

CHURCH OF THE UNITED
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

DISCIPLINE

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**United
Brethren**
ALL FOR CHRIST

BASIC DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER I

Origin and History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ

The Church of the United Brethren in Christ was the first denomination in America that was not transplanted from Europe. While there were European antecedents, the church originated in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia under the earnest evangelistic preaching of two men.

One of these leaders was Philip William Otterbein, who was born in Dillenberg, Germany, and was originally a minister of the German Reformed Church. When he came to America in 1752, he found formal religious practices the common standard among church people. His training and subsequent heart change prompted him to present a dynamic spiritual experience based on a faith relationships which permitted God to release His power through the indwelling Holy Spirit to a continuing transformation of the believer's life.

Martin Boehm was the other associate. He came from the Mennonite faith, and had been selected by lot to be a preacher among his people. He felt that he had no message to present until he had a personal experience of God's saving grace through faith. Then he was anxious to present the good news and became a flaming evangelist, proclaiming the salvation experience wherever he had the opportunity.

These two men who had done extensive evangelistic preaching in interdenominational gatherings met for the first time on Pentecost Sunday, 1767. A "great meeting" was held in the barn of Isaac Long near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. These great meetings were usually held over weekends in groves, barns, or wherever a large congregation could assemble. The congregation included preachers and laymen from various denominations, including the German Reformed, Lutheran, Moravian, Mennonite, Amish, and Dunker groups. The preacher for the afternoon service was Martin Boehm. On a high tide of spiritual peace and power at the close of the sermon, Otterbein, who was of greater stature than Boehm, threw his arms around the small man and exclaimed, "We are brethren," using the German language. From that greeting came the corporate name of the church "United Brethren," to which was added "in Christ" at a later date.

These two leaders were joined by George A. Geeting from Maryland and other God-called leaders in attempting to evangelize the German-speaking churches located in the Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland colonies. There was no thought of organizing a separate fellowship, and no effort was made to do so until they were forced to it by circumstances. They cooperated in the appointment of great meetings where one or more of them would preach. Counseling and guidance were given to other preachers and laymen who joined the interdenominational venture. Itinerant preachers were selected to conduct services where possible.

There are records of organized small group meetings dating from 1774. Otterbein and other Reformed pastors were involved in class meetings that sought to awaken the Reformed churches spiritually. Opposition forced Otterbein to proceed along other lines. The church at Baltimore, Maryland, of which Otterbein

was the pastor, became interested in an outreach and became the mother church for a number of societies. Articles for the operation of the Baltimore church program, adopted in 1785, made reference to societies under the superintendence of Rev. Otterbein. Preachers and exhorters were already in the field and looked to Otterbein for direction.

A formal conference was held in Baltimore in 1789 to gain a fuller knowledge of the field, to unify the work being done, and to plan for larger and more permanent results. Another conference was held in 1791 to advance the work started two years before. There are no records of additional conferences until 1800. From that point, sessions were held annually until 1815, when a General Conference was held. Since 1821, the general conferences have been held every four years.

The conference of 1800 adopted the name "Church of the United Brethren in Christ," and elected Otterbein and Boehm as bishops. They served in this capacity until their death. Christian Newcomer was elected bishop for one year in 1813, and according to the church rules of 1814, he was again elected this time for a three-year period. The Discipline was formally accepted by the first General Conference in 1815, which provided for quadrennial sessions and the election of bishops. Since Newcomer had been elected in 1814 for three years, it was decided to hold the next conference in 1817. It was Newcomer who bridged the gap, from the loose evangelistic fellowship to a more organized movement. He was also the connecting link between the early leaders and the later itinerants.

People who had been associated with United Brethren in the east migrated west and settled in Ohio and Indiana. Societies were organized and services conducted by itinerant preachers. Christian Newcomer visited an area in Ohio in 1810 and held a meeting which was of the nature of an annual conference. Because of distance, the brethren in the west felt that annual meetings for all ministers were impossible; so the plan for a General Conference was adopted as reported above. The first known Sunday school to be organized was near Corydon, Indiana, by Rev John George Pfrimmer in 1820.

Services were conducted almost exclusively in the German language. The group inherited from the German culture the standard of opposition to secret societies. It was not until English-speaking people associated with the revival movement in Ohio that a pronouncement was necessary by the Miami Annual Conference of 1826. This moral reform standard became a part of the Constitution of 1841. The Discipline of the church in 1821 took a historic stand against slavery, which hindered the growth of the church in the South. This stand was also included in the Constitution of 1841.

A tentative constitution for the church was adopted by the General Conference of 1837, followed by a formal adoption of a constitution in 1841. General departments for the church were organized as needs arose. The work of publishing a church paper gave birth to the United Brethren Publishing House, established at Circleville, Ohio, in 1834. It was moved to Dayton, Ohio, in 1853. The first missionary activity was to send a caravan under the leadership of Rev. T.J. Conner and Dr. Jeremiah Kenoyer to the far west where they settled in Oregon. In 1853, the mission board was reorganized under the name of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society. A mission in Africa was established in 1855.

The first educational institution was Otterbein University at

Westerville, Ohio, in 1847. The Union Biblical Seminary was founded in 1871. In 1865, the Sunday School Association was organized, and the Church Election Society was constituted in 1869. The Women's Missionary Association was organized in 1875.

After discussion for a number of general conferences over three problems—pro-rata representation, lay delegation in the General Conference and membership in secret societies—a division in the denomination occurred in the General Conference of 1889 which brought into existence two United Brethren fellowships. A new constitution and confession of faith accepting the above principles was adopted by the majority group and became known as the United Brethren in Christ, New Constitution, with headquarters in Dayton, Ohio. This group united with the Evangelical Association in 1946 to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church merged in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church.

The group that adhered to the Confession of Faith of 1815 and the Constitution of 1841 under the leadership of Bishop Milton Wright adopted the name "Church of the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution)." Church headquarters were moved from Dayton, Ohio, to Huntington, Indiana, in 1897. The local churches in Michigan and Oregon were awarded to the Old Constitution group, but churches in other states and all departments had to be reestablished. Educational activities centered in Hartsville College at Hartsville, Indiana, which was in sympathy with the Old Constitution fellowship.

The twentieth General Conference of 1889 reorganized the general departments—board of education, trustees for the United Brethren Publishing Establishment, and a board and secretary for the Domestic, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society. The Women's Missionary Association was reorganized during the quadrennium.

Huntington (then Central) College was chartered in 1897 and has operated at Huntington, Indiana, since that time. Other educational institutions which functioned for a period of time were the College of Philomath at Philomath, Oregon, formerly Sublimity College; and Edwards College at Albion, Washington, formerly Washington Seminary.

Work for the youth of the church was started by the General Conference of 1897, known as the Young People's Christian Association. The name was changed to United Brethren Christian Endeavor in 1901. Sunday school work was a part of the educational program of the local church and was promoted by a general secretary. Unification of the Sunday school and Christian Endeavor was accomplished in 1921 by the General Conference when the Department of Religious Education was organized. The name was changed to Christian Education in 1937. In the 1977 General Conference, the Department of Christian Education was merged with the Department of Publication to form the Department of Church Ministries. The Department of Ministerial Aid was chartered by the 1913 General Conference. A pension plan was established in 1966.

The Christian Conservator, which had been published for a quadrennium, became the official publication of the United Brethren Publishing Establishment in 1889. The name was changed to The United Brethren in 1954. A building was purchased in Huntington when the headquarters was relocated in 1897. A new building was dedicated in 1917 and was enlarged by the purchase of adjacent structures in 1957. All these holdings were disposed of in 1973. A new denominational headquarters building was completed in Huntington, Indiana, in May of 1976.

Sunday school literature was published by the denomination until 1982. For many years, this included literature for children through adults. However, the development of the many supplementary helps for teaching children by interdenominational publishers made it economically impossible to produce this quality of literature with the needed helps on the limited basis of our denominational needs.

A number of changes occurred in these publications before being discontinued. In 1971, the denomination entered into a joint publishing venture with the Evangelical Congregational Church. The two groups cooperated in the publication of an adult teacher's quarterly, an adult students' quarterly, Lesson Leaflets, and the Sunday school paper Contact. These publications were known as "The Venture Series."

In 1981, the General Conference voted to discontinue these publications and close the printshop. The "Venture Series" ceased with the publication of the March-May 1982 quarter's materials.

The reorganization plan adopted by the 1981 General Conference resulted in the consolidation of some general departments. The departments of Church Ministries and Stewardship ceased to exist, and these responsibilities, along with the denominational Archives, were placed under the newly-created Department of Church Services. With the relocation of the Archives at Huntington College in 1988, oversight of the Archives was transferred to the Board of Education.

Over the years, the Parent Board of Missions (Domestic, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society until 1957) and the Women's Missionary Association have had oversight of the mission fields. Until 1961, these boards worked separately, but in that year the first step was taken to begin working more closely together—a Joint Board of Missions account was established. Action was taken at the 1965 General Conference to merge the two mission groups into one department to be known as the Department of Missions.

Mission fields served at that time included: Sierra Leone, West Africa; Hong Kong; Jamaica; and Honduras. Laurel Mission in Kentucky was a home mission station until 1973, when administration was transferred to Central Conference. A new field was established in Nicaragua in 1969, and the department became involved in medical work in India in 1974. In 1986, the board began overseeing several congregations in Mexico which affiliated with the United Brethren church. The board also opened a new work in Macau in 1987. The 1989 General Conference added the Mexico Mission District and the Macau Mission District to the Overseas District.

A number of missionaries working with parachurch groups now receive support from the church. The board also cooperates with the Evangelical Congregational and Primitive Methodist denominations in jointly supporting several missionaries.

In 1889, the majority of the churches organized were rural. Through a program of church extension, the annual conferences have established churches in industrial and metropolitan areas. Consolidation of some of the smaller churches in relocated areas has proved advantageous.

Through referendums, the church constitution was amended in 1957 and 1961, resulting in lay representation in the General Conference; in 1973, resulting in a provision for local churches to hold title to their own property and for the use of a nomination slate in electing elders to the General Conference; and in 1977, changing the eligibility for election to General Conference from three years in the conference district to three years' standing as an elder and substituting the term "ministers" for "preachers."

Certainly we must concur with the Prophet Samuel, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us..." (1 Samuel 7:12) and with Paul when he said, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13,14).

CHAPTER 2 CONFESSION OF FAITH

1. The Triune God

In the name of God, we declare and confess before men that we believe in the only true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that these three are one—the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence or being with both; that this triune God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, and furthermore sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

2. Jesus Christ, the Son

We believe in Jesus Christ; that He is very God and man; that He became incarnate by the power of the Holy Ghost in the Virgin Mary and was born of her; that He is the Savior and Mediator of the whole human race, if they with full faith in Him accept the grace proffered in Jesus; that this Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us, was buried, arose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God to intercede for us; and that He shall come again at the last day to judge the quick and the dead.

3. The Holy Spirit, Comforter and Guide

We believe in the Holy Ghost; that He is equal in being with the Father and the Son, and that He comforts the faithful, and guides them into all truth.

4. The Church

We believe in a holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

5. The Holy Bible and Salvation

We believe that the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God; that it contains the only true way of our salvation; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it with the influence of the Spirit of God as the only rule and guide; and that without faith in Jesus Christ, true repentance, forgiveness of sins, and following after Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

6. The Salvation Message

We also believe that what is contained in the Holy Scriptures, to wit: the fall in Adam and redemption through Jesus Christ, shall be preached throughout the world.

7. The Christian Ordinances

We believe that the ordinances, viz. baptism and the remembrance of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be in use and practiced by all Christian societies; and that it is incumbent on all the children of God particularly to prac-

tice them; but the manner in which ought always to be left to the judgment and understanding of every individual. Also, the example of washing feet is left to the judgment of every one to practice or not; but it is not becoming of any of our preachers or members to traduce any of their brethren whose judgment and understanding in these respects is different from their own, either in public or in private. Whosoever shall make himself guilty in this respect shall be considered a traducer of his brethren, and shall be answerable for the same.

CHAPTER III CONSTITUTION

We, the members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, in the name of God do, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, as well as to produce and secure a uniform mode of action in faith and practice, also to define the powers and the business of local, annual, and general conferences, as recognized by this church, ordain the following articles of Constitution:

11. Article I Personnel

.1 All ecclesiastical power herein granted to make or repeal any rule of discipline is vested in a general conference, which shall consist of elders and laymen, elected by the members in every conference district throughout the society. Such elders shall have stood in that capacity three years in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ; such laymen shall have been members of a local church within the conference district for six years and shall have served on the administrative board for five years.

.2 General conference is to be held every four years.

All officials elected by the general conference shall be members ex officio of the general conference, the bishops to be considered presiding officers.

.3 Each annual conference shall place before the society a list of nominees for election as delegates as provided in the Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

12. Article II Duties

.1 The general conference shall define the boundaries of the annual conferences.

.2 The general conference shall at every session elect one or more bishops from among the elders throughout the church, who have stood six years in that capacity.

.3 The business of each annual conference shall be done strictly according to discipline; and any conference acting contrary thereunto shall, by impeachment, be tried by the general conference.

.4 No rule or ordinance shall at any time be passed to change or do away with the Confession of Faith as it now stands, nor to destroy the itinerant plan.

.5 There shall no rule be adopted that will infringe upon the rights of any as it relates to the mode of baptism, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or the washing of feet.

.6 There shall no rule be made that will deprive local ministers of their votes in the annual conferences to which they severally belong.

.7 There shall be no connection with secret combinations, nor shall involuntary servitude be tolerated in any way.

.8 The right of appeal shall be inviolate.

13. Article III Property

The right, title, interest, and claim of all property, whether consisting in lots of ground, meeting houses, legacies, bequests, or donations of any kind, obtained by purchase or otherwise, by any person or persons, for the use, benefit, and behoof of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, is hereby fully recognized and held to be the property of the Church aforesaid; however, local churches may be granted title to their property as provided in the Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

14. Article IV Amendments

There shall be no alteration of the foregoing Constitution unless by two-thirds vote of the general conference, provided a request of such change has come from the majority of those who elected the general conference.

CHAPTER IV OFFICIAL DOCTRINAL POSITIONS

15. Depravity

All men are born, because of the fall of the race in Adam, with an inherent tendency toward evil. This depravity has negatively affected and is operative in every faculty of one's being. Each person, because of the inherited depravity, when confronted by the world, the flesh and the devil, will follow his sinful nature, deliberately choosing to ratify sin, and thus assumes the guilt and condemnation belonging to a sinner.

MEMBERSHIP, MINIS- TRY, GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER I MEMBERSHIP

I. Committee on Membership

101. Purpose

The committee on membership shall concern itself with all aspects of preparation for and maintaining membership in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

102. Personnel

The pastor, together with the lay leader, Sunday school superintendent or director of Christian education, and two persons elected by the local board of administration, chosen from its number annually at its first meeting, or the pastor, together with the board of deacons/deaconesses, shall constitute a church membership committee.

103. Duties

This committee shall seek out suitable persons for member-

ship in the church. Candidates for membership shall be referred to this committee for interview and recommendation to the local board of administration. It is recommended that this committee arrange for and conduct membership classes for the candidates for membership. Such classes may deal with history, beliefs, and administration of the church.

This committee shall give continual encouragement to all members of the church to participate actively in the total program of the church which will contribute to their spiritual welfare.

If any member becomes careless or indifferent in spiritual matters, this committee shall seek to restore such a member to active spiritual participation.

This committee shall report at least annually to the local board of administration.

II. Classes of Membership

104. Adult

Qualified persons fourteen (14) years of age and older may join as adult members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ with vote in all local elections, elections of delegates to the annual and General Conferences, and on referendum proposals.

105. Youth

Qualified persons aged nine (9) through thirteen (13) may join as youth members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ without vote.

106. Watchcare

Children under the age of nine (9) may be nurtured in the church in its watch-care membership upon the consent of their parents or guardians.

III. Admission to Membership

107. Reception of Adult Members

.1 Application

(When at any time members are to be received into our church membership, the minister shall, in the hearing of the congregation, read the following:)

As a church, we believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, the regeneration of the soul, a wholly surrendered and Spirit-filled life, and growth in grace and knowledge of the truth. We believe that there must be perseverance in Christian living and faithfulness in Christian witness to promote harmony in our relationship with the Savior.

Our beliefs are further indicated by the questions which follow:

(The minister shall then ask the prospective member the following questions:)

a. Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God and that therein only is revealed the knowledge of the way of salvation? If so, answer, "I do."

b. Have you experienced the forgiveness of your sins through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and have you peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? If so, answer, "I have."

c. Are you determined by the grace of God to follow Christ, renouncing the world and all ungodliness, seeking to live a life of holiness and devotion to God and His cause? If so, answer, "I am."

d. Are you willing to be governed by our church Discipline and to give of your time, talent and means to the support of the various interests of this church according to your ability?

If so, answer, "I am."

e. Have you received water baptism? If not, are you willing to be baptized at your earliest convenience?

.2 Applicants from Other Churches

Applicants by letter from other denominations shall in every case be asked all the questions.

.3 Reception

If the person answers the above questions in the affirmative, the pastor shall extend to such person the right hand of fellowship, receiving him as a member of our church, and record the name on the church record and the class book.

108. Reception of Youth Members

(All youth uniting with the church from the ages of nine to thirteen inclusive after coming before the membership committee for instruction shall be asked the following questions:)

.1 Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God and that therein only is revealed the knowledge of the way of salvation?

If so, answer, "I do."

.2 Have you asked God to forgive you your sins, and do you now believe that He accepts you as His child?

If so, answer, "I so believe."

.3 Do you promise to attend the services of the church and to read the Bible and pray, so that you may become more and more like Jesus?

If so, answer, "I promise."

.4 Have you received water baptism? If not, are you willing to be baptized?

(If these questions are answered in the affirmative and no objections are made, the pastor shall extend to such person the right hand of fellowship, and he or she shall have all rights and privileges of the church excepting voting powers.)

109. Reception of Watch-care Members

.1 All children under nine years of age desiring membership in our church shall be received under the watch-care of the church. In no case shall these children be admitted into the watch-care of the church until the consent of their parents or guardians has been received by the pastors.

(All children before being received under the watch-care of the church shall be asked the following questions by the pastor:)

a. Do you believe the Bible to be God's Book through which He speaks to us, and that in the Bible is shown the only way we can be saved from sin?

If so, answer, "I do."

b. Are you willing to be taught the Bible and what it means to be a Christian, and will you faithfully try to meet the requirements for membership in this church?

If so, answer, "I will."

.2 Not Reported as Members—Persons received under the watch-care of the church shall not be reported as members, nor shall they have a vote in the church, but they shall be reported as members in watch-care.

.3 Instruction in Christian Education—It shall be the duty of the pastor, or others under his supervision, to instruct them in Christian education and to seek to lead them to a definite decision for Christ, unless they are already conscious of such decision.

IV. Correction of the Membership Roll

110. Transfer of Members

When members desire a letter of transfer to another local church of the United Brethren in Christ, their request shall be placed before the membership committee. If approved, such a transfer shall be prepared and signed by the pastor and the recording secretary. After notification of their reception, the names of those so transferred shall be removed from the roll, proper notations recorded in the permanent record of membership and a report given to the local board of administration.

111. Withdrawal of Members

When members desire to withdraw from the church, they may be given a letter of withdrawal by a vote of the membership committee. Their pastor and the recording secretary shall sign such letter of withdrawal. It is understood that this letter of withdrawal may be accompanied, when appropriate, by a statement of recommendation and directed to some church, regardless of denomination.

