is composed of all ordained bishops of the Church of God, who shall comprise its voting constituency.

### **Agenda**

1. The International General Council shall meet biennially to consider all recommendations from the International Executive Council. The International General Council agenda shall be mailed to the ordained bishops at least thirty (30) days prior to the International General Council. (Minutes of the July 1966, International Executive Council, page 93)
2. The International General Council shall consider and prepare such recommendations as are Scriptural and proper in matters pertaining to the welfare of the church. Such recommendations are to be presented to the International General Assembly for final disposition.
3. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall serve as the official guide for the business of the International General Council in all matters to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the International General Council. As a guide for the order of business, the agenda presented by the International Executive Council shall claim the attention of the Council first.
4. Any new business shall be presented to the chairman of the motions committee, which committee shall receive, classify, clarify, eliminate duplication, and dispatch for placement on the agenda following the completion of the printed agenda. Any new business presented to the motions committee shall be presented in typewritten form not later than 2 p.m. of the third day of the International General Council.
5. The International General Council shall nominate to the International General Assembly the general overseer, the assistant general overseers, the secretary general, the general Youth and Christian Education director, the assistant general Youth and Christian Education director, the Evangelism and Home Missions director, the assistant Evangelism and Home Missions director, the director of World Missions, and the assistant director of World Missions.
6. The International General Council shall elect the Council of Eighteen ([1972]; 58th A., 1980, pp. 29-32 (1-4).

### **Officers and Committees**

1. The officers of the International General Council shall consist of the moderator and a secretary. The general overseer shall preside as moderator. He shall also appoint parliamentarians to serve during the International General Council meetings. He shall also appoint members of committees called for by the International General Council.
2. The secretary general shall serve the Council as secretary. He shall be responsible for recording actions by the Council and shall be the custodian of the records of the Council.

### **Parliamentary Procedure and Authority**

1. The names of all persons on the nomination ballots receiving twenty-five (25) or less votes for an elected office shall be posted in an appropriate designated place in lieu of reading those names to the International General Council.
2. Debate on all motions shall be governed by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Each member has the right to speak on every question. However, he cannot make a second speech on the same question as long as any member who has not spoken on the question desires the floor (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*). It is the prerogative of the moderator to recognize each speaker and to determine a balance of negative and affirmative speeches.
3. Debate may be limited by a proper motion (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*).

### **3. International Executive Council**

#### **Authority**

This council shall consider and act upon any and all matters pertaining to the general interest and welfare of the Church of God.

#### **Members**

The general overseer, his assistants, the secretary general, and eighteen councilors [the Council of Eighteen] elected by the International General Council shall constitute the International Executive Council of the church.

#### **Meeting**

At a time set by the general overseer, the International Executive Council shall meet and adopt recommendations to be brought before the International General Council.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

The duties and responsibilities of the International Executive Council shall be set by the International General Assembly upon recommendation by the International General Council.

## ARTICLE VII

### **Executive Board**

International Executive Committee—The executive officers of the Church of God shall be the general overseer, three assistant general overseers, and the secretary general. These shall constitute the International Executive Committee. Their tenure in office, manner of selection, duties and authorities, and procedure for filling vacancies shall be decided by the International General Assembly upon recommendation from the International General Council

## ARTICLE VIII

### **Committees**

Standing Boards and Committees—Standing boards and committees as called for by the International General Assembly or International General Council shall be appointed by the International Executive Committee. The general overseer shall be an *ex officio* member of all standing boards and committees.

## ARTICLE IX

### **Parliamentary Authority**

The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the official parliamentary guide for conducting the business of the church.

## ARTICLE X

### **Amendment of Bylaws**

#### **Amendment**

The power to alter, amend, or repeal these bylaws shall be vested in the International General Assembly and exercised only by a two-thirds vote of the International General Assembly upon recommendation of a two-thirds vote of the International General Council.

#### **Previous Notice**

In order to amend, alter or repeal these bylaws, previous notice will be considered fulfilled if the following guidelines to notify the constituency are observed:

(1) Mail to ministers whose addresses are on record at the Church of God International Offices in Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., including national and territorial leaders, the notice and copies of the proposed change(s) to the Bylaws of the Church of God to be considered by the International General Council not later than 90 days prior to the opening of the International General Council. Pastors should make this notice available by public announcement and/or posting to their congregations.

(2) Include the notice and a copy of the proposed change(s) to the Bylaws of the Church of God to be considered by the International General Council in at least two issues of the *Church of God Evangel* preceding the opening of the International General Council.

(3) Post the notice and a copy of the proposed change(s) on the church's Internet web site.

(4) The proposed change(s) may be amended, but cannot be amended beyond the scope of the notice. Any change of the bylaws approved by the International General Assembly will go into effect immediately upon its adoption, unless the motion to adopt specifies another time for its becoming effective.