112. Revision of the Roll

.1 Adults

Members whose whereabouts have not been known by the membership committee for three years, and whose names have been posted and announced in the church, shall be dropped from the roll. However, effort must be made to locate them by sending a registered or certified letter, with receipt requested, to the last known address. (See 113.)

.2 Youth

a. *Correction of the Roll*—The youth roll should be corrected each year at the time of the annual revision by the church membership committee, reported as youth members, and included in the total membership of the church.

b. *Admission into the Adult Membership*—After the fourteenth birthday, those on the youth roll who have applied themselves to study and prayer and given evidence of having been born again by genuine Christian experience and practice, may be received into adult membership by answering the questions. Youth shall not be permitted to remain on the youth membership roll after the fifteenth birthday.

.3 Watch-care

a. *Admission to Youth Membership*—After the age of nine, as these children shall give evidence that they have experienced the forgiveness of sins and manifest a continued interest in the church, they may become youth members by complying with the requirements for youth church membership. (See 108.)

b. *Dropping from the Roll*—If these children under the watch-care persistently refuse to seek Christ or to receive religious instruction, their names may be dropped from the roll by the church membership committee.

V. Duties of Members

113. The following duties of members and standards of conduct are drawn up for the better regulation of our church and we believe they are founded on the Word of God and incumbent on all who are members to observe, both ministers and laymen (Hebrews 13:7,17). Should anyone violate or habitually neglect these rules, he/she shall be referred to the membership commit-

tee for appropriate attempts to instruct, reconcile and reform. If all attempts for reformation fail, persons in violation of these duties and standards may be removed from the roll through the due process of notification and revision.

.1 Christian Disciplines

Every member shall attend to the ordinances of the church—namely, baptism (Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38) and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-28, 1 Corinthians 11:23-29); shall be diligent in prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and the study of God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15). Further, it is the responsibility of all members of the church to serve with time and talent, and to contribute to the financial interests of the church in proportion to their ability, as God has prospered them.

.2 Family Piety

Heads of families should observe daily family worship including grace at the table, Bible reading and prayers, and encourage other worship opportunities. They should set a good example in all Christian virtues.

.3 Love to Others

Everyone should walk as in the presence of God and accustom himself to a close communion with God in all his employments (Colossians 2:6; Psalm 1:1,2; Romans 8:1-6). He should never speak evil of his fellowbeings (Ephesians 4:25, 29, 31; Titus 3:2; James 3:5-10), but practice love toward others (Mark 12:31), rendering service to others (Luke 10:28-37), Galatians 5:13), and endeavoring to be a follower of Christ in deed (Colossians 3:17, 23), in order that a spirit of unity may exist (Ephesians 4:3).

.4 Lord's Day Observance

Following the example of the early disciples and New Testament church, everyone should make provision for exercises of devotion on Sunday, the Lord's Day, and inasmuch as possible shall attend all services for hearing read the Word of God, singing spiritual songs and hymns, Christian fellowship, and giving of tithes and offerings (John 20:19, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Hebrews 10:25). Members are admonished to neither buy nor sell needlessly on the Lord's Day.

.5 An Effective Witness

Since every Christian is called to be a witness to Christ (Acts 8:26-39) in the midst of ungodly people and circumstances (Acts 1:8) and since it is largely through the testimony of believers that others are brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, we urge every member of the church to take upon himself the obligation of seeking the lost and winning them to Christ.

In order that they may be prepared to witness for Christ by life as well as by word, we admonish our members of all ages to maintain a position of nonconformity to the world (Romans 12:2) and to lay aside the evil things of this life (James 1:21); and further, to guard carefully their Christian testimony (1) by engaging only in such business and social activity which is consistent with the Christian life (Colossians 3:17, 23); (2) by observing modesty in dress, in speech, and in all other personal conduct as becomes a child of God (1 John 2:15-17; 1 Peter 3:3, 4); and (3) by renouncing the world and all ungodliness seek to lead a life of holiness and devotion to God and His cause (2 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Timothy 2:19, 21).

.6 Necessity of Union

Let us be deeply sensible, from what we have known, of the evil of a division in principle, spirit or practice and of the dreadful consequences to ourselves and others. If we are united, what can stand before us? If we are divided, we shall injure ourselves, the work of God and the souls of our people. To secure a closer union among ourselves, let us:

- a. Be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of union (Ephesians 4:3).
- b. Pray earnestly for and speak truly and freely to each other (James 5:16).
- c. When we meet never part without prayer, if prayer is at all practicable .
- d. Take care not to despise each other's gifts (Romans 12:3- 8).
- e. Never speak lightly of each other (James 4:11).
- f. Defend each other's character in everything, so far as is consistent with truth (Ephesians 4:31).
- g. Labor in honor, each preferring another before himself (Philippians 2:3).
- h. Seriously examine the cause, evils, and cures of heart and church divisions (Galatians 5:26).
- i. Observe and follow the principles for reconciliation or excommunication laid down by Jesus in Matthew 5:21-26 and 18:15- 17 whenever an offense exists between members of the congregation.

.7 Receiving the Pastor

All local churches and affiliate local churches shall receive the pastor appointed by the stationing committee of their respective annual conferences (Colossians 4:10; Philippians 2:29; Hebrews 13:7, 17). (See 206.4c.)

.8 Obedience to Government

It is the duty of every member to lead a quiet, peaceable and godly life among men, as it becomes a Christian to live in peace and to be subject to the higher or ruling powers, as the Word of God requires (Romans 13:107; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

.9 Legal Testimony

We believe that the mode of testifying to the truth, when required to do so in a legal form, by way of affirmation is on us solemnly, conscientiously and fully binding before God to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth (Matthew 5:33-37).

.10 Going to Law

Any member refusing, in case of debt or dispute, to refer the matter to arbitration, or who shall enter into a lawsuit with another member before these measures are taken, may be expelled, except in criminal cases of such a nature as to require and justify a process at law, as in the case of executors or administrators, or when a member is in danger of suffering an unexpected loss of property (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Proverbs 25:8-10; Matthew 5:25, 26).

.11 Secret Combinations

a. *Definition*—A secret combination is a fraternal benefit society which has a printed ritual with prayers, altar, chaplain, burial ceremony, the claims to spiritual advancement and a guarantee of heaven as a reward for following the principles of the order

and whose members are pledged by oath to conceal the initiatory ceremony, the obligations of members and the inner workings of the society.

b. *Position*—Inasmuch as secret combinations teach that salvation is achieved through human effort alone, apart from faith in Christ, and that such salvation is offered to all men of whatever faith or religion, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ is bound by her Confession of Faith and Constitution to place herself in opposition to such a system.

c. *Admonition*—We believe that these combinations are evil and that Christians ought not to be connected with them, for the apostle expressly says: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15, 17, 18).

d. *Membership*—Any member or minister who shall connect himself with a secret combination shall be regarded as having withdrawn from the church. But in case such offending members shall sever their connection with such combination, such members may be borne with and retained as members of the church (Colossians 3:17; James 5:12; John 14:6; 1 John 2:23; 2 Corinthians 4:2; 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11-13; Matthew 5:33-37; Leviticus 5:4, 5).

VI. Moral and Social Standards

114. The Family

.1 Marriage

Marriage was instituted by God and is regulated by Him. For this reason, the Church must resist all attempts to alter marriage from what the Bible has revealed about it. The purpose of marriage is companionship between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:18) in a permanent relationship which can end only when one of the partners dies.

A Christian should marry only another Christian (1 Corinthians 7:39, 2 Corinthians 6:14). Their relationship is to express God's original intention for marriage: the wife's role alongside her husband as an equal.

.2 Family Life

Married couples should cultivate a relationship of mutual love and respect (Ephesians 5:21, 22, 25, 33). They should remember their unique oneness (Mark 10:6-9), their equality (Genesis 1:27, Galatians 3:28), the complementary nature of their union (Genesis 2:18), and their responsibility to help bring each other to full Christian maturity in all areas of life (Ephesians 5:22-28).

A husband should follow the Bible's admonition to love his wife in the way Jesus loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25). Such Christian love, as described by the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 13:4-7), demands that the husband respond openly and cooperatively with his wife (Ephesians 5:21, 28-31).

As the head of the Christian home (1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:25), the husband and father should exercise his delegated authority without being authoritarian, and should fulfill his responsibility under Christ by providing for the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of each family member (1 Timothy 5:8).

The wife should follow the Bible's admonition to be submissive, though not subservient, to the headship of her husband (Ephesians 5:22-24) by cooperating with his efforts to provide the home with authority and stability under Christ.

Together, the husband and wife should exercise proper discipline tempered with love (Proverbs 3:11-12, Hebrews 12:5-11, Colossians 3:21). They should also create and maintain a Christian atmosphere within the home (Ephesians 6:4, 2 Timothy 3:14-15). Such an atmosphere should consist of the following:

a. Communication with the heavenly Father through spontaneous prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), especially at mealtimes, whether in seeking His aid or giving thanks.

b. Daily, directed worship as a way for the family to express love and trust in God, and to sense His presence in the home (Matthew 18:20).

c. Spontaneous and directed teaching of Bible truths at every opportunity (Deuteronomy 6:20-21a).

d. Christian symbols and works of art in the home (Deuteronomy 6:6, 9).

e. A consistent example in Christian living (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Children and young people should obey their parents in all things in the Lord (Ephesians 6:1, Colossians 3:20). This was the example of Jesus (Luke 2:51).

.3 Illicit Sexual Relations

The biblical view of sex firmly establishes it within the framework of marriage and family life. Therefore, the church cannot condone premarital sex, adultery, or any form of homosexual behavior (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). All are clearly contrary to the expressed will of God concerning the union of man and woman together in this most sacred and binding of human relationships (Romans 1:20-32; Deuteronomy 22:23-27).

.4 Divorce

Divorce was never in God's original plan, and is really one of the consequences of the fall of man. According to Jesus in Mark 10:5, the Mosaic directive concerning divorce came only as a concession to man's hardheartedness.

In the New Testament, Jesus indicated that divorce may be granted on the basis of fornication (Matthew 5:32, 19:9). Fornication includes all forms of sexual sin, such as adultery, prostitution, sodomy, incest, bestiality, homosexuality, and lesbianism. Continual and deliberate sexual sin by a marriage partner is a justifiable cause for divorce.

The Apostle Paul cites another exception which applies to the marriage of a believer and an unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:12-15). If an unbelieving partner chooses to dissolve the marriage, the believing partner may yield to the divorce. This same exception also applies when a believer renounces his faith in Christ or assumes the position of an unbeliever and chooses to dissolve the marriage. Such a person is considered an unbeliever because he places himself outside the divine directive.

Even though the Bible admonishes Christian spouses not to divorce each other (1 Corinthians 7:10-11b), there may be situations in which a spouse decides a divorce is essential, e.g., when the spouse or children suffer severe physical or emotional abuse. The Bible seems to suggest that the spouse may make the decision to divorce, but must then remain unmarried or be reconciled to the former partner (1 Corinthians 7:11). God does

not advocate divorce in such situations, but when it does occur, He regulates it. The principle remains—no divorce—but the Bible recognizes that the ideal is not always observed because of hardheartedness.

In all cases, however, every effort should be made to bring about repentance, restoration and reconciliation. Bringing about reconciliation which leads to harmony and compatibility is always preferable to divorce.

.5 Remarriage

We believe the Christian has biblical grounds for remarriage in the following situations:

- a. When the spouse dies. In this case, the partner may remarry a believer (1 Corinthians 7:39).
- b. When the marriage and divorce occurred prior to salvation (2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:1-7).
- c. When the spouse is guilty of marital unfaithfulness and will not repent and live faithfully with the partner, and the offended partner is innocent of such conduct. Marital unfaithfulness includes adultery, prostitution, sodomy, incest, bestiality, homosexuality and lesbianism.
- d. When an unbelieving partner has willfully deserted a believing partner (1 Corinthians 7:12-15).
- e. When the spouse has assumed the position of an unbeliever by choosing to divorce the believing partner. In this case, the believing partner may remarry another believer (1 Corinthians 7:12-15).

.6 Family Planning

In the Christian view as based in the biblical revelation, it is only within the marriage relationship that children should be conceived, brought into the world as a precious gift in trust from God and nurtured to full personhood.

As responsible Christians and parents, some couples may for valid reasons determine not to have children, or others may need to determine the number and spacing of children. The church admonishes its members to weigh carefully and prayerfully the responsibilities of family planning and to use those methods which are medically and psychologically suited to their needs. They shall not use methods which conflict with the church's stand on abortion, as stated in 114.7.

For those couples who for physical reasons cannot bear children, the church advises them to consider the adoption of children. Such couples should seek the assistance of reliable placement agencies to avoid possible unfortunate circumstances and to avail themselves of competent counsel.

.7 Abortion

Abortion is a major moral problem in our society. We believe that human life is sacred from the moment of conception, and that abortion must not occur anytime after conception. Consequently, abortion cannot be recognized morally and Scripturally as a means of birth control, as a solution to a pregnancy resulting from rape or incest, or as a way to prevent or eliminate congenital or hereditary defects.

The church recognizes the possibility of therapeutic abortion. However, it can be performed in Christian conscience only when the mother's life is in imminent danger, as determined by two competent physicians, one of whom has been or would be attending her pregnancy.

.8 Genetic Engineering

Genetic engineering, the ability to manipulate the genetic formation of the living cell, is part of our scientific culture. However, the church does not condone sex selection or genetic screening as reasons for abortion, through information obtained by amniocentesis.

The church does not approve of artificial in ovulation (the process by which a fertilized ovum is placed in the fallopian tube or the uterus), except in the case of a married couple whose own sperm and ovum are used. The church also rejects the process of cloning in the human reproductive system. Neither does the church condone experiments to develop artificial uteruses and placentas with the ultimate goal of developing a full-term fetus without the mother's presence.

Genetic engineering raises legal, medical, ethical, and religious issues. The church is concerned that scientific knowledge, without a moral system, will lead to devastating results.

.9 Euthanasia

Because of the commandment, "Thou shalt not murder" (Exodus 20:13, Deuteronomy 5:17), the church cannot condone the taking of life for the purposes of escaping the suffering and difficulties caused by sickness, disease, injury, old age, infirmity, or for any other such reasons.

Because of the dignity of human life and the Christian's privilege of dying and going to be with Christ, the Christian or the members of his family, in the event that he lacks the capacity to do so, should have the privilege of rejecting artificial means for the sustaining of life when the maintenance of life is dependent upon these artificial means.

115. Social Standards

.1 Human Relations

The church respects human personality which is inherent in every race, nation and creed. We believe in the Bible's instruction that there is no basis whatsoever for a belief in the superiority or inferiority of any people. Therefore, the church protests against any action or practice that produces discrimination based upon racial, national, creedal or social differences, since God "made from one, every nation of men to live on the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). The church admonishes all members to commit their attitudes, actions and influences in faithful witness to this truth and to oppose every influence, whether it be economic, social, moral or religious which would debase, impair, or bring into bondage those whom God has created in His own likeness.

The church believes that there must be equal rights and justice for all. All members should register their concern and opposition to any form of prejudice that would prevent any individual or ethnic group from free and full participation in the privileges and benefits of our society. We advocate through due process of law and within the framework of the democratic system the elimination of poverty; the abolishment of unemployment; a fair wage in every vocation; fair practices between employer and employees; adequate provisions for the aged and for those who are unemployable; the opportunity for decent housing for all; and a proper concern for total human need in our contemporary world.

The church acknowledges that man's basic need is for the saving grace of Jesus Christ and is therefore committed to the telling of the Good News of the gospel to all men. But the church

also recognizes the commandment to love all men in the name of Christ. Therefore, the church admonishes all its members to strive for a society characterized by unselfish compassion and service to all (Philippians 2:3; Matthew 25:31-41; Luke 6:31; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; 1 Peter 3:8-12).

.2 Peace

We positively record our disapproval of engaging in voluntary, national, aggressive warfare; yet we recognize the rightful authority of the civil government and hold it responsible for the preservation and defense of our national compact against treason or invasion by any belligerent force.

We wish to go on record as a church as being much in favor of national, international and universal peace; and it is the perpetual aim of this church to do all we can to hasten the much desired universal peace, when Christ shall be recognized by the whole world as the Prince of Peace and the whole world shall reverently bow to Him as King of kings and Lord of lords.

.3 Drug Abuse

Christians are enjoined in the Holy Scriptures to be temperate in all things. This implies discipline in all emotions, passions and appetites. It means the proper use of wholesome food and drink and the entire abstinence from such that are known to be harmful (Proverbs 20:1; Isaiah 5:20; Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19; 9:19-27; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; 1 John 2:15-27; Revelation 21:8).

a. *Alcoholic Beverages*—The church believes that scientific evidence and human experience confirm the spiritual teaching that alcoholic beverages are useless and injurious. The manufacturing and vending of alcoholic liquors are contrary to the best interests of personal and social morality, economy and welfare. Therefore, all members are to exercise abstinence in the usage of alcoholic beverages in any form.

The United Brethren Church prohibits its members from consuming any alcoholic beverages, except as a medical prescription. They are also enjoined from being involved as a direct investor, manager or owner (full or partial) of businesses which engage in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic beverages. Neither should a member lease or rent his property to those who would use it for the manufacture, storage or sale of these harmful beverages.

b. *Tobacco*—The Holy Scriptures reveal that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and admonish believers to live pure lives. The church believes, based upon scientific evidence, that the use of tobacco is injurious to the physical body and is a detriment to the best stewardship and witness of our lives. Therefore, all members are urged to abstain from its use in any form.

c. *Narcotics and Hallucinogenic Drugs*—The church is strongly opposed to the illicit use of habit forming and hallucinogenic drugs. Members of the church are prohibited from using these drugs in any form or for any purpose, except under the most strict prescription and observation of skilled members of the medical profession. Members of the church are prohibited from using such drugs, except as a medical prescription, and we urge members of the church to make every effort to combat this growing menace in our society.

.4 Gambling

The church recognizes that gambling stimulates the desire to

get something for nothing and it seeks material gain by a fatalistic faith in chance. The church has observed that organized and commercial gambling is a threat to business, breeds crime and poverty, and is destructive to the interests of good government. Because gambling is a menace to personal character and social morality, we therefore urge all members to abstain from participating in gambling of any form, including lotteries, and to raise a proper protest against the spread of illegal and legalized gambling.

.5 Pornography

The distribution of pornographic material in various media is one of the causes of the moral decline of our nation. We encourage our local churches to take an active part in any local movement to eliminate the distribution of pornographic material in their respective communities. In case there is no such movement in their communities, we encourage our local churches to take the initiative in carefully and prayerfully organizing such a movement.

.6 Occult

The Holy Scriptures teach us to seek supernatural guidance from God only. Therefore, all members are to abstain from any participation in the occult. This includes all types of fortune-telling, astrology, communication with spirits and witchcraft (Deuteronomy 18:9-22; Galatians 5:19-21; Acts 19:13-20).

CHAPTER II THE MINISTRY

I. Introduction

151. Ministry

The word ministry usually has a very restricted connotation often centering in one person. However, the word should convey an active concept which is to be understood in terms of tasks to be done and in terms of the person who performs the tasks.

The New Testament indicates the tasks of the ministry to be those of: the ministry of the word, action and rule. The gifts of the Holy Spirit for the work of the ministry are directly related to these aspects. But, the New Testament allows for no false division among the tasks of ministry—the Church is engaged in word and deed in ministry. The ministry of worship, edification and witness is the responsibility of every Christian.

Though every Christian is responsibly involved in the one ministry of the Church, all are not engaged in the same manner and to the same extent. There are certain aspects of the public ministry of the Church in word, action and rule which do not belong to the entire body of believers. Therefore, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ establishes the following procedures for ministers:

II. Qualifications and Duties

152. Qualifications

.1 General

Persons holding licenses as ministers in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ must be above reproach. Therefore, a license shall not be granted nor will any person be permitted to continue as a licensed minister, whose moral life does not conform to the established moral standards and social concerns of the church.

.2 Marriage

No person shall be granted a license nor be continued as a licensed minister whose present marriage relations are not in harmony with the Bible and as interpreted in the moral standards and social concerns of the church.

.3 Drugs

A ministerial license shall not be granted to or retained by anyone who uses beverage alcohol, illicit drugs or tobacco.

.4 Immoral Conduct

A person guilty of immoral conduct shall not be granted a license nor be continued as a licensed minister.

153. Duties

.1 General

It shall be the duty of ministers to preach Christ crucified and risen from the dead for our sins; to talk with the members about their spiritual relationship to the Lord; to see that relief and help is given when needed; to strengthen and support those who have become cold and indifferent; to take advantage of opportunities to strengthen and instruct all in faith, grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; to visit the sick and strive to reinforce and confirm the doctrine they preach by a well-ordered and exemplary life.

Their business should be to lead as many souls to Christ as possible. To this goal they should give themselves unreservedly. They should give themselves to preaching, visiting from house to house, instruction, prayer and meditation on the Word of God. They should be faithful in these efforts until our Lord shall come.

.2 To Be Prudent

Ministers should be zealous and should use their time wisely. Their motto should be "holiness unto the Lord!" Their conduct and conversation with the opposite sex should be proper and they should endeavor to be Christ-like in all areas of life. They should believe evil of no one without good evidence and should place the best construction on everything.

.3 To Guard Speech

They should speak evil of no one. Whatever may be their thoughts, they should not voice them until they can tell the person concerned what they think wrong in his conduct.

.4 To Avoid Trespassing

No minister shall arbitrarily form an appointment or local church within the limits of any conference district or church extension district or receive members into the church, or receive compensation for labor performed without the consent of the bishop and the conference superintendent of the district.

No minister, after he shall have ceased to sustain the relation of pastor to a pastorate, shall either in person or by letter or other communication interfere with the work of his successor. Any violation of this rule shall be considered trespassing.

Any minister violating the provisions of this section shall be accountable to his local or annual conference.

.5 To Avoid Electioneering and Candidating

No minister shall be permitted to electioneer favorable to his

own election to any office or delegation in the church or candidate for any pastoral assignment within the denomination, and should anyone be found doing so, he shall be accountable to the next annual conference of which he is a member to be dealt with according to the judgment of said conference.

III. Lay Ministers

154. Lay Ministers

.1 Definition

A lay minister in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ is one of its members who has been called of God and licensed to perform specified acts of ministry.

All Christians are endowed with spiritual gifts of one kind or another according to the sovereign will of the Holy Spirit. The church recognizes that some of its laity possess gifts which qualify them for acts of ministry which are not generally performed in the more general ministry of the laity. Therefore, the church recognizes the status of those licensed to be ministers.

This status is not to be considered as a step toward either the specialized vocational or ordained ministry but is to be conferred on those laymen called by God who are willing to be trained for limited service in the church.

.2 Qualifications

A person desiring the status of a lay minister must have been a member of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ for at least two years and of the local church to which he applies for license for at least one year. He must have demonstrated personal faith and piety, the fruit of the spirit and faithfulness to his duties as a member of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. He shall not be a user of tobacco, beverage alcohol or illicit drugs.

.3 Licensing

Persons meeting these qualifications may apply to the local conference for license as a lay minister as follows:

a. The applicant should confer with his pastor concerning his conviction that God is calling him to serve as a lay minister.

b. The pastor shall arrange for a committee composed of the conference superintendent, himself and one other member of the local conference to examine the applicant concerning the following requirements:

(1) His personal qualifications shall be ascertained by three letters of reference (i.e. employers, teachers, work associates, etc.), and by a written testimony outlining the applicant's Christian experience and beliefs and reason for desiring recognition as a lay minister.

Based on the letters, written testimony and oral examination, the committee shall satisfy itself as to the personal integrity of the applicant, his commitment to the gospel of Christ, the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life, the uniqueness of his spiritual gifts and his relationships with others.

(2) His background qualifications shall be ascertained by examination concerning the Confession of Faith and the history and polity of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

(3) The applicant must express the desire and willingness to engage in a course of study which will equip him for service as a lay minister.

Persons who satisfy the committee concerning their integrity, witness, purpose and call may be recommended to the local

conference for a probationary license. When properly approved by the conference, the conference superintendent shall confer such a license which shall be subject to annual renewal until the course of study is completed.

.4 Course of Study

Each person granted a probationary license shall engage in a reading course which will prepare him to pass an oral examination covering doctrine, Bible, church history, preaching, the leadership of public worship and the history and polity of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

To be eligible for annual renewal, those holding a probationary license as a lay minister must have read and passed examination on at least four books, one from each of the following areas: theology, Bible, history and either polity, preaching or worship.

Examinations in the course of study shall be given by a committee appointed by the conference superintendent. At least one member of the committee must be an ordained elder.

When the basic course of study has been completed (at least four books in each of the areas), the examining committee shall review the suitability of the candidate for a permanent license as a lay minister. If satisfied, the committee may recommend that the local conference confer such a license. Upon proper action by the local conference, the superintendent shall confer a permanent license which shall be valid so long as the bearer maintains an active relationship in a local church and conforms to the doctrines and practices of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

.5 Transfer of Membership

A person holding either a probationary or a permanent license as a lay minister may transfer his license together with his membership to another local Church of the United Brethren in Christ, providing the local conference from which he is moving certifies the transfer.

.6 Duties of Lay Ministers

a. Lay ministers shall fulfill all duties of members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

b. Lay ministers shall work under the direction of their pastor and local church affairs committee; or the conference superintendent, or the bishop after their consultation with the pastor.

c. Lay ministers shall annually file a report of their activities with the pastor of the local church to which they belong, using forms provided for that purpose.

Lay ministers may be called upon to assist pastors; to supply pulpits when ministers are ill or on vacation; to act as supply pastors; or to do specified ministries as a part of the outreach ministry of their local church or conference.

IV. Local Conference Ministers

155. Licensing

Persons having made application may be given license to preach upon a written request to the local conference signed by a majority of the resident members of the society to which said person belongs provided, however, that none shall receive license who cannot give satisfactory evidence of their call, experience, soundness in doctrine and attachment to our church and government, nor show promise of ministerial service.

156. Examination of Applicants

.1 Board of Examiners—All applicants for local conference

license to preach and all local conference licentiates shall be examined by a board of examiners of three persons constituted as follows: the bishop or conference superintendent, the pastor and a third member of the local conference chosen by the presiding chairman and the pastor. In the event there is no pastor in charge, the bishop or conference superintendent shall select one person and these two a third. The bishop or conference superintendent shall be the chairman of the board. When the majority of the board reports favorably, the license may be granted.

.2 *Educational Requirements and Questions*—All applicants for local conference license to preach must give evidence of educational attainments equivalent to the completion of a public school course through the standard high school, or to the completion of the standard academic course necessary to entering the freshman class of a standard college; shall agree to pursue the course of study required for annual conference license; and shall answer satisfactorily the following questions, and any other questions relevant to this examination which any member of the committee may ask:

a. Do you believe our Confession of Faith as set forth in our Discipline?

b. Have you now peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?

c. What is your motive in desiring permission to preach the gospel?

d. Are you satisfied with the moral and social standards and the government of the church, and will you maintain them on all occasions?

e. Will you submit yourself to the official counsel of your brethren in the Lord?

f. Define depravity, redemption, faith, repentance, justification, regeneration and sanctification.

g. Is it your purpose, if received, to remain permanently with the church?

h. Will you pursue the course of study as a candidate for the annual conference license?

i. Will you abstain from the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs and tobacco?

157. Receiving Ministers from Other Churches

If ministers from other churches who have not met the requirements for admission to the local conference come to us with certificates of good standing in the society in which they have had membership and give satisfaction to the local conference by examination in the doctrines, discipline, government, reform principles and usages of our church, then they may be licensed by the local conference and will be subject to renewal by the local conference.

158. Renewal of License

.1 The license of a local conference minister is subject to renewal annually by vote of the local conference, and the fact of the renewal shall be designated on the license by the bishop or chairman. However, if such local conference minister shall fail to attend or report in writing to the local conference in session during the year, his license shall not be subject to renewal.

.2 *Revocation of License*—The local conference or the annual conference shall have the right to review and revoke the license of any local conference minister within their bounds, provided, however, the person whose license is under consideration is

given an opportunity for a hearing before a proper committee or is given the opportunity for a trial as per Discipline (12.8).

159. Recommendation to the Annual Conference

.1 Local Conference Requirement

After local conference ministers have stood in that capacity for a minimum of 12 months, the local conference may recommend them to the annual conference provided they give evidence of educational attainments equivalent to the completion of a public school course through the standard high school, or to the completion of the standard academic course necessary to entering the freshman class of a standard college, and have completed two years of academic training either at Huntington College [or at such other schools or colleges as may be academically approved by the board of education] or by the minister's training program by correspondence, under the direction of the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries.

.2 Relation if Not Received

All ministers recommended to the annual conference and not received may retain their former relation.

160. Duties of Local Conference Ministers

.1 To Fill Appointments

It shall be the duty of local conference ministers to fill appointments under the direction of their pastor, conference superintendents or bishop, to preach whenever acceptable, exhorting saints that they with purpose of heart should cleave to the Lord, and sinners that they flee from the wrath to come; and this they shall do as often as practicable.

.2 To Hold Membership

All local conference ministers are required to have membership in some local church, and upon neglect or refusal to do so they shall lose their official relation. Transfer of membership shall automatically transfer the license with it.

.3 To Pursue Course of Study

All local conference ministers are required to engage in the prescribed course of study for candidates for ministry in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ by enrolling in Huntington College or such other schools or colleges as may be approved by the Board of Education or in the ministers' correspondence training program offered by the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries.

Should a local conference minister fail to so enroll and complete the equivalency of two years of academic work within four years, his license shall not be renewed.

V. Annual Conference Ministers

161. Conference Relationship

.1 Requirements

a. *Recommendation*—Persons to be admitted into the annual conference must have a recommendation from the local conference. If the annual conference should, on examination, find that the candidate's abilities are insufficient to preach the gospel, it may refer him back to the local conference. (See 158.2)

b. *Examination*—He shall be orally examined on the basis of his written answers (previously prepared) to the following questions and the oral examination may also include questions

pertaining to the Scriptures as they apply to the content of these questions.

(1) Have you an experience assuring you of the forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ?

(2) Have you peace with God; and is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit?

(3) Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and that therein only is revealed the true way to salvation?

(4) What reason have you for such beliefs?

(5) Do you follow after holiness?

(6) What is your motive for desiring permission to preach the gospel, and why do you desire a license from the annual conference?

(7) Do you believe that man is fallen from original righteousness and, apart from the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is inclined to evil continually; and that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God?

(8) Define depravity, redemption, faith, repentance, justification, regeneration and sanctification.

(9) Does your own salvation and the salvation of your fellow men lie nearer to your heart than all other things in the world?

(10) Will you agree to abide by the official action of your conference and church in all matters pertaining to your ministry?

(11) Are you satisfied with the moral and social standards and the government of our church, and will you maintain them on all occasions?

(12) Are you willing, as much as is in your power, to assist in upholding our itinerant plan.

(13) Is it your purpose, if received, to remain permanently in the active ministry of this church?

(14) Will you diligently pursue the course of training prescribed for annual conference ministers?

(15) Do you have a working knowledge of the Discipline as it pertains to the reception and duties of members; the organization and duties of the local board of administration; the organization and duties of the annual conference; and classification and duties of ministers? Please demonstrate.

(16) Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in the work of the Christian ministry?

(17) Will you wholly abstain from the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs and tobacco?

(18) Are your marriage relations in harmony with the Word of God as interpreted by this church?

.2 Duty of Bishop

When applicants are received into the annual conference, the presiding bishop or someone selected by him shall read 153. (Duties) to them with such comments as he may deem proper.

.3 The License of an Annual Conference Minister

a. *Granting the License*—If upon examination the board of ministerial relations should find that the applicant has met all the requirements for admission into the annual conference and is sufficiently qualified to preach the gospel, then the board may report favorably with recommendation that the license be granted; whereupon the license may be granted by a majority vote of the annual conference. The license shall be signed by the bishop and the secretary of the conference and shall be valid for a period of four years, subject to renewal annually thereafter by action of the annual conference.

b. *Licensing Women*—There shall be no discrimination between men and women in granting ministerial credentials.

c. *Surrender of Credentials*—Any minister licensed under this rule who afterwards joins a church of another denomination or fellowship or indulges in the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs or tobacco shall be compelled to surrender his credentials to the annual conference.

.4 Study and Examinations

All annual conference licentiates shall be required to pursue the remaining course of training for annual conference ministers, either in residence at Huntington College or at such other schools or colleges as may be approved by the Board of Education or by correspondence under the direction of the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries. Final examinations upon the courses taken by correspondence are to be proctored by the director of correspondence studies or his appointee. At least one year of the course of study is required to be taken in residence at the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries unless this rule is waived by a committee consisting of the bishop of the district, the chairman of the conference superintendents and the director of the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries.

The basic education standard for ordination in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ is the Master of Christian Ministries degree as offered by the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries.

Candidates with comparable degrees from institutions approved by the Board of Education or a committee named by that board, may satisfy the educational requirements for ordination by successfully passing a written comprehensive examination in United Brethren church history, doctrine and polity administered by the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries.

All licentiates shall present a certified record of the credits earned each year to the board of ministerial relations.

.5 Ministers from Other Churches

When ministers from other churches come to us with certificates of good standing from the church in which they have held membership or with transfers from the conference, presbytery or synod, and give satisfaction to the annual conference concerning their agreement on the doctrine, discipline, government, reform principles and usages of our church, the conference may receive them and shall require them to pursue in whole or in part the course of training, unless they give satisfactory evidence of having completed a course of training equivalent to that required by this church. Under all circumstances they shall be required to pass an examination on United Brethren church history and Discipline under direction of the conference board of ministerial relations in cooperation with the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries. If they are ordained elders, they must pass the examination required of candidates for elders' orders, after a waiting period of at least one year, but may be exempt from the laying on of hands. (See 162.1.)

However, those pastors of affiliate local churches who are in good standing may have the waiting period waived.

.6 Minister's Local Church Membership

a. *Required Membership*—All annual conference ministers are

required to have membership in some local church and upon neglect or refusal to do so shall lose their official relation. Ministers who pastor affiliate local churches, who place their membership with such affiliate local churches, meet the requirements of a minister's local church connection.

b. *Received on His Credentials*—An annual conference member may be received into a local church on his ministerial credentials, so long as said credentials are held in force by the conference to which he is amenable.

.7 Minister's Transfer

a. *Requirement for Entrance to Another Conference*—A minister moving from one conference to another shall, when he applies to the latter for admission, present a transfer from the conference to which he formerly belonged to the conference to which he applies for admission. This transfer shall be signed by the presiding officer or published in the minutes of the conference from which he has been transferred. No minister shall be received into a conference by transfer until said transfer has been granted by a vote of his conference.

b. *Time Limit of Transfer*—A licentiate or elder who receives a transfer to another conference shall present said transfer to said conference at its first session following the granting of said transfer.

c. *Transferred Minister's Membership*—A minister receiving a transfer shall be a member of the local conference within the bounds of the pastorate in which he may reside and shall be accountable to the annual conference granting the transfer until it has been received by the conference to which he has been transferred, or until the transfer expires by limitation.

.8 An Expelled Minister

When a licentiate or elder has been expelled or informally withdraws from one annual conference, he shall not be received into another without the consent of the conference from which he has been expelled or from which he has withdrawn; and when such an expulsion or withdrawal has occurred, his credentials are nullified, and notice of the same shall be sent by the secretary of the annual conference to the editor of *The United Brethren* for publication.

162. Classification of Ministers

Annual conference ministers shall be classified as elders and licentiates. The term reverend should be reserved for active pastors, general and conference ministerial officers of the church and other ordained ministers and retired ministers

.1 Elders

An elder is one who, having completed the course of training, is set apart to the office by the laying on of hands.

a. *Requirements*—After a probation of two years a licentiate may be presented to the annual conference for elders' orders if he has passed the prescribed course of training as offered through the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries and other approved seminaries and graduate schools, and if he has served at least one year under the appointment of the stationing committee, a conference superintendent or a general board of the church. When these requirements are satisfied, the bishop shall propose to the board of ministerial relations the following questions:

b. *Questions Regarding a Candidate*

- (1) Is he blameless touching the marriage relation?
 - (2) Is his social behavior characterized by self-discipline and purity?
 - (3) Is he hospitable toward the afflicted and needy?
 - (4) Is he faithful in the public administration of God's Word, and diligent in reading and study?
 - (5) Is his household subject to rules of piety?
 - (6) Has he been true to his duties as a licentiate as outlined in 153?
- c. *Examination by Committee*—Should the above questions be answered in the affirmative, a committee of three elders shall be appointed, before whom the candidate shall appear and be orally examined on his written answers (previously prepared) to the following questions:
- (1) What are your reasons for believing the Bible to be the Word of God?
 - (2) How do you prove the fall of man by transgression?
 - (3) How do you prove the redemption of man by Jesus Christ?
 - (4) Do you believe in the Godhead of Jesus Christ?
 - (5) What reason have you for such belief?
 - (6) Do you believe in the doctrine of the Holy Ghost as presented in our Confession of Faith?
 - (7) Upon what evidence do you believe this?
 - (8) Do you believe in the resurrection of believers in Christ to everlasting life and in the resurrection of unbelievers to judgment and everlasting condemnation?
 - (9) Is your purpose, if ordained, to remain permanently in the active ministry of this church?

At the close it shall be the privilege of the committee to propose any further questions it deems advisable. It shall also be their duty to make out, sign and deliver to the conference a report on each case which may have been before them.

d. *Election to Ordination*—If the committee and conference find the candidate worthy, he may be elected to ordination by a majority of the votes of the conference.

e. *Duties of Elders*—It is the duty of an elder to preach the gospel, to baptize, to administer the Lord's Supper, to solemnize marriages, to perform all parts of divine service, to be an example to the flock of Christ by imitating his moral example; and in a very special manner it shall be the duty of an elder to cherish and encourage young ministers, always looking for those whom God has called to preach, advising them to take up the cross and begin preparation for the work without delay, that the labor of the gospel harvest may be faithfully performed.

.2 **Licentiates**

a. *Definition*—A licentiate is one who is a member of the annual conference and has not yet been ordained. A licentiate may administer the Lord's Supper, may administer baptism and may solemnize marriage only when in charge of a pastorate or serving as an assistant pastor; otherwise he may only assist. Any licentiate guilty of violating the foregoing rule shall be reported to his annual conference by the conference superintendent, and shall be dealt with as the conference may recommend.

Licentiates in training are those who have not yet completed the course of study in preparation for the pastoral ministry.

b. *Assignment of Licentiates*—A licentiate may be assigned to a pastorate by the stationing committee or conference superintendent and bishop of the district. However, should he fail to complete his course of study in six years, he shall not be reas-

signed to a pastorate for at least one year, with the exception of the licentiate who is regularly pursuing the academic program looking toward an M.C.M. or M. Div. degree. (See 219.8).

.3 **Itinerants**

a. *Definition*—All annual conference licentiatees and ordained elders are to be considered as itinerants who, in keeping with their commitment to be in subjection to the counsel of their elders, have given themselves without reserve for service in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and have committed themselves to uphold the principles of the itineracy.

b. *Exceptions*

(1) *Excused from Service*—The stationing committee shall recommend to the conference for its approval those ministers who are to be recognized as properly excused from service for one year and who shall be in good standing.

(2) *Leave of Absence*—The stationing committee shall recommend to the conference for approval those ministers who should be granted leave of absence for two or more years and who shall be in good standing.

(3) *Inactive Without Cause*—The stationing committee shall recommend to the conference for appropriate discipline those ministers who are inactive without sufficient reason for excused service or leave of absence.

(4) *Retired Status*—The stationing committee shall recommend to the conference those ministers who by their own request or who in the judgment of the conference should be granted a retired status with good standing in the conference. It is recognized that age 65 is the normal retirement age for ministers.

(5) *Chaplaincy*—The United Brethren church recognizes God's call to the chaplaincy. Therefore, the stationing committee shall recommend to the conference for approval those who have received a call to institutional or military chaplaincy, and who have prepared for such service through education and ordination.

VI. Pastors in Charge

163. Duties of Pastors

.1 To be holy in lifestyle.

- a. By leading a life of prayer
- b. By spending time devotionally in God's Word
- c. By setting an example of the Christian life within the church and community.

.2 To preach and teach the Word of God.

- a. By giving priority to study and preparation.
- b. By having a preaching/teaching plan to present the whole Word of God.

.3 To provide for the regular observance of the ordinances and ceremonies of the church.

- a. By celebrating the Lord's Supper.
- b. By providing opportunities for Christian baptism.
- c. By performing weddings and funerals.

.4 To equip the believers for works of service.

- a. By helping them find their spiritual gifts.
- b. By training them to become proficient in the use of God's Word.
- c. By training them in the various aspects of ministry.
- d. By allowing them to be involved in personal ministry with-

in the local church.

.5 To do and teach the work of an evangelist.

- a. By doing consistent personal evangelism in the local church and the community.
- b. By providing for training the believers in personal evangelism in both classroom and real life settings.

.6 To be responsible for local church administration.

- a. By planning and leading the worship services.
- b. By giving direction for the ministry of the local church.
- c. By doing specific planning and goal-setting.
- d. By making monthly reports to the board of administration and annual reports to the annual conference.
- e. By keeping accurate membership records.
- f. By preparing and keeping an updated passbook.
- g. By presenting the church Discipline.
- h. By notifying conference supervision in writing at least 30 days before the effective date of resignation.

.7 To provide for pastoral care.

- a. By doing pastoral visitation.
- b. By providing for training the laity to use their gifts in providing pastoral care to one another.
- .8 To provide for the counseling needs of the congregation.
 - a. By being available for personal counseling.
 - b. By referring counselees to qualified counselors.
 - c. By providing for training the laity to provide counseling for one another.
 - d. By providing for competent Christian pre-marital counseling.

.9 To promote conference activities.

- a. By attending conference activities that are provided for pastors.
- b. By promoting other conference interests including seminars, camps, athletic events, etc.

.10 To promote general church interests.

- a. By promoting the departments of the general church including Huntington College, UB Missions, Church Services and Church Extension.
- b. By overseeing general church elections.
- c. By presenting the referenda.
- d. By promoting church periodicals and publications.

VII. Conference Evangelist

164. Conference Evangelist

.1 Appointment

A conference evangelist is one who has been appointed to that relation by the annual conference of which he is a member.

.2 Duties

It shall be the duty of the conference evangelist to do the work of an evangelist within his annual conference and, under the direction of the conference extension supervisor, to assist in establishing new appointments and in organizing new societies in unoccupied territory and to aid pastors when invited.

.3 Approval

No conference evangelist shall accept employment outside his

annual conference without the consent of the conference council of administration or of the conference superintendents and the bishop where he is to be employed.

VIII. Conference Superintendents

165. Election and Stationing of Conference Superintendents

.1 Election

The annual conference shall elect by ballot one or more of the elders who shall serve as conference superintendents. A majority of the whole number of votes shall be necessary for a choice. However, in the case of church extension districts the presiding bishop shall appoint the conference superintendent, subject to approval of the General Board of Administration. (See 202.7.)

.2 Extended Term

If it so desires, an annual conference may elect a conference superintendent for up to four years.

.3 Stationing

Conference superintendents shall be stationed by the bishop and two elders from each conference superintendent district. (See 170.7.)

166. Duties and Powers of Conference Superintendent

.1 To Assist Bishop

a. *To Implement the General Church Program*—The superintendent (or board of superintendents in case of multiple districts) shall, under the direction of the bishop, take the program proposed by the General Conference and the General Board of Administration and the general boards and adapt it to the local conditions and needs prevailing in the conference.

He shall be responsible for placing this program before the annual session of the conference, the conference council of administration, and to conduct at least one planning session for placing the correlated program before the pastors and delegates from the various local churches.

b. *To Act as Resource Leader*—The superintendent shall work with pastors and local churches as a resource person in conducting seminars, institutes and retreats; in the conducting of surveys; and in pastor-church relations. He shall perform these duties as directed by the bishop, the conference council of administration or as requested by local boards of administration and pastors.

c. *To Conduct Local Conferences*—The conference superintendent shall appoint and conduct sessions of each local conference at least annually (oftener if necessary) in his district, for the purpose of hearing reports, evaluation and planning. Particular attention should be given in these sessions to the program of the general church and the conference and to the relation of the congregation to them. (See 222.2j).

.2 To Administer Conference Program

a. *Serve on Stationing Committee*—The conference superintendent shall serve on the committee to station pastors. (See 219.8.)

b. *Serve on Conference Council of Administration*—The conference superintendent shall be a member of the conference council of administration. (See 220.2a.)

c. *Serve as Church Extension Supervisor*—The conference superintendent shall be the church extension supervisor of his district under the direction of the conference council of administration, unless the annual conference determines to elect a

director of church extension.

d. *Propose Conference Finances*—The conference superintendent shall make a careful study of the financial needs of the district and also of the general interests of the church. He shall submit these needs to the conference council of administration and suggest means and methods of assisting the pastors in raising the budget assessed to the various local churches on the district.

e. *Propose Pastor's Salary*—The conference superintendent shall propose to the annual conference finance committee the pastor's salary for each field on his district for the coming year. It shall be his duty to determine if the pastor has received the salary due him and in case of a deficiency to assist the local church in securing the balance due.

.3 To Make Reports

The conference superintendent shall make a written report to the bishop as requested and annually to the conference.

.4 Responsible to the Annual Conference

The conference superintendent shall be amenable to the annual conference for the faithful performance of these duties.

IX. Bishops

167. The Office of the Bishopric

The office of the bishop in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ shall combine the roles of "overseer" and "executive."

As an overseer the bishop shall be responsible for seeing that the work done under his jurisdiction is done properly—toward spiritual ends and in keeping with denominational doctrine and polity. In this role he shall devote as much time as possible to "feeding the flock over which he has the oversight" (Acts 20:29); to creative writing; to the stewardship development of the churches under his care; and to encouraging and challenging those who have answered the call to the gospel ministry.

As an executive, the bishop shall correlate the affairs of his jurisdictional area and promote the general interests of the church as indicated under the following headings.

The bishop shall emphasize in his overseer and executive relationship the ideal of responsible church leadership based on the democratic representative principle, with the pastor as the recognized leader of the local church.

Basically, the bishop-pastor relationship shall be that of the bishop fulfilling something of the role of the pastor's pastor.

168. Election of Bishops

.1 Nominating Committee

The executive committee of the General Board of Administration, as soon as practicable following the election of delegates to the General Conference, shall appoint a bishops' nominating committee composed of seven members selected from the total membership of the General Conference.

.2 Duties of the Committee

a. The nominating committee shall prepare two ballots, one for the office of overseas bishop and one for the North American bishops. Each ballot shall have at least twice the number to be elected.

b. The committee shall give consideration to the whole number of elders eligible for election to the office of bishop. (See 12.2.)

c. The committee shall confer with those whom they desire to nominate and determine if there are circumstances which would

prevent them from serving, if elected.

d. The committee shall meet at least twice and a twenty-four hour period must have elapsed between the time of their first meeting and the report to the General Conference.

.3 Amendments to the Report

The report of the committee may be amended by additions from the floor of the conference. However, before the report can be finally adopted, those thus nominated must be interviewed by the committee in order to determine if there are circumstances which would prevent them from serving if elected.

.4 Election

The election shall be conducted immediately following the adoption of the report and those elected must receive a majority of the votes cast by ballot.

169. Stationing of Bishops

.1 Stationing Committee

The executive committee of the General Board of Administration shall appoint a committee composed of one person from each North American conference delegation for the purpose of stationing bishops to the various jurisdictions.

.2 Chairman of the Board of Bishops

This stationing committee shall determine who shall be the chairman of the Board of Bishops.

170. Duties of Bishops

.1 General

The chairman of the Board of Bishops and the overseas bishop shall reside in Huntington, Indiana. Other bishops may reside within the geographical boundaries of the jurisdiction to which they are assigned. A bishop must be capable of fulfilling the duties to which he is assigned and of conducting the conferences and mid-year councils appointed to him; otherwise he cannot be a bishop. The location of the bishop's residency must be approved by the General Board of Administration or its executive committee.

.2 To Meet as a Board

The Board of Bishops shall meet at least quarterly to consider the total program of the church as to uniform administrative procedures, to foster unity in the program and emphases, to provide and develop effective pastoral and lay programs within the various conferences and to consider the availability of personnel for special needs within the conferences and various agencies of the church.

.3 To Serve on General Boards and on Interdenominational Agencies

A bishop shall serve as a presiding officer of the General Conference; he shall serve on one or more of the general boards as determined by the Board of Bishops; and he shall serve on at least one interdenominational board or agency if elected, appointed or invited to do so.

.4 Chairman of the Board of Bishops

a. The chairman of the Board of Bishops, in addition to any geographical jurisdiction, shall be responsible for the general administration of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

b. He shall coordinate the total church program as directed by

the Board of Bishops.

c. He shall meet regularly with all administrative personnel for fellowship and prayer, for exchange of needs and ideas in creative planning and for the purpose of maintaining liaison between all the areas of the church's work.

d. He shall be available to the directors and boards for consultation and implementation of their programs as they pertain to the church as a whole.

e. He shall be responsible for the implementation of all decisions and policies adopted by the General Conference, the General Board of Administration and the executive committee of the General Board of Administration.

f. He shall meet with groups and seminars within any jurisdictional areas as directed by the Board of Bishops.

.5 To Preside Over Conferences

It shall be the duty of a bishop to preside over the annual conference sessions and their mid-year council sessions within his district and to insist that the Discipline and all adopted programs of the church be faithfully executed. The bishops shall arrange the times of holding the several annual conferences and their mid-year council sessions. (See 218.1.)

.6 To Serve on the Conference Council of Administration

The bishop shall be a member of the conference council of administration. He shall preside at the organizational meeting of the council immediately following the annual conference sessions, and at the mid-year conference council sessions.

.7 To Be Chairman of the Stationing Committee

The bishop shall be chairman of the committee to assign ministers and superintendents of the conference. (See 219.8.)

.8 To Ordain Elders

It shall be the duty of the bishop to perform the rite of ordination at the annual conferences, and at such other times and places as circumstances may require, but only upon such persons as have passed the usual examination required of candidates for ordination, by a committee of three elders chosen for that purpose by the bishops. (See 162.1c.)

.9. To Promote Program

It shall be the duty of the bishop to initiate the promotion and administration of the coordinated program of the church as provided by the General Conference, the General Board of Administration and the general departments. He shall meet at least twice annually with the conference superintendents on his district for the planning and implementation of the total church program. He shall render assistance to the conference superintendent in the preparation of the conference program and shall review this program periodically with the superintendents as to its progress, effectiveness and need for alteration.

.10 To be Field Representative

The bishop shall be field representative of the General Board of Administration and all general departments. He shall present the needs of these departments to his district.

.11 To Make Reports

a. *General*—Each bishop shall report annually to the General

Board of Administration and shall publish a summary of his report in *The United Brethren*. He shall also provide a complete quadrennial report to the General Conference showing the complete statistics of his district, the resume of his services, expenses and remuneration received.

b. *Annual Conference*—The bishop shall present to each annual conference in his district a summary of that conference's activities, the progress in implementing the general church program in the conference and pertinent statistical trends for the conference.

.12 To Receive Offerings

The bishop shall receive such offerings for the various interests of the church as directed by the General Board of Administration.

.13 To Care for Isolated Churches

All churches not included in an annual conference boundary are referred to the bishop of the district in which they are geographically located for instruction as to their possible relationship to the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and for pastoral care. If feasible, such churches should be assigned to an annual conference district. If this is not possible, they may be assigned to a church extension district.

.14 To Organize Church Extension Districts

In consultation with the Department of Church Extension, the bishop shall have power to organize church extension districts.

.15 To Fill Vacancies

a. *Conference Superintendent*—Should any conference district or church extension district, through death, resignation or other cause be without a conference superintendent, the bishop shall appoint an eligible elder to serve until the reorganization of the conference or church extension district.

b. *Pastors*—It shall be the duty of the bishop to fill all vacancies, with the consent of the conference superintendent, which may occur in the pastorates of the conference.

.16 To Remove Pastors

The bishop shall have the power in consultation with the stationing committee to remove, for the following reasons, any pastor from the pastorate to which he has been assigned and to supply the vacancy:

a. A pastor charged with immoral or imprudent conduct, who persists in ignoring the church by refusing to prepare for trial or appear for same after being cited to trial as per instructions or who refuses to resign upon the request of the bishop, shall be subject to removal under the above-named rule.

b. A pastor who may become so involved in debt or other delinquencies in his business relations in the community where he serves to destroy his influence as a Christian minister and who, after being admonished to reform, refuses to correct the cause of offense may be requested to resign the pastorate by the bishop of the district. Should he refuse to do so, he shall be subject to removal in harmony with the provisions of this paragraph.

c. A pastor assigned to a pastorate who becomes officially incompetent through mental or bodily disability or who, being insubordinate, refuses to work in harmony with the church program as set forth in our Discipline may be removed from the pastorate under this rule. This shall not be construed so as to deprive the accused of all the rights and privileges of a commit-

tee trial as provided in the Discipline.

.17 To Remove Pastors Temporarily

A pastor who is disabled, as determined by the bishop and conference superintendent, for an extended period of time may temporarily be relieved of all responsibility of his assigned pastorate until the bishop determines that he is capable of resuming full responsibility. Matters pertaining to compensation and benefits shall rest with the bishop, superintendent, local board of administration and pastor.

.18 To Appoint and Preside Over Local Conferences

The bishop may appoint and preside over special sessions of any local conference in his district if he deems such action is advisable, provided proper notice is given to the members of the local conference.

.19 To Act as Resource Leader

The bishop shall work with conference superintendents, pastors and local churches as a resource person or leader in conducting pastors' conferences, seminars, institutes or retreats; in the conducting of surveys; in pastor-parish relations; and in special observances as suggested by the Board of Bishops, or the General Board of Administration, or as requested by the conference council of administration or local churches.

.20 To Interpret Discipline

The ruling of the bishop(s) in interpreting the Discipline will be accepted until the next General Board meeting or the next General Conference.

.21 To Declare General Conference Delegates

- a. The bishop shall specify the number of delegates allowed for each conference.
- b. The bishop shall announce the General Conference delegates elected from each conference.

171. Vacancy in the Office of Bishop

When a bishop cannot fulfill the duties to which he is assigned or refuses to do so, the General Board of Administration or the executive committee shall declare the office vacant. If the vacancy occurs within the first three years of the quadrennium, the general board shall appoint an eligible elder to fill the vacancy.

CHAPTER III COURSES OF STUDY

I. Course of Training for Lay Ministers, Local and Annual Conference Ministers

191. Course of Study

.1 How Provided

A three year course of training by correspondence shall be arranged by the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries subject to the approval of the General Board of Administration. The curriculum shall include the usual studies for the preparation of the ministry.

.2 Credits on the Course of Study

A diploma with a Master of Christian Ministries degree from

the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries or a Master of Divinity degree from an approved seminary shall be substituted in full for the annual conference course of training. Due and proper credit toward ordination shall be given a licentiate for work in any other course of Huntington College or the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries and for credits from the college on subjects in the annual conference course of training or such as make a reasonable equivalency in subject matter, except that all theological work must be fully paralleled, and all candidates must complete studies in United Brethren history and Discipline. Credits from other institutions of learning, approved by the general Board of Education or its committee, shall be referred to the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries for evaluation. The licentiate who is allowed credit on his course of training on any of the above provisions shall be exempt from examination on those subjects.

.3 Credit

Due and proper credit toward ordination shall be given licentiates in overseas conferences for work done in approved Bible institutes, Bible colleges, or seminaries, or through correspondence courses.

.4 Examinations

All examinations on the course of training taken by correspondence should be in writing and proctored by the director of correspondence studies or his appointee. Examination papers shall be forwarded to the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries for grading and the grades reported to the annual conference, in harmony with requirements for study and examination.

.5 Lay Ministers Course

Lay ministers will select books from the bibliography of the correspondence course of study or books from a bibliography prepared by the book committee.

CHAPTER IV THE ORGANIZATION

I. General

201. Purpose

It is essential within the church as an institution to do all things "decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40). It is also imperative to structure the organization so as to preserve the freedom of the church to respond to the mandate of Jesus Christ and the need and opportunity for ministry without unnecessary hindrance.

Therefore, the following organizational structure is established on the basic premise of assigning appropriate responsibility for policy and decision making, for review and control. Further, the structure assumes that appropriate and responsible boards will establish the procedure for analysis, planning, determining ministries and writing personnel policies pertaining to persons under their appointment.

202. Division of the Territory

Territory occupied by the church shall be divided into appointments, local churches, affiliate local churches, conference superintendent districts, annual conferences, church extension

districts, mission districts and bishops' districts.

.1 *Appointments*—An appointment is a preaching point organized or not organized into a local church.

.2 *Local Church*—A duly organized group consisting of adult members from ten or more resident families, except in the overseas conferences, where it shall consist of ten or more adult members. A resident family must include at least one person who is a member of the church. The family must also meet at least one of these requirements: live within ten miles of the church, regularly contribute financially or regularly attend services.

.3 *Affiliate Local Church*—A congregation of adult members from ten or more resident families which is associated with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ under the provision of 210.

.4 *Local Conference*—A local conference shall consist of the bishop, the conference superintendent, members of the local church who hold a local conference ministerial license and the local board of administration.

.5 *Conference Superintendent's District*—A conference superintendent's district shall consist of two or more local churches or appointments under the supervision of a conference superintendent.

.6 *Annual Conference*—An annual conference shall consist of five or more churches within such boundary lines as the General Conference may establish.

.7 *Church Extension District*—A church extension district is one or more appointments or local churches outside the boundaries of an established annual conference administered by the general Board of Church Extension. If the district has three or more churches, it shall be known as a church extension conference.

.8 *Mission District*—A mission district is one or more appointments or local churches not organized as a conference and is administered by the Board of Missions.

.9 *Mission Conference*—A mission conference is an annual conference outside of the United States or Canada and administered by the Board of Missions.

.10 *Bishop's District*—A bishop's district is one or more annual conferences under the supervision of a bishop within boundaries set by the General Conference and such other territory designated by the Board of Missions and approved by or assigned by the General Board of Administration.

.11 *General Conference*—The General Conference shall consist of the Board of Bishops, the directors elected by the General Conference, and the lay and ministerial delegates elected in accordance with the Constitution and Discipline.

203. Right to Books and Records

Any person who has been elected to an office is entitled to immediate possession of all papers, documents, books, records and minutes pertaining to the past acts and proceedings of said office; and his predecessor shall turn over to him/her all such documents and records which he/she may have in his/her possession.

II. Local Church

204. Organization

A group of adult members from ten or more resident families may become a local church when organized with the officers listed in 205:

205. Officers of the Church

.1 Lay Leader

The local church will annually elect one of its non-ministerial members to give active leadership. Persons nominated for this position must meet these qualifications: faithfulness to their duties as members, an exemplary personal life, and abstention from the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco.

.2 Treasurer

This person will receive church funds from the financial secretary and disburse them as directed by the local board. The treasurer shall keep a complete record of all of the church's financial transactions.

.3 Sunday School Superintendent or Director of Christian Education

a. *Purpose*—The Sunday school superintendent or director of Christian education shall give active leadership to the Sunday school. This person, along with other elected and appointed personnel and the pastor, shall assure an effective program of Christian education in the church school.

b. *Election*—The Sunday school may annually elect by ballot a member of the local church to be its superintendent or director of Christian education, or the local board of administration may appoint a superintendent or director of Christian education.

.4 Commission Chairpersons

The church membership will elect the chairpersons for the various commissions which the local board establishes to meet the mission and needs of the congregation. Suggested commissions are listed in 207.

.5 Lay Delegate(s)

a. *Purpose*—The lay delegate(s) represent the local church in the annual conference, the mid-year council session, and other meetings when their presence is requested, and may appear before the stationing committee.

b. *Qualifications*—Persons nominated for this position shall have been members of the local church for at least one year prior to the election, except in new churches having been organized less than one year. It is recommended that nominees be members of the local board of administration. The church shall not nominate anyone who holds an annual conference license or is being recommended to the annual conference for license.

c. *Nomination*—The local board of administration shall, at least one month prior to the election, nominate at least two persons for each delegate to be elected. These names shall be posted and/or printed in the church bulletin at least one week before the election.

d. *Election*—At the annual election, the church membership shall elect by ballot the lay delegate(s). The ballots shall be counted by a board of tellers, consisting of the secretary and two other persons appointed by the local board. In cases of sickness or other unavoidable absence, a member may seal his signed ballot in an envelope and send it to a member of the board of tellers.

e. *Credentials and Certification*—The secretary shall list, on a form provided, the number of votes cast for each nominee and the names of the delegates and alternates elected. The secretary shall then certify the results to the pastor and conference recording secretary. The conference superintendent shall publish these names by February 1. This published list shall be sufficient credentials for all delegates in conference meetings.

206. Local Board of Administration

.1 Purpose

The local board of administration oversees all affairs pertaining to the local church. All commissions, committees, and other groups within the church are subject to the board of administration.

.2 Personnel

a. The board consists of the pastoral staff, lay leader, lay delegate (chairperson, when there are multiple delegates), treasurer, secretary, 3-5 members at large, and the chairperson of each commission established by the board (see 207).

b. The board will elect these officers from its own number: a chairperson and assistant chairperson.

c. The board will appoint from the church membership a church treasurer and secretary, both of whom will be members of the local board. All other board members, except for the pastoral staff, will be elected by the church membership.

d. All lay board members must be members of the local church.

e. No board member can serve more than six consecutive one-year terms. However, a person can be re-elected to the board after a one-year absence. No individuals can hold more than two offices that place them on the local board. These rules apply only to churches with more than 50 adult members.

.3 Duties

a. The local board has the freedom to establish the structure that will best suit the needs and ministries of the congregation and community.

b. All of the board's rulings and policies must be in harmony with the policies and proceedings of the annual conference and the general church.

d. The board will nominate lay delegates.

c. The board will annually provide for a nominating committee which consists of the pastor and four other persons. This committee will nominate persons for the various positions to be elected by the church, local board, and Sunday school.

e. The board, when desired, shall provide for the election of deacons/deaconesses who will serve as spiritual leaders within the church. Their ultimate purpose should be to develop and nurture the spiritual lives of members and to preserve the witness of the church. Persons nominated for this position must meet these qualifications: faithfulness to their duties as members, an exemplary personal life, and abstention from the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco. They shall serve three-year terms.

When a board is initially formed, one-third of the members shall serve for one year, one-third for two years, and one-third for three years. The term of office for each shall be determined by lot. No deacon/deaconess may serve more than two terms consecutively in office, but may be re-elected to the board after one year's absence.

207. Commissions of the Church

The local church may use any or all of the following commissions to accomplish its mission and ministry. These commissions report to the administrative board through the elected chairperson, who is a voting member of the administrative board. The chairpersons are elected by the church membership.

The following commission structure is suggested as a guideline for local churches. The areas of responsibility, as suggested,

are not meant to limit the responsibilities assigned by the local board of administration.

.1 Evangelism and Discipleship Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, and four persons appointed by the local board.

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—Any evangelism and/or discipleship ministry (including GRADE and GROW), any spiritual renewal emphasis, and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

.2 Missions Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, president of the WMF, president of Masters Men International, and two persons appointed by the local board. (If the elected chairperson is president of either the WMF or Master's Men International, the board will appoint three persons.)

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—Missions conferences, self-denial emphases, thank offerings, mission work teams, and other areas of ministry assigned by the local board.

.3 Worship and Music Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, pastor, and three persons appointed by the local board.

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—Ushers, greeters, children's worship, choir, organist, pianist, special music and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

4. Christian Education Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, Sunday school superintendent/director of Christian education, youth sponsor, and two persons appointed by the local board. (If the elected chairperson is either the Sunday school superintendent/director of Christian education or the youth sponsor, the local board will appoint three persons.)

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—Sunday school, youth, VBS, singles, camping, senior adults, family, children's ministries, and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

.5 Spiritual Care Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, lay leader, pastor, and two persons appointed by the local board. It should include someone involved in the GRADE Barnabas ministry or a similar responsibility.

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—Visitation, deacons' work, social concerns, food pantry, serve as the membership committee, and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

.6 Property Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, and four persons appointed by the local board. These people are the trustees of all church property.

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—Care for all physical property needs—including the insuring, maintaining, and protection of all property—and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

This commission shall, in keeping with applicable laws and the Constitution of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the applicable provisions of the Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, hold in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ all property of the local church, real and personal. The trustees shall hold this property subject to

the control and will of the local board of administration.

.7 Finance Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, church treasurer, and three persons appointed by the local board.

b. *Areas of Responsibility*—All financial policies and procedures, pastor's salary and benefits, annual budget, the annual audit of church records, stewardship emphasis, and other areas of responsibility as assigned by the local board.

The Finance Commission will name a financial secretary from the church membership. This person will receive and record all offerings received for the support of the local and benevolent budget, provide for the counting of these funds by two or more persons, and keep a confidential record of individual contributions given by envelope or check.

.8 Personnel Relations Commission

a. *Personnel*—The elected chairperson, and four persons appointed by the local board.

b. *Areas of Responsibility*

(1) Serve as a conferring and counseling committee to the pastor and other employed personnel.

(2) Be sensitive to the relationship between the pastor and the local church.

(3) Cultivate the pastor-church relationship.

(4) Interpret to the congregation the nature and function of the pastoral office.

(5) Make recommendations to the Finance Commission concerning the pastor's salary and benefits.

(6) Make recommendations to the local board concerning vacation, pulpit supply, and attendance at conventions and seminars.

(7) Cooperate with the conference stationing committee in securing a pastor when the need arises.

(8) Make recommendations to the local board concerning job descriptions of other employed personnel.

c. *Meetings*—This commission will meet at least two times a year at the request of the chairperson, the pastor, or the conference superintendent. (In matters pertaining to pastoral relations, the committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the pastor and/or conference superintendent. It may meet with the conference superintendent without the pastor being present; however, the pastor must be informed prior to the meeting and immediately afterward be consulted by the conference superintendent.)

208. Local Church Property

.1 Acquisition of Real Estate or Building of Structures

No appointment or local church shall purchase real estate nor commence the building of a meeting house, parsonage, parish hall or any other structure to be used for any other purpose whatever, without first being incorporated where the laws of the state or province require it or unless in compliance with those provisions of the laws of the state or province or other governmental authority with regard to the ownership of real estate or real property when the laws of the state, province or other governmental authority do not require an incorporation.

.2 Approval for Building

No appointment or local church nor any entity of an appointment or local church, nor any official or officials of an appointment or local church shall purchase any real estate, nor

shall they commence any building, structure or addition to an existing building or structure for any purpose whatever, without first obtaining the approval of the annual conference or the conference council of administration acting in its stead, having jurisdiction over such appointment or local church.

.3 Sale, Rent, or Pledging as Security of Property of Local Churches

Appointments and local churches shall not authorize the leasing, renting, mortgaging or sale of the property of local churches without obtaining the express written approval of the annual conference or the conference council of administration acting in its stead. No appointment or local church shall borrow monies from any source in excess of 20% of its annual income, as recorded in the last printed annual minutes of the annual conference, without the express written approval of the annual conference, or the conference council of administration acting in its stead. Appointments and local churches shall not pledge their real property, personal property, monies or future income or contributions as security for bonds or other evidences of indebtedness issued by such appointments or local churches or by any other entity without the express written approval of the annual conference or the conference council of administration acting in its stead.

.4 Repair, Maintenance and Upkeep

The approval of the annual conference, or the conference council of administration acting in its stead, shall not be required for making ordinary expenditures for the repair, maintenance and upkeep of appointment and local church facilities.

.5 Closing a Church

In the event a board of administration should close an appointment or local church or should terminate its existence but should for any reason fail to convey the property to the annual conference board of trustees within 30 days of said closing, such property, personal and real, shall revert to the conference board of trustees with authority to dispose of the same as provided for herein.

.6 Property of Closed Churches

Local church property, both personal and real, of appointments and local churches closed, without action of its board of administration, for more than one year shall revert to the conference board of trustees to be held in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Such board shall stand in the place of local church board of trustees and shall have the authority to dispose of said property, providing such sale is approved by the annual conference or the conference council of administration acting in its stead.

.7 Selling Church Buildings

No church house or meeting place shall be sold without the consent of the annual conference or the conference council of administration within the bounds of which said property is located if this transaction would result in the disbanding of a local church.

.8 Announcement of Liability

Appointments and local churches shall not in any prospectus, advertising or announcement released for the purpose of selling bonds, or in the course of incurring any other indebtedness, hold forth that the general church or the annual conference is

responsible for the payment of such indebtedness, and shall in such prospecti, advertisements or announcements state that the local church is solely responsible for the payment and interest and principal of such indebtedness.

.9 Minutes of Property Decisions

All appointments and local churches shall cause all actions relating to the purchase of property, personal or real, the building of any meeting house, parsonage, parish hall or other structure; the leasing, renting, mortgaging, or sale of property, personal or real; the borrowing of funds, the pledging of real estate, personal property, monies of future income or contributions as security, to be carefully recorded in the minutes of the board of administration of the appointment or local church. Such minutes shall describe the property involved, the terms of the transaction, the limitations of the transaction contemplated and all other information pertinent to the authority being exercised.

.10 Vacant Parsonages

a. *Rental*—When a pastor refuses to reside in the parsonage, the disposition of the proceeds arising therefrom (rent, etc.) shall be determined by the local board of administration.

b. *Disposition of Parsonage*—In cases where pastorates having parsonages upon them are divided, the disposition of said parsonages shall be submitted to a board of arbiters consisting of three members of the church, one to be chosen by each local conference and a third by these two, to whom the whole matter shall be referred. From their decision an appeal may be taken to annual conference. In cases where more than two local conferences are interested, the same plan shall be pursued.

III. Affiliate Local Church

209. Definition

The Church of the United Brethren in Christ invites any congregation of Christians to become an affiliate local church in order that the name of Jesus Christ may be more adequately exalted and that His commission to preach and teach the gospel to all the world may be more completely fulfilled provided that:

- .1 They subscribe to the Confession of Faith.
- .2 They individually answer the questions asked of applicants for church membership with the understanding that question four concerning being governed by the Discipline excludes the articles on secret combinations in the Constitution and 113.11 in the Duties of Members.
- .3 They agree to the duties as recorded in the Discipline, except 113.11 concerning secret combinations, and subscribe to the Moral and Social Standards.
- .4 The minister of such congregation shall be or shall become a member of an annual conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ on the same basis as any other minister. He shall become subject to assignment by the annual conference and eligible for all benefits and considerations available to the ministers of the church.
- .5 An affiliate local church shall accept the pastor assigned by the annual conference and shall contribute to the general and conference funds according to a mutual agreement.
- .6 An affiliate local church shall be entitled to lay representation in the sessions of the annual conference and the mid-year council but without vote.
- .7 The property investments of an affiliate local church shall

be safeguarded to the local church, and all property investments by the conference or general church shall be safeguarded to the conference or general church.

.8 An affiliate local church may become a full member local church in the conference by a two-thirds vote of those members present at a duly announced meeting for that purpose. Such a vote shall include the purpose of adopting the Constitution and all provisions of Membership (113) of the Discipline.

.9 When an affiliate local church votes to become a member local church in the annual conference, they may retain those members who cannot accept the provision concerning secret combinations (113) on an affiliate membership roll, but shall not receive additional members in this classification following the vote to become a local church in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

.10 This provision shall not be construed so as to permit any local church of the Church of the Untied Brethren in Christ to revert to the status of an affiliate local church.

IV. Local Conference

210. Purpose

The local conference shall be the highest authority in the local church that it represents and shall consider those items of business or concerns which should be cared for under the direction of the bishop or conference superintendent. (See 166.1c, 170.17.)

211. Personnel

The bishop, the conference superintendent, persons holding a local conference minister's license and who are members of the local church, and all the members of the local board of administration shall be members of the local conference.

212. Meetings

The local conference shall meet at the request of the bishop, the conference superintendent, the pastor or upon the written requests of three members of the local board of administration. Such members as are present at any regularly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

213. Officers

.1 *Chairman*—The conference superintendent shall be the chairman of the local conference (except in the case of a special session called by the bishop). If the conference superintendent is not able to be present at a session he has called, he may appoint an elder of the annual conference, in consultation with the bishop, to preside in his place.

.2 *Secretary*—The secretary of the local board of administration shall act as secretary and shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of the local conference in a book provided for that purpose.

214. Duties

.1 *To Grant and Renew Licenses*—The local conference shall grant and renew local conference ministers' licenses and shall recommend to the annual conference those ministers who are qualified for annual conference license to preach. The local conference shall be empowered to take all actions necessary to the licensing of lay ministers. The local conference shall have power to remove either local conference ministers or lay ministers from office according to the further provisions of Discipline.

.2 *To Hear Reports and Review the Activities of All Agencies of the Local Church.*

.3 *To Try Appeals*—The local conference shall receive and try all appeals, references and complaints that may come regularly before it. No members of the local church shall be denied the right to a trial according to Discipline.

.4 *To Enforce Discipline*—The local conference shall enforce Discipline in the local church under its charge.

.5 *To Disband a Local Church*—The local conference shall have the power to disband a local church when in its judgment it is found impracticable to provide the necessary organization and support.

When a local church is disbanded, each member shall have his/her membership transferred to the local church of his/her choice. If that is not done within six months, the conference superintendent shall close the roll by removing the names by revision, or by transferring them to other United Brethren congregations in the area.

V. Annual Conference

215. Purpose

The annual conference shall administer all affairs pertaining to local churches, organizations and agencies within its established boundaries, except those local churches and preaching appointments which are under the direction of the general Board of Church Extension.

216. Personnel

The members of the annual conference are the presiding bishop, elders and licentiates who have been duly received by the conference, the lay delegates and laymen elected to the conference council of administration. Each local church shall be entitled to at least one lay delegate. Furthermore, each conference has the right to determine a proportionate basis of lay representation to its own annual conference. The laymen thus chosen shall have all rights and privileges of ministers in the annual conference except on decisions otherwise restricted by Discipline. (See 205.5.)

217. Absentee

Should any member of the conference absent himself from the sessions of the conference three years in succession without giving a satisfactory reason for so doing, his name may be erased from the roll of the conference.

218. Officers

.1 Bishop

The bishop of the district shall preside over the affairs of the conference and its business sessions. In his absence, he or the Board of Bishops shall designate a chairman pro tempore.

.2 Assistant Chairman

The conference council of administration shall annually name an assistant chairman to assist the chair in administering the business sessions.

.3 Secretary

a. *Purpose*—The secretary shall record the proceedings of the annual conference session, the sessions of the conference council and the mid-year session of the conference, and shall provide for the safekeeping of the permanent records and documents of the

conference. (See 161.8.)

b. *Election*—At the time of its annual organization, the conference council of administration shall name from its membership a secretary who shall perform the duties of this office through the session of the next annual conference.

.4 Treasurer

a. *Purpose*—The treasurer shall receive all funds of the conference and shall disburse the same on order of the conference or the conference council of administration.

b. *Election*—The treasurer shall be appointed by the conference council of administration on a fiscal year basis or any time the office becomes vacant.

c. *Handling of Funds*—The treasurer shall keep an accurate account book of all receipts and disbursements and shall make regular and complete reports as required by the conference and its council of administration. The funds designated for general church benevolences shall be forwarded to the general church treasurer on or before the twentieth of each month.

.5 Conference Superintendent(s)

a. *Purpose*—Conference superintendents shall work with the bishop in implementing the purposes established for ministry within the conference. They shall especially give oversight to the determination of mission and ministries by the local boards of administration in their district.

b. *Election*—Each annual conference shall elect by majority ballot one or more elders to serve as conference superintendents. (See 165.2.)

219. Duties

.1 Examine its Members

A committee of the bishop and the conference superintendent(s) shall examine all ministerial members of the conference and others serving pastorates within the conference regarding their moral character, doctrinal soundness, administrative integrity, and pastoral competency. Should any minister feel he has been unfairly dealt with in the recommendations of the committee, he/she shall be privileged to bring his/her case before the conference. (See 161.3c.)

.2 License and Ordain Candidates for the Ministry

The annual conference shall license candidates for the ministry and ordain elders. (See 158, 159, 161, 162.)

.3 To Provide a Board of Ministerial Relations

The annual conference shall elect a conference board of ministerial relations of three or five elders to assist the conference superintendent and/or the conference in matters of ministerial recruitment and training. Members of the board shall be elected for a term of three years with no more than two members serving concurrent terms. The board shall elect one of its members to serve as its chairman and another to serve as the secretary, both officers to be charged with the customary responsibilities of their offices. Other responsibilities of the board may be delegated to other members of the board.

The board, through its secretary, shall report annually to the annual conference regarding the educational status of each licentiate. Permanent records shall be kept of the individual minister's progress, and such records shall remain the property of the

board and conference.

The conference board of ministerial relations shall have responsibility in the following areas:

- a. To provide orientation and study resources for candidates for a local conference license, and a continuing record of the licensee's educational progress.
- b. To encourage and urge all ministerial candidates and prospects to attend the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries, and to keep a viable communication with them while pursuing their theological studies.
- c. To receive annual reports on each ministerial student enrolled in a theological school.
- d. To give direction and guidance to the educational program of the ministerial candidate who is not regularly enrolled in a theological school.
- e. To examine candidates for annual conference ministerial membership and to make recommendations to the conference.
- f. To report to the conference with recommendations when a licentiate has completed his educational requirements for ordination.
- g. To cooperate with the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries and/or other conference agencies in providing guidance and programming for the continuing education of ministers.

.4 Determine the Mission and Ministry of the Conference

The annual conference shall annually provide for the work of planning necessary for the determination of its response to the mandate of Jesus Christ in ministering through its total effort to support with appropriate resources the mission and ministry of its local churches and other conference agencies.

.5 Appoint a Director of Evangelism

Each conference is encouraged, when practicable, to appoint a director of evangelism who shall assume the responsibility of organizing and directing in each church under his conference a suitable program of training for the pastor, laymen and young people in the basic fundamentals of evangelism.

a. *Qualifications*—He shall have a minimum of ten years of preaching and teaching experience, unless otherwise determined by the conference council. A compassion for people and a calling to be a teacher must be in evidence. He shall be experienced in one of the proven methods of presenting the gospel and should be prepared to stay at a given church until at least the pastor and two lay persons are trained.

b. *Duties*—He shall use a plan of evangelism which is suitable for fulfilling our evangelism objectives. The program shall include instruction in the presentation of the gospel, memorization of scripture verses relating to the subject, on the job training and sharing of results for the edification of the body of believers.

.6 Provide Appropriate Committees and Make Necessary Appointments

The annual conference shall, in keeping with its sense of mission and ministry and the policies of the general church, provide for such committees, commissions, task forces, boards, etc. and provide for any desirable additional offices and appoint the qualified persons necessary to assure the success of its ministry.

.7 To Determine Boundaries

The annual conference shall annually review the list of its

member local churches and take appropriate action to receive new member congregations or to disband those unable to maintain the required organization and ministry at the local level.

The annual conference shall also determine the number and boundaries of superintendents' districts within its boundaries.

.8 Assign Pastors

a. *The Itinerant Plan*—The itinerant plan is the church's method for doing the following:

(1) Using a stationing committee to assign all licensed ministers employed by local churches.

(2) Electing or appointing ministers to annual conference or general church offices.

In all of these assignments, the authority and final decision belongs to the stationing committee, the annual conferences and the general conferences. The authority and final decision does not belong to the local church or any of its committees.

b. *Stationing Committee*—The stationing committee shall be comprised of the bishop (chairman), the conference superintendent(s), and one to three conference elders currently serving pastorates. These elders must be elected to the committee by ballot.

The stationing committee shall supply appointments and local churches with licensed ministers when the need arises, giving preference to ministers on the annual conference roll. Upon advice from the lay delegate(s), personnel relations committee or conference council of administration, the committee may appoint one minister to serve two or more congregations.

c. *Procedure for Assignment*—A minister shall be assigned indefinitely to a congregation. When the need for a change arises, a change may be suggested by the bishop, the conference superintendent, the minister, or the lay delegates(s) of personnel relations committee acting on behalf of the board of administration.

d. *Consultation Privileges*—A personnel relations committee of the lay delegate(s) acting on behalf of the board of administration may appear before its conference stationing committee to make any statement. Ministers may also appear before the stationing committee to state their opinions and wishes. The stationing committee shall be sensitive and consider this information before making a final decision regarding assignments. An assignment shall be made only after consulting with the minister and personnel relations committee or the delegate(s) of the church(es) involved.

e. *Cross-Conference Assignments*—The bishop(s) may consider cross-conference assignments after first consulting with the stationing committees of the annual conferences involved. Assignments shall be made after consultation with the personnel committee of the church(es) and pastor(s) involved.

Any minister assigned to another conference shall have full voting privileges for three years in that conference, but only if he waives, in writing, his voting privileges in the conference of which he is a member. If he does not transfer his conference membership within three years, the voting privileges shall cease.

f. *Appointment of Local Conference Ministers*—If necessary, a local conference minister may be appointed as pastor. However, he must have successfully completed at least one year of the study course.

g. *Report of the Stationing Committee*—The stationing committee shall make regular reports as required by the annual conference or the council of administration.

h. *Filling Vacancies*—The bishop shall provide interim minis-

ters to fill vacancies in conference churches. He shall make such appointments with the consent of the conference superintendent. The appointment of a minister for continuing assignment shall be referred to the stationing committee.

.9 Station Superintendents

Conference superintendents shall be stationed by the bishop and two elders from each conference superintendent district. (See 165.)

.10 Provide Finances

The annual conference shall annually adopt a budget and policies which will govern its financial resources. The budget shall show the amount established for the salary and benefits for pastoral service in each local church, the funds needed for the various interests of the conference, the general benevolent budget allocated or accepted by that conference, and the goals for the designated conference and general offerings.

The annual conference shall also determine a suitable means by which each local church may equitably share in the support of the conference and general budgets. A strictly per member basis shall not be used in such a determination.

.11 Report to the General Board of Administration

The annual conference, through its secretary and bishop, shall prepare such reports as are requested by the General Board of Administration from time to time.

.12 Fill Vacancies

The annual conference, through its council of administration, shall provide for the filling of vacancies which may occur in its offices and appointments except those otherwise provided for.

220. Conference Council of Administration

.1 Purpose

The conference council of administration shall act as an executive committee of the annual conference and is empowered to enact any necessary interim business pertaining to the affairs of the conference except that of examining ministers, the licensing or ordaining of ministers, or the changing of boundaries.

.2 Personnel

a. *Ex Officio Members*—The bishop, the superintendent(s) and the treasurer shall be members of the conference council of administration with vote.

b. *Members at Large*—The annual conference shall annually by majority ballot elect from its membership a designated [no less than three (3) and no more than seven (7)] number of members at large to the conference council of administration, at least two (2) of whom shall be laymen.

.3 Officers

a. *Chairman and Assistant Chairman*—At its first meeting following the conclusion of the annual conference, the council shall elect by ballot a chairman and an assistant chairman from its membership. These persons shall perform the duties usual to their positions.

b. *Secretary*—The council shall also name from its membership a secretary who shall record the sessions of the council, the annual conference sessions and the mid-year session.

.4 Meetings

The council shall determine the time and place of its regular meetings. The council may also meet at the call of the chair or upon the written request of three of its members. All meetings of the council must be duly announced and all members informed by appropriate communication.

.5 Duties

a. *Elect Chairman of Superintendents*—In case of multiple superintendents, the conference council of administration shall elect by ballot the senior or chairman of the superintendents.

b. *Acts as Executive Committee for the Annual Conference*—In keeping with its stated purpose, the council of administration shall care for all interim concerns and business.

c. *Prepare Recommendations*—The council of administration shall provide for an ongoing process of review and evaluation of the total ministry of the conference and its various agencies and shall prepare appropriate recommendations for the consideration of the annual conference. In particular, the council shall prepare recommendations concerning boundaries, budget and finance, and proposals for growth through enlargement and expansion.

d. *Provide for Agenda and Programs*—The council of administration shall provide for the preparation of the agenda and program of the various conference meetings such as the annual and mid-year sessions, ministers' seminars, briefings, etc.

e. *Provide for a Mid-Year Session*—The council of administration may provide for a mid-year council session. Membership in this session shall be the officers of the conference, ministerial members, lay members of the conference council of administration, and newly-elected delegates to the next annual session. In particular, the mid-year session shall be concerned with the ministries of the annual conference and any major considerations which may be recommended to the next annual conference. All members (except delegates from affiliate congregations) shall have vote and the session is empowered to care for all necessary business except that which may pertain to the ministry of the changing of boundaries. United Brethren ministers whose credentials are being transferred from one conference to another may be received by mid-year sessions.

VI. General Conference

221. Purpose

The General Conference shall administer all the affairs pertaining to the boards, agencies, annual conferences, local churches, church extension districts, mission districts and mission conferences under its direction and shall establish policies pertaining to the mission and ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

222. Personnel

The members of the General Conference are the Board of Bishops, the directors elected by the General Conference, and the lay and ministerial delegates elected in accordance with the Constitution and Discipline as follows:

.1 Basis of Representation

a. *North American Annual Conferences*—Each annual conference shall be entitled to two delegates—one minister and one layperson. Each conference shall average its adult membership and morning worship attendance, and shall have one additional dele-

gate for each average of 500 or major fraction thereof above 500.

Those conferences which are entitled to 2 or 3 delegates must include 1 lay delegate.

Those conferences which are entitled to 4, 5, or 6 delegates must include 2 lay delegates.

Those conferences which are entitled to 7, 8, or 9 delegates must include 3 lay delegates.

Those conferences which are entitled to 10, 11, or 12 delegates must include 4 lay delegates.

Those conferences which are entitled to 13, 14, or 15 delegates must include 5 lay delegates.

Those conferences which are entitled to 16, 17, or 18 delegates must include 6 lay delegates.

Those conferences which are entitled to 19, 20, or 21 delegates must include 7 lay delegates.

b. *Church Extension Conferences*—Church extension conferences with at least 250 adult members shall be entitled to one ministerial delegate.

c. *Overseas Conferences*—Overseas representation shall be based on the average of the adult membership and the attendance at the main worship service. Each conference shall be entitled to one ministerial delegate, plus another ministerial or lay delegate, for each additional average of 2000 over the first 1000.

.2 Election

a. *Duties of Bishops*—The Board of Bishops shall as early as possible announce in The United Brethren the number of delegates to which each conference shall be entitled, as appears from the official statistics of the annual conferences at the end of the third year of the quadrennium.

b. *Duty of Annual Conferences*

(1) *Nomination of Elders*—It shall be the duty of each annual conference in session preceding the General Conference delegate election to place in nomination a list of nominees equal to at least double the number of ministerial delegates to be elected, providing there are a sufficient number available. The nominees shall be chosen by ballot containing the names of all eligible elders.

(2) *Nomination of Laymen*—In the third year of the quadrennium the local board of administration shall nominate an eligible layman as a candidate for lay representation in the General Conference who has agreed to serve if elected.

From this number of nominees, the annual conference preceding the General Conference shall place in nomination a list of nominees equal to at least double the number of lay delegates to be elected. These nominated lay persons and nominated elders of the conference shall constitute the ballot for the election of delegates to General Conference.

(3) *Identification*—In connection with each name (ministerial and lay) placed on the ballot for election of delegates to the General Conference, the following information shall be added or furnished separately: the address, church to which the person belongs and his position in the local church or annual conference.

(4) *Board of Tellers*—It shall be the duty of each annual conference at the annual session preceding the General Conference delegate election to elect a board of tellers consisting of three members and three alternates, whose duty it shall be to receive and count the ballots cast for delegates and alternates.

c. *Duty of the Conference Council of Administration*—The council shall delegate the responsibility for and provide for the expense of printing the ballots and the bills of election. The

ballots and bills of election are to be printed and in the hands of the pastors by September 15 preceding the election.

d. *Duty of the Pastors*—It shall be the duty of the pastors to place the ballots and bills of election in the hands of the local board of election and to faithfully announce the election and to fully explain the procedure of the balloting and any referendum which may be presented at the time of election.

e. *Duty of Local Board of Election*—The lay leader, serving as chairman, the secretary of the local board of administration and one or two more members of the local board of administration who have been appointed by the board for that purpose shall receive the ballots cast by the members of their local church.

It shall be the duty of the local board of election to be present and to receive ballots at any and all meetings of the local church during the month of October; to record the name of each voter; to record, after the last service in which ballots can be received, the name of each elder and layman voted for, together with the number of ballots received; and to sign, seal and forward the bill of election by November 15 to the annual conference board of tellers. The local board of election shall keep the list of names of the voters, together with the ballots and a copy of the bill of election, until the close of the General Conference.

f. *Time of Election*—The election shall be held in the month of October preceding the sitting of the General Conference.

g. *Absentee Voters*—Members incapacitated by age or other unavoidable circumstances may send their ballots in sealed envelopes with their names written on the outside. Conference superintendents and pastors may cast their ballots at the local church where they are stationed or regularly attend. Voters may designate their choice on the ballots by the cross sign X.

h. *Pastors of Affiliate Local Churches and Their Spouses and Dependents*—Pastors of affiliate local churches, their spouses and their dependents, who are either members of a fully constituted local church or members of the local affiliate congregation and meet all requirements for full United Brethren adult membership may send their ballots in sealed envelopes with their names written on the outside to the conference board of tellers.

i. *Duty of Annual Conference Board of Tellers*—The duties of the annual conference board of tellers shall be as follows:

(1) to make a list of all elders and laymen on the ballot, along with the number of votes cast for each. This shall be completed after November 15 as soon as possible.

(2) When a tie occurs, the board of tellers shall determine by lot which of them is elected.

(3) The elder receiving the highest number of votes shall be the delegation chairman.

(4) Those elected shall be notified by December 1.

(5) The board shall send a complete transcript of the election to the Board of Bishops and to each local church and pastor by December 15.

(6) The conference superintendent shall be notified if local church reports are received with a postmark later than November 15.

j. *Delinquent Local Church Reports*—If a delinquent local church wants to have its votes counted, the following procedure shall be used:

(1) The conference superintendent shall convene a meeting of the conference council of administration. The council shall appoint an investigating committee.

(2) The committee shall investigate the following:

(a) Was the election held at the proper time?

(b) Are the ballots being held, along with a record of the persons who cast ballots?

(c) Does the local board of election have a copy of the bill of election?

(3) The ballots may be counted if the above questions are answered in the affirmative and if the local church pays the cost of the investigation.

k. *Publication*—The Board of Bishops shall publish the names of those elected delegates and alternates in The United Brethren no later than the February issue, and furnish a copy to the secretary of the General Conference. The published list, as certified by the Board of Bishops, shall be sufficient credentials for all delegates in the General Conference.

l. *Vacancies*—If one or more of the delegates elected should be prevented from attending, it shall be the duty of the annual conference board of tellers to notify the first alternate to take his place and to descend to the last alternate.

m. *Contested Elections*—In case of contest of election, this annual conference board of tellers shall furnish each contestant with an exact copy of the election returns, when requested.

Should a contestant feel that a recount is necessary, he should notify the conference superintendent who in turn shall call a meeting of the conference council of administration. The council shall appoint a committee of three to make the recount, first on the local level. Any local boards who do not have the ballots together with the list of votes and bills of election will be disqualified. The recount committee shall report to the conference council of administration who shall declare the delegates elected. The contestant requesting the recount shall pay the expense involved.

223. Officers

.1 *Bishops*—The Board of Bishops shall designate from their number chairmen for the various sessions of the General Conference.

.2 *Directors*—The directors of the various departments as established by Discipline shall assist the bishops in administering the affairs of the General Conference.

.3 *Secretary*—The executive committee of the General Board of Administration shall appoint a secretary who shall record the proceedings of the conference.

.4 *Parliamentarian*—The executive committee of the General Board of Administration shall appoint a parliamentarian to assist the bishops in questions of procedures and rules of order.

224. Duties

.1 *Constitutional*—The General Conference shall perform all the duties assigned it in the Constitution. (See 11, 12.)

.2 *Receive and Evaluate Reports*—The General Conference shall receive reports and recommendations from the officials, general departments and boards, agencies, conferences and districts of the church. The conference shall cause these reports to be evaluated and act on any recommendations submitted with them.

.3 *Elect Officials and General Boards*—The General Conference shall elect at each quadrennial session a bishop or bishops and such directors and general boards as may be required by Discipline.

The conference shall determine the time of elections. However, said elections shall not be scheduled to precede the consideration of the reports of the officers and boards reporting to the conference.

.4 *Revise Discipline*—The General Conference shall consider the revision of Discipline in accordance with its established rules and procedures.

.5 *Determine the Mission and Ministry of the Church*—The General Conference shall provide for the guidelines and planning necessary for the church to respond to the mandate of Jesus Christ in ministering through its total effort to support with appropriate resources the mission and ministry of its agencies, departments, conferences, districts and local churches.

.6 *Provide Appropriate Committees and Make Appointments*—The General Conference shall, in keeping with its sense of mission and ministry, provide for such committees, commissions, task forces, boards, etc., as may facilitate the planning and implementation necessary to the fulfillment of its objectives for the church.

.7 *Provide for Finance*—The General Conference shall receive and review the projected budget for the various departments and general denominational needs. It shall establish a general benevolent budget, approve the various special offerings to be received in behalf of the departments or agencies of the church and their goals, and make provision for the various conferences to share in meeting the benevolent budget.

VII. The General Board of Administration

225. Purpose

The General Board of Administration shall act in the interim between General Conference sessions to review and direct the implementation of the planning and policies of the General Conference concerning the mission and ministry of the church and shall have controlling power over all departments and agencies of the church.

226. Personnel

.1 *Members*—The members of the General Board of Administration are the bishops; the directors of the various departments of the church; the designated superintendents of the annual conferences in North America; and three laymen to be elected by the General Conference, from each bishop's district in North America. These laymen shall have served either as a delegate to General Conference, as a member of the General Board or a general department board, or as a delegate to annual conference. They shall be elected for a term of four years.

.2 *Designated Conference Superintendents*—Each conference shall be represented by the chairman of its superintendents. Conferences with less than 1000 adult members shall have one representative. Conferences with 1001 to 2500 adult members shall have two representatives. Conferences with 2501 to 4000 adult members shall have three representatives. Conferences with more than 4000 adult members shall have four representatives. The additional representatives shall be conference superintendents and shall be appointed as representatives by the conference council of administration. If a conference does not have sufficient superintendents to fill its quota of representatives, the conference council of administration shall appoint from its own number sufficient persons to fill the quota.

227. Officers

.1 *Chairman*—The chairman of the Board of Bishops shall be the presiding officer of the sessions of the board.

.2 *Assistant Chairman*—The board at the time of its organization shall elect by ballot one of its members to be the assistant chairman.

.3 *Secretary*—The board shall select one of its members to be the recording secretary.

228. Meetings

The board shall meet within thirty days after the adjournment of the General Conference. It shall meet annually thereafter, except during the year of General Conference, and at other times as designated by its action or the action of the executive committee.

229. Duties and Powers

The General Board of Administration shall have the essential function of accepting the policies established by the General Conference.

.1 Review and Evaluation

The board shall provide for an ongoing process of review and evaluation of mission and ministry of the church and give appropriate recommendations and directives to the officers, commissions and conferences of the church.

.2 Reports

The board shall receive and review reports.

.3 Salary Policies and Schedules

The board shall set salary policies and schedules for the bishops, directors and other staff members.

.4 Additional Policies

The board shall determine and approve policies that relate to the work of the bishops and the directors which are in addition to those already contained in the Discipline.

.5 Acquisition and Disposition of Properties

The board shall authorize the acquisition and disposition of all real estate properties and physical properties for the general church.

.6 Review Budget and Offerings

The board shall provide for an annual review of the budget and schedule of offerings established by the General Conference. It shall make provisions for adjustments and sharing in the benevolent budget as necessary.

.7 Interpret Discipline

The board shall decide by majority vote questions of Discipline arising during the quadrennium. Between sessions of the General Board or the General Conference, a bishop's ruling will be accepted as the interpretation of Discipline. His interpretation will stand until the next meeting of either the General Board or the General Conference. (See 170.20.)

.8 Vacancies

The board shall be empowered to fill vacancies occurring in the office of the bishop and also to fill vacancies occurring in the office of any director. The board shall be empowered to fill vacancies occurring in its own membership.

.9 Appoint General Treasurer/Officer Manager

a. *Purpose*—The office manager shall assist the chairman of the Board of Bishops in the general administration of the denominational offices and act as general treasurer of the church.

b. *Appointment*—The General Board shall confirm the recommendation of the General Executive Committee of the person to

fill this office or to declare the office vacant for due cause. Should a vacancy occur, the General Executive Committee shall have power to act in the interim.

c. Duties

(1) *Supervision*—The office manager shall supervise the operation of the retirement program, the provision for general ministerial aid, the work of office personnel in the general offices, and shall perform any other administrative functions assigned by the General Board or the General Executive Committee.

(2) General Treasurer

(a) *Purpose*—The general treasurer shall perform the general duties of the office for the General Board of Administration, and the departments and agencies of the church as designated by the General Conference or the General Board of Administration.

(b) *Bond*—The executive committee shall fix the amount of bond necessary.

(c) *Accountability*—The general treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds placed under his/her care by the General Board. He/she shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements. He/she shall give reports to the various departments and agencies as requested, an annual report to the General Board of Administration and quarterly reports to the General Executive Committee.

(d) *Disbursements*—The general treasurer shall disburse funds only upon order through written directives from the appropriate officers and departments of the church.

.10 Appointments

The board shall act on the appointment of such other persons as the directors and the bishop(s) shall recommend.

.11 Recommendations

The board shall provide for preparation of suitable recommendations concerning the amendment of the Constitution and circulate them as a referendum to the electorate of the church and other such recommendations to the General Conference concerning the mission and ministry of the church and the revision of Discipline, as appropriate.

230. General Executive Committee

.1 Purpose

The General Executive Committee shall act in the interim between meetings of the General Board to review and direct the implementation of the planning of the General Board and the various departments of the church concerning the mission and ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

.2 Personnel

The members of the General Executive Committee are the Board of Bishops, the directors of the various departments and five (5) members at large elected annually by the General Board from its membership. In the event of a vacancy among the members at large, the committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy in the interim.

.3 Officers

The committee at its first meeting in the quadrennium shall elect by ballot from its members a chairman, an assistant chairman, and a secretary.

.4 Meetings

The committee shall meet at least semi-annually in the interim between meetings of the General Board.

.5 Duties

a. *Receive and Evaluate Reports*—The committee shall receive at its meetings reports from the bishops and the general treasurer/office manager.

b. *Coordinate Planning*—The committee shall provide for the coordination, promotion and implementation of the policies and planning of the church, its agencies and various departments.

c. *Appointments*—The committee shall appoint such task-oriented groups and personnel as deemed advisable in implementing the policies and planning of the church, its agencies and various departments.

d. *Provide and Review Job Descriptions*—The committee shall provide for and review at least annually the job descriptions of the elected and appointed officials of the church and the various departments of the church, boards of directors of the various departments and agencies of the church, and the various groups and individuals appointed by the General Conference, the General Board of Administration and the General Executive Committee for the purpose of defining and implementing the mission and ministry of the church.

e. *Prepare Recommendation*—The committee, based on its review of reports, job descriptions, etc., shall make recommendations to the General Board of Administration, the departments and agencies of the church and to other policy and decision-making groups as deemed appropriate and advisable.

f. *Arrange for Meetings*—The committee shall arrange for the meetings of the General Board of Administration and the General Conference. It shall be responsible for the appointment of all necessary committees, the provision and allocation of travel expense, the preparation of agenda, etc.

g. *Recommend Personnel*—The committee shall recommend to the General Board of Administration a suitable person for the office of general treasurer/office manager and make other personnel recommendations as directed.

h. *Provide for Audit*—The committee shall provide for the annual audit of the various accounts of the general church by a certified public accountant.

i. *Provide Report Forms and Certificates*—The committee shall provide for the forms necessary for the required reports coming to the various review and policy making boards of the church. The committee shall also approve the forms and certificates issued for the licensing and ordination of ministers and for membership in the church.

j. *Administer Retirement, Ministerial Aid and Insurance Programs*—The committee shall administer the funds and plans established and in accordance with the policies determined by the General Conference and the General Board of Administration for the retirement, ministerial aid and insurance programs of the church.

k. *Provide for Charter Revision*—The committee shall provide for the annual review and revision of the various corporate charters which apply to the church, its agenda and departments.

l. *Provide for Permanent Records and Documents*—The committee shall provide for the proper recording and preservation of the proceedings of the General Conference, the General Board of Administration, the various departments and other appropriate material which should be deposited in the church archives.

CHAPTER V PROPERTY

I. General

251. Security of Property

.1 All church property shall be secured by a legal document recognized by the state or province or other governmental authority in which the property is located and held in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ by a board of trustees, and their successors in office, of local churches and other entities authorized to hold property pursuant to the Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Churches or other legal entities of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ holding property shall be incorporated if required by the law of the state or province or other governmental authority in which it is located.

.2 Local Church Title—Recognizing that local church property is held in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, local churches desiring to hold title to property in the name of the local congregation may do so when the following procedure has been followed:

a. The local board of administration of said church shall prepare a recommendation concerning the acquiring of the title to be presented to a special called local conference session.

b. The local board of administration shall apprise the annual conference of the recommendation by submitting copies to the bishop and conference superintendent.

c. The annual conference council of administration shall determine the capital funds invested in the property by the annual conference and/or the general church that would need to be repaid.

d. The local board of administration shall make an announcement to the congregation about the meeting of the local conference stating the date and purpose of the meeting. This announcement shall be made at least one month before the meeting.

e. The local conference shall require a two-thirds favorable vote to pass the resolution.

f. The bishop or his appointee shall chair a meeting of the adult members of the congregation. Each member shall be informed by a certified letter three months in advance of the meeting. The letter shall explain the purpose of the meeting. It will require a two-thirds favorable vote to pass the resolution.

g. After all of the above conditions have been met, a duly organized meeting of the annual conference or the conference council shall be held and a motion shall be passed whereby that organization sells, conveys or releases, in the form of a deed, the property to the local church. The chairman and secretary shall sign a resolution in the form of a certified copy indicating that the property is so conveyed. This shall be signed before a notary public. This certified copy and the deed are both necessary to convey property title to the local church. The vote by the annual conference or the conference council shall be by ballot and shall require a two-thirds favorable vote. Expenses incurred shall be assumed by the local church.

II. Boards of Trustees

252. Local Church Trustees (See 208.2, 209.)

253. Annual Conference Trustees

The annual conferences may elect boards of trustees to acquire, control and dispose of property in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ who shall hold office for three years,

providing at the first election under this provision one or more shall be elected for three years, one or more for two years, and one or more for one year, and at the expiration of their terms their successors shall be elected for three years. If the annual conference has a board of trustees other than the conference council of administration, the chairman of the board of trustees shall be a member ex officio of the conference council of administration.

254. General Board of Trustees

The executive committee of the General Board of Administration shall act as the general board of trustees of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. This board shall hold and control all church property and funds not otherwise provided for, subject to the direction of the General Conference or the General Board of Administration. It shall report annually to the General Board of Administration and quadrennially to the General Conference. The general church treasurer is the treasurer of this board of trustees.

255. Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs in any of the foregoing boards of trustees, the conference or governing body to which it is amenable shall fill such vacancy. In all cases the board shall see that the records required by the civil law governing such cases shall correspond to the facts.

256. Vacant Church Property

When any of our houses on vacant pastorates cease to be used by our people for religious purposes and for that or other reasons are left without a properly constituted board of trustees, the conference superintendent of the district on which the vacancy occurs shall notify the board of trustees appointed by the annual conference for the purpose of taking charge of such property, which shall hold the property in trust to control, rent or sell as the annual conference may direct; provided, however, that should the district be without a conference superintendent, the bishop of the annual conference shall notify said board of trustees. In the event of sale, all money derived from the sale shall be held in trust by the annual conference board of trustees for a period of one year. If within that time another local church is organized in the same locality the money derived from said sale may be used by the new local church; otherwise it may become a part of funds of the annual conference to be used as the trustees shall determine.

CHAPTER VI BOUNDARIES

I. Bishop's Districts

276. East

The East Bishop's District includes Florida, Michigan, Michindoh, Ontario, Pennsylvania, and Sandusky conferences.

277. West

The West Bishop's District includes Arizona, California, Central, Midwest, Northwest, and Rock River conferences.

279. Overseas

The Overseas Bishop's District includes all overseas conferences and mission districts, namely: Honduras, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Sierra Leone, the Nicaragua Mission District, the Mexico Mission District, and the Macau Mission District.

II. Overseas Conferences

280. Overseas Conferences

.1 *Honduras*—The Honduras Conference includes all the territory in the Republic of Honduras.

.2 *Hong Kong*—The Hong Kong Conference includes all the territory in the Hong Kong colony.

.3 *Jamaica*—The Jamaica Conference includes all the island of Jamaica.

.4 *Sierra Leone*—The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Sierra Leone Conference, includes all of Sierra Leone, West Africa.

III. Conference Districts

281. Arizona Conference

The Arizona Conference includes the State of Arizona.

282. California

The California Conference includes the State of California.

283. Central

Central Conference includes the portions of the states of Indiana and Ohio bounded as follows: Beginning at the southwest corner of the State of Indiana, thence north on the west line of the State of Indiana, to the northwest corner of Benton County, thence east on the north line of White, Cass, Miami, Wabash and Huntington counties, thence north on the west line of Allen County to the point where the Allen County line turns east, thence east on a straight line to the northwest corner of Putnam County, Ohio, thence east on the north line of Putnam County to the northwest corner of said county, thence south on the east line of Putnam and Allen counties to the northwest corner of Hardin County, thence south on the east line of Hardin County to the Union County line, thence east on the north line of Union County to the northeast corner of said county, thence south on the east line of Union County to the Delaware-Marion County line, thence east on the north line of Delaware, Licking and Muskingum counties to the Guernsey-Muskingum County line, thence south on the eastern boundary of Muskingum and Morgan County lines to Washington County, thence east on the north boundary of said county to the Ohio River, thence south and west on the Ohio River to the point of beginning in the State of Indiana, and the State of Kentucky.

284. Florida

The Florida Conference includes the State of Florida.

285. Michigan

The Michigan Conference includes the entire State of Michigan except the counties of Monroe, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Branch, St. Joseph, Cass and that portion of Berrien lying south of a line extending from the northwest corner of Cass County due west to Lake Michigan.

286. Midwest

The Midwest Conference includes the states of Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Oklahoma and Colorado, three tiers of counties in north Arkansas, and the portion of Missouri west of the west line of Mercer, Grundy, Livingston and Carrol counties and south of the Missouri River.

287. Michindoh

The Michindoh Conference includes the portions of the states

PART THREE: GENERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I CHURCH EXTENSION

301. Article I Name

There shall be a Board of Church Extension known as "The Board of Church Extension of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ."

302. Article II Purpose

The purpose of the Board of Church Extension is to help plant new, healthy, reproducing churches. The board's primary responsibilities are to initiate new churches, and to recruit church planters for areas where there is no United Brethren witness or where the United Brethren church is too weak to engage in effective church extension. Further, the department is to encourage annual conferences and local churches to initiate church extension projects in areas where there is no evangelical witness.

303. Article III Organization

.1 Membership

The general Board of Church Extension shall be composed of the bishops and five persons, at least two of whom shall be from each district, who are members of the conference council from each of the North American bishops' districts, and elected by the General Conference.

.2 Officers

a. The board shall be convened by the chairman of the Board of Bishops as soon as practicable following the General Conference sessions, and shall organize by selecting a chairman, a vice chairman, and a recording secretary.

b. The executive committee of the general Board of Church Extension shall be composed of the officers plus one other member of the board.

c. The general treasurer of the church shall be the treasurer of the board and shall be an advisory member.

.3 Annual Meetings

The board shall meet at least annually. Business arising in the interim shall be committed to the executive committee, which shall have power to act in the name of the board.

.4 Reports

The board shall report annually to the General Board of Administration and quadrennially to the General Conference.

.5 Vacancies

of Ohio, Michigan and Indiana bounded as follows: Beginning at the northeast corner of Monroe County, Michigan, thence west on the north line of Monroe, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Branch, St. Joseph and Cass counties, to the northwest corner of Cass County, thence due west to the shore of Lake Michigan, thence following the south shore of Lake Michigan to the Indiana- Illinois state line, thence south on said line to the southwest corner of Newton County, thence east on the south line of Newton, Jasper, Pulaski, Fulton, Kosciusko and Whitley counties to the southeast corner of Whitley County, thence north on the east line of Whitley County to the point where the east line turns east, thence east on a straight line to the northwest corner of Putnam County, Ohio, thence east on the south line of Defiance County to the southeast corner of Defiance County, thence north on the east line of Defiance County to the Maumee River, thence northeast on the Maumee River to the mouth of the Maumee River, thence northeast on the shore of Lake Erie to the place of beginning.

288. Northwest

The Northwest Conference includes the states of Washington, Idaho and Oregon.

289. Ontario

The Ontario Conference includes the Province of Ontario in the Dominion of Canada.

290. Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Conference includes the portion of the State of Pennsylvania east of a line beginning at the northwest corner of McKean County, thence southward to the northwest corner of the State of Maryland; all of the states of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia except the panhandle of West Virginia; and all of the District of Columbia.

291. Rock River

The Rock River Conference includes the states of Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin, and the portion of the State of Missouri north of the Missouri River and east of the west line of Mercer, Grundy, Livingston and Carroll counties.

292. Sandusky

The Sandusky Conference includes the portion of the State of New York west of a line beginning at the southeast corner of Steuben County, thence due north to the shore of Lake Ontario; the portion of Pennsylvania west of a line beginning at the northeast corner of Warren County, thence southward to the northwest corner of the State of Maryland; and the portions of the states of West Virginia and Ohio bounded as follows: beginning at the southwest corner of the State of Pennsylvania, thence due west of the Ohio River, thence southwest on the Ohio River to the southeast corner of Monroe County, Ohio, thence west on the south lines of Monroe and Noble counties, thence north on the west lines of Noble and Guernsey counties, thence west on the south line of Coshocton, Knox, Morrow and Marion counties, thence north on the west line of Marion and Wyandot counties to the southeast corner of Hancock County, thence west on the south line of Hancock County, thence north on the west line of Hancock County, thence north on the west line of Henry County to the Maumee River, thence northeast on the Maumee River to the mouth of the Maumee River, thence eastward on the south shore of Lake Erie to the Ohio-Pennsylvania state line.

Should a vacancy occur in an office of the board or the executive committee, except in the office of the treasurer, the executive committee may fill such vacancy until the time of the annual meeting.

.6 Duties

a. Goal Setting

(1) It shall encourage each conference to establish new church extension projects and encourage local churches to establish satellite congregations.

(2) It shall conduct studies to establish priorities as to where church extension projects should be encouraged in expanding population areas and among ethnic groups through cross-cultural ministries.

b. Recruitment—The department shall recruit church planters and provide appropriate leadership training through seminars, workshops, etc., at department expense to equip them for church extension. Conferences and churches will be encouraged to assist planters in training expenses.

c. Policies

(1) The board shall adopt such policies and procedures as shall in their judgment best encourage church extension. These policies shall be published and made available to the General Board of Administration.

(2) The Board of Church Extension shall annually review the plan of work and operation of our church planters, with a goal of assisting, interpreting and improving the operation of church planting.

d. Publications—The department shall provide a manual of church extension, books, leaflets and pamphlets as needed.

e. Consultation—The department shall offer consultation and advice for church extension projects.

304. Article IV Standards and Procedures

.1 Establishing an Extension Church

a. The general Board of Church Extension will assist conferences in carrying on the work of church extension within conference boundaries. The Board of Church Extension may initiate projects in those areas outside of conference boundaries.

b. A new church extension project within conference boundaries may be initiated by the Board of Church Extension and the conference council of administration when such projects have been approved by the General Board of Administration or its executive committee.

c. Generally, the initiative in establishing new church extension projects within conference boundaries should rest with the conference committee of church extension. The committee is responsible for initiating the surveys which will indicate the need and possibilities of a society of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ in any prospective area.

d. The various conferences may call upon the board for assistance in formulating policies and procedures for the establishment of extension churches. However, in order to receive financial assistance from the board, the conference council must give its approval and the conference church extension secretary must be able to present in writing sufficient evidence that the proposed extension church can succeed or is succeeding. Such information should include the following:

- (1) Evidence of an interested nucleus.
- (2) Statistics showing that the extension church is located in a

promising center.

(3) An indication of the population mobility rate.

(4) Some indication of the basis of the economy of the community.

(5) The basic religious affiliation of the community.

(6) The prevalence of other churches in the community.

e. Conference extension projects should be staffed with persons whose spiritual and educational qualifications particularly suit them for church planting. They should be gifted in visitation, evangelism, personal contacts, counseling and have an ability to present the unique message and program of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ to those to whom it may be totally new.

f. All necessary arrangements for the establishment and maintenance of the church extension project shall be made by the conference council of administration. However, the church planter shall be under the administrative supervision of the conference superintendent.

.2 Organizing a Local Church—The following guidelines should be used by conference councils in determining when a church extension project should be organized as a local church.

a. An extension project should be organized into a local church when it:

(1) Is spiritually mature and doctrinally sound.

(2) Is informed of the ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ so that it will pray and operate as a church group.

(3) Has sufficient leadership for such organization as will enable it to function as an organized society.

(4) Is financially able to support its work, though for a time it may be advisable for continued outside support to be given.

(5) Is complying with the criteria of 202.2 of Discipline.

b. Each extension project should be considered in view of its particular circumstances.

c. A newly established church will need to have a clear understanding of the operation of our church. Since new members come into the congregation with their preconceived ideas of church procedure, a continuous program of instruction on church policy will be needed in extension projects.

.3 Finances

a. Sources of Income

(1) The general church budget.

(2) The general Department of Missions.

(3) Annuities—The goal for receipts from annuities shall be determined by the board.

(4) Other Gifts—the goal for special gifts and offerings shall be determined by the board.

b. Aid to Churches

The department shall consider and recommend the allocation of funds to the existing general church extension projects or proposed church extension projects, conference projects or satellite ministries.

The following guidelines for appropriations shall be followed: Monies from the fund will be made available to congregations as a grant for the construction of new facilities or for new ministries only after the congregation, together with the conference council of administration, has made formal application for such monies to the Department of Church Extension on forms provided for that purpose by the department. Information to be requested on these forms shall include the church's statement of

purpose and mission around which the building or new ministry will be designated; church membership and morning worship and Sunday school attendance figures for the previous ten year period or the life of the congregation, whichever is greater; ten-year profile of congregational giving and expenses; a current balance sheet; a current statement of income and disbursements; and budget projections showing income and disbursements for the next five years; and also architect or certified-engineer approved blueprints for buildings.

CHAPTER II CHURCH SERVICES

401. Purpose

The Department of Church Services, under the authority of the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, exists to serve by helping our pastors and laity build a quality ministry for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

402. General Board of Church Services

.1 Personnel

The Board of Church Services shall consist of one bishop designated by the Board of Bishops, eight members elected by the General Conference, and up to four members named by the Board of Church Services. The director, associate director(s), and general treasurer will be advisory members without vote.

.2 Duties

- a. To elect from its own number a chairman, assistant chairman, secretary, and other officers as necessary.
- b. To recommend to the nominating committee a suitable director of Church Services.
- c. To employ suitable associate staff to carry out the purpose as stated in 401.
- d. To establish the vision and direction of the ministries of the department.
- e. To evaluate the ministries of the Department of Church Services and the director.
- f. To approve a manual of operations prepared by the director, which shall include job descriptions for associates and other employees in the department.
- g. To review and recommend policies respecting salaries, fringe benefits and business expenses of associates; wages, fringe benefits, business expenses, and employment for hourly employees.
- h. To review and adopt the annual budget of the department.
- i. To review and recommend policies and procedures for related literature, including evaluation of products, editorial policies, production and marketing.

.3 Vacancy

If a vacancy occurs on the board among members elected by the General Conference, the board may submit the name(s) of qualified potential nominees to the General Board of Administration or its executive committee, who shall fill the vacancy by ballot for the rest of the quadrennium.

.4 Meetings

The Board of Church Services shall meet as soon as possible

following its election for the purpose of organization. It shall meet at least annually.

.5 The Executive Committee

The Board of Church Services may elect an executive committee to handle interim decision-making. The members of the executive committee shall be the chairman, assistant chairman, secretary, and two elected members.

403. Director of Church Services

.1 Election

The department shall be administered by a director of Church Services who shall be elected by the Board of Church Services.

.2 Duties

- a. Manage all ministries and services as assigned by the Board of Church Services.
- b. Be responsible for all job descriptions and lines of accountability within the department.
- c. Recommend salary and benefits for staff members.
- d. Work closely with the bishops to implement the goals and objectives of the church.
- e. Report to the Church Services board and the General Board annually.
- f. Be a member of the General Board and its executive committee.
- g. Propose the annual budget to the Board of Church Services.
- h. Recommend to the Board of Church Services the establishment of new positions.
- i. Appoint committees as needed subject to the approval of the Board of Church Services.

404. Annual Conference Board of Church Services

.1 *Election*—Each annual conference is encouraged to elect a director of Church Services, who shall serve as chairman of the board. The term of office may be for three years.

They are also encouraged to elect at least four persons to serve, with the director, as a Board of Church Services. They shall be elected for a term of three years, terms not to be concurrent.

.2 *Relationship*—The director of Church Services shall be a member of the conference Board of Church Services, and shall be an advisory member to the general Board of Church Services.

.3 *Meetings*—The board shall hold its organizational meeting within 30 days after the conference session. It shall meet at such times as the board shall designate. The chairman or three members of the board may call special meetings.

.4 *Duties*—The board shall supervise and promote the work of Church Services throughout the conference.

CHAPTER III EDUCATION

501. Constitution

.1 *Purpose*—The Department of Education is established to create and promote a general interest in Christian higher education in general and Huntington College in particular throughout our denomination, to lay the foundation for Christian character and culture, to promote the distinctive standards and teachings of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and to prepare youth and others for more effective Christian service in the

various vocations of life.

.2 General Conference—The General Conference shall be the final authority in the management of the Department of Education in all matters of policy, procedure and function not otherwise provided herein.

.3 General Board of Administration—This board shall be the interim authority between quadrennial sessions of the General Conference in the management of the Department of Education in all matters of policy, procedure, and function not otherwise provided herein. It shall fill vacancies in the Board of Education by ballot.

502. Constitution

.1 Name

There shall be a general Board of Education known by the name of “The Board of Education of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.”

.2 Functions

The Board of Education shall have general supervision of the work of higher education and other educational interests in our church. It shall:

- a. Have power to locate and establish all necessary institutions of learning.
- b. Review the annual budget for education and consider all requests for funds from the church and report to the General Board of Administration.
- c. Review the trends of giving to Huntington College from the church and recommend any needed action to the General Board of Administration.
- d. Review the student recruitment procedures at Huntington College, the United Brethren student population at Huntington College, and recommend policies to the General Board of Administration.
- e. Review and recommend policy respecting the financial subsidy programs for ministerial training and the financial student assistance programs and the curriculum programs for ministerial training in the undergraduate school and the Graduate School of Christian Ministries.
- f. Review and recommend policy respecting United Brethren ministerial students enrolled in other educational institutions.
- g. Review and recommend policy relating to the relationship between Huntington College and the United Brethren church.
- h. Review and recommend needed revisions of Discipline effecting Christian higher education.
- i. The board shall give oversight to the denominational Archives.

.3 Members

This board shall consist of two bishops as designated by the Board of Bishops, and six (6) other members elected by the General Conference. The director of Education, the president of Huntington College and the chairman of the Huntington College board of trustees shall be advisory members.

.4 Term of Office

This board shall hold office for four (4) years.

.5 Meetings

This board shall meet at least annually. Special meetings may be called by the chairman, the director of Education, and/or upon request of three (3) members.

.6 Quorum

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

.7 Receipt of Funds

This board shall receive all funds raised by the church for general educational purposes and appropriate the same under the direction of the General Conference.

.8 Procurement of Funds

In coordination with the Board of Church Services, it shall have power to request, solicit and/or raise funds or other assets by collections, donations, bequests or otherwise for the benefit of our educational interests, and shall apply such funds as the donors or the General Conference may direct. In the solicitation of funds, encouragement shall be given that they may pass through the local and annual conference treasurers.

.9 Vacancy—In the event of vacancy occurring in the board membership, the General Board of Administration shall fill such vacancy by ballot for the remainder of the quadrennium.

503. Director of Education

The General Conference at each quadrennial session shall elect a director of Education whose duty it shall be to supervise the work of higher education in a manner hereafter to be specified. He shall devote such portion of his time to the work of the board as it may direct, and his compensation shall be fixed by the board. He shall make a full annual report to the General Board of Administration and quadrennial report to the General Conference. The director of Education may be the president of Huntington College.

504. Officers of the Board

.1 Officers—The officers of the Board of Education shall be a president, a vice president, and a recording secretary. These officers shall be elected for the quadrennium at their first meeting following the General Conference.

.2 Treasurer—The general church treasurer shall receive and hold all funds contributed for educational purposes subject to the orders of the Board of Education. The proportion of his salary to be paid by this board shall be determined by the General Board of Administration.

505. Executive Committee of the Board

The board may elect an executive committee if it desires.

506. Conference Directors

.1 Conference Director of Education—Each annual conference shall quadrennially elect a conference director of Education whose duty it shall be to promote the interests of the Department of Education within the bounds of the conference. The conference director shall cooperate with the director of Education in securing students and financial support for Huntington College, and aid in other phases of promotion of Christian higher education.

.2 Local Director of Education—Each local church, through its local board of administration, shall appoint a local director of Education who shall cooperate with the conference director and the director of Education in promoting the total interests of Christian higher education in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

507. Huntington College

.1 Founding

Huntington College was authorized on September 1, 1897, under articles of association signed by the Indiana Secretary of State, to serve as an institution of higher learning belonging to and held in trust for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, to provide opportunities for worthy persons of the supporting denomination and others to prepare for Christian service and to engage in any other activity pursuant to the realization of such aims as an evangelical Christian educational institution would want to accomplish.

.2 Purpose

To create and promote a general interest in higher education, to lay the foundations for character and culture, to promote the Christian teachings and standards of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, to provide opportunities for worthy persons of the supporting denomination and others to prepare for Christian service, and to engage in any other activity pursuant to the realization of such aims as an evangelical Christian educational institution would want to accomplish.

.3 Board of Trustees

The board of trustees is responsible for the management of the college in all aspects and in accordance with the principles of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ under the Board of Education.

a. *Constitution*—The college shall be operated under a constitution and manual of operations. The constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds vote of the General Conference.

b. *By-Laws*—The board of trustees shall adopt such by-laws as shall assure proper operation and management of the college and as shall be approved by the Board of Education.

c. *Membership*—The number, qualifications and composition of the board of trustees shall be set from time to time as required by the General Conference. Members of the Board of Education shall be members of the board of trustees, and shall assume their term of office effective at the time of the fall reorganizational meeting.

d. *Employees as Trustees*—No full-time employee of the college shall be eligible to serve as an active, voting member of the board of trustees.

CHAPTER IV

SECTION I: DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS CONSTITUTION

601. Purpose

The Department of Missions is established in compliance with Christ's commission to go into the uttermost part of the earth as His witnesses and to carry out the missionary program of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

602. Article I Name

The Department of Missions shall function through a board known as "The Board of Missions of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ."

603. Article II Membership

The Board of Missions shall consist of 18 members as follows:

.1 The Overseas bishop.

.2 One other bishop designated by the board of bishops.

.3 Four members elected by the General Conference.

.4 Three other members named by the Board of Missions.

.5 Nine members of the board of directors of the Women's Missionary Fellowship.

604. Article III Meetings

The Board of Missions shall meet annually. Special meetings shall be called by the president or upon request of three members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

605. Article IV Officers

The officers of the Board of Missions shall be a president, a first vice president, a second vice president, a recording secretary and a treasurer.

Officers shall be elected at the board's first regular meeting of the quadrennium and shall hold office until their successors are elected. All officers shall be United Brethren members.

606. Article V Duties and Powers

.1 The Board of Missions may nominate a person as a candidate for the office of Overseas bishop to be considered by the bishops' nominating committee as a suitable candidate for the office of bishop.

.2 Associate directors shall be employed by the Board of Missions, one of whom shall be elected by the Board of Managers of the Women's Missionary Fellowship and who shall direct the work of the Women's Missionary Fellowship. If deemed advisable, the associate director chosen by the Board of Missions may be employed on a quadrennial basis. The duties of these persons shall be defined by the Board of Missions and, by virtue of their employment, they shall be advisory members of the board and of its executive committee. The associate directors shall be responsible to the Overseas bishop in carrying out the program of the Board of Missions in its functions and policies; however, the right of appeal to the board of its executive committee regarding any judgments or procedures shall be considered proper.

.3 The board shall have power to select the location of mission fields, appoint missionaries, receive annuities, legacies and gifts, and appropriate funds of the board, and shall be responsible for the administration and general management of the affairs of the board.

.4 The board shall report annually to the General Board of Administration and quadrennially to the General Conference.

.5 All Overseas conferences so designated by the General Conference or General Board of Administration shall be under the jurisdiction of the Overseas bishop.

607. Article VI Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of five officers and at least two others elected by the board from its membership. This committee shall meet at the call of the president or upon the request of three of its members.

608. Article VII Property

The directors of the Board of Missions shall hold and administer all property coming under its jurisdiction. All legal papers shall be executed by the president and the Overseas bishop who shall sign and seal all such papers, including deeds of transfer, annuities and other documents on behalf of the board.

609. Article VIII Funds

.1 The treasurer of the Women's Missionary Fellowship shall retain such funds as may be determined by its board of directors for the administrative use of said association. All other funds shall be transferred to the treasurer of the Board of Missions.

.2 The treasurer of the Board of Missions shall hold all funds subject to the order of the board, and no funds shall be disbursed by this treasurer except upon the orders of said board, duly signed by the person or persons designated by the board to do so.

610. Article IX Incorporation and Seal

The Board of Missions shall incorporate under its proper name, "The Board of Missions of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Incorporated."

Said corporation shall not be for profit, neither is it to have capital stock.

The principal place of business of the corporation shall be in the City of Huntington, County of Huntington, State of Indiana.

The seal of corporation shall be a stamp with the inscription, "The Board of Missions of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Incorporated."

611. Article X Vacancies

Vacancies that may occur among those members elected by the General Conference shall be filled by the General Board of Administration.

Vacancies that may occur among those members of the Women's Missionary Fellowship board of directors during the quadrennium shall be filled by the Board of Managers of the Women's Missionary Fellowship subject to the approval of the General Board of Administration.

612. Article XI Amendments

This constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the General Conference. Any proposed change or amendment not recommended by the Board of Missions shall not be considered on the same day when presented except that this provision may be suspended by a majority vote of the conference.

613. Article XII By-Laws

The board shall have the power to adopt such by-laws as may be deemed necessary, in harmony with this constitution.

614. Article XIII Related Agencies Within the Department

.1 *Women's Missionary Fellowship*—The Women's Missionary Fellowship shall be a functional branch of the Department of Missions.

.2 *Master's Men International*—The Master's Men International shall be a functional branch of the Department of Missions.

.3 *The Conference Council of Missions*—Each annual conference shall provide a Cabinet of Missions which shall seek to coordinate and promote the interests of the Department of Missions within the conference.

SECTION II WOMEN'S MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP CONSTITUTION

615. Article I Name and Location

.1 *Name*—The name of this organization shall be "The Women's Missionary Fellowship of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Incorporated."

.2 *Principal Office*—The principal place of business of the organization shall be in the City of Huntington, County of Huntington, State of Indiana.

616. Article II Purpose

.1 The purpose of the Women's Missionary Fellowship shall be to unify the missionary efforts of women within the various conferences of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ as they endeavor to assist in the general missionary program of the denomination, which is based upon the Great Commission as found in Mark 16:15, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Through organized channels of activity, both in prayer support and finance, the membership shall seek to promote and sustain the work of Christian missions.

.2 This corporation, organized and incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana, is a non-profit, non-political organization in which no director shall receive any compensation for her services as a director.

617. Article III Membership

.1 *Membership*—Membership in the organization may be obtained by the payment of \$1.00 annual dues to the local society or by the payment of \$100 within a period of four (4) years which shall entitle the payer to a life membership in the organization.

.2 *Branch Organizations and Local Societies*—Branches of this organization may be formed within the territorial boundaries of the annual conferences of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ by the acceptance of their branch organization's procedure as established by the Board of Managers. Local societies of these branches may be formed within the corresponding boundaries by the acceptance of the local organization's procedure as established by the Board of Managers.

Annually, each local society shall elect three delegates to their branch; thereafter, the branch shall elect to the Board of Managers the number of delegates in proportion to their membership as stated in the branch organization's biennial procedure. These elections of delegates at the local society and branch level shall be held prior to the biennial meeting of the Board of Managers.

618. Article IV Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall begin January 1 and end December 31 of each calendar year.

619. Article V Board of Managers

.1 Personnel

The Board of Managers shall consist of the board of directors, the delegates from each branch and the WMF Youth-in-Action representative.

a. The executive secretary, as hereinafter provided for, shall by virtue of her office be an advisory member of this board.

b. The branch delegates, one of whom shall be the branch president.

c. All vacancies in branch delegations shall be filled by elected

alternates only.

d. Life members shall be advisory members of the Board of Managers.

.2 Biennial Meeting

The Board of Managers shall meet biennially, with the date, time and place to be designated by the board of directors, for the purpose of electing the board of directors when necessary, an executive secretary when necessary and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

The executive secretary, as herein provided, shall be an employee of the organization, and the Board of Managers shall delegate her powers, duties and responsibilities; she shall perform the duties usually associated with the position of executive secretary.

.3 Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Managers may be called either by the president and secretary, or on written application of twelve or more members of the Board of Managers.

.4 Notice of Meetings

a. The secretary shall notify in writing all members entitled to vote at such a meeting.

b. Notice may be given either personally, by mail or by telegram not less than five days before the date of such meeting, said written or printed notice to state the place, day and hour of said meeting. In the case of a special meeting or one required by a statute or by these by-laws, the purpose for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice.

c. Any member may waive notice of any meeting by written instrument executed either before or after such meeting.

.5 Quorum

A simple majority of the members of this board shall constitute a quorum at any of its meetings.

.6 Officers

The officers of the board of directors shall act as the officers of the Board of Managers.

.7 Duties

The Board of Managers shall receive and pass upon the reports of the executive secretary, the board of directors, the general treasurer, the recording secretary, the WMF Youth-in-Action representative and the respective reports from all branch organizations.

620. Article VI Board of Directors

.1 General Powers

The board of directors shall be responsible for the conduct of the business and management of the organization. The board shall exercise all the powers inherent in the control and management of the organization, except those expressly reserved to the Board of Managers.

By way of illustration, and not limitation, the board of directors is authorized to enter into contracts in the name of the organization; to borrow money and/or property in the name of the organization; to execute promissory notes, mortgages and other evidences of the indebtedness on behalf of the organization; to receive by gift, devise, bequest or otherwise any money or property, absolute

or in trust, for the furtherance of any of the above mentioned purposes of the organization; and to do any other act or thing deemed necessary to further carry out the purposes of the organization.

.2 Personnel

The number of directors shall be nine, all of whom shall be members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The directors shall be elected by the Board of Managers at the biennial meeting preceding General Conference, and shall serve for a period of four years with their term to begin immediately upon their election and they shall serve for said term and until their successors shall have been elected and qualified. A director may succeed herself in office.

.3 Nominating Committee

At least six months prior to the annual meeting preceding General Conference, the board of directors shall appoint a nominating committee consisting of five members of the Board of Managers. Such committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for election as directors and shall secure the consent of its nominees to serve if elected. The nominating committee shall report its nominations at the biennial meeting of the Board of Managers. Nominations shall be permitted from the floor, provided said nominee has given her consent to the nomination. The WMF directors shall be the nominating committee for the executive secretary, placing one name on the ballot with the privilege of write-in votes.

.4 Election

The Board of Managers, at its biennial meeting preceding General Conference, shall elect by majority ballot the required number of directors.

.5 Vacancies

Vacancies occurring on the board of directors may be filled at any time by the board of directors, and such appointees shall serve the entire unexpired term of their predecessors.

.6 Quorum

A simple majority of the board of directors shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at all of its meetings. The act of the majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the entire board of directors.

.7 Meetings

The board of directors shall meet during the biennial Board of Managers meeting. Any special meeting of the board may be called by the president, or by the secretary upon request of three board members on not less than three days notice.

In all cases where notice of a regular meeting or a special meeting is required, the secretary shall notify in writing all directors entitled to vote at such meeting. Notice may be given either personally, or by mail, or by telegram, said written or printed notice to state the place, time and general purpose of the meeting.

a. If mailed, the notice of the meeting shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the United States mail properly addressed to the member at her address as it appears on the records of the corporation, with postage thereon prepaid.

b. If by telegram, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when the telegram is delivered to the telegraph company.

c. At any meeting at which all directors are present, notice of the time, place and purpose thereof shall be deemed waived.

Any director may waive notice of any meeting by written instrument executed either before or after such meeting.

.8 Executive Secretary

The executive secretary as herein provided shall be an advisory member of the board of directors.

.9 Committees

Advisory and other committees and sub-committees may be designated by the resolution of the board of directors.

621. Article VII Officers

.1 Personnel

The officers of the organization shall be a president, two vice presidents, a recording secretary and a treasurer. The board of directors shall appoint the WMF Youth- in-Action representative from the membership of the organization.

.2 Election, Qualification and Term of Office

The officers of the organization shall be members of the board of directors and shall be elected annually by the board of directors at its first meeting of each year. The officers shall take office on the date of their election and shall hold office until their successors shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified. Vacancies may be filled at any meeting by the board of directors.

.3 Duties of Officers

The duties of the officer shall be as such attached to such offices and such further duties as may be designated from time to time by the board of directors, and by way of illustration and not limitation, are as follows:

a. *President*—The president shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Managers and board of directors. She shall act as executive officer of the organization, and in general, perform the duties usually associated with the office of president; in the name of the corporation she shall execute all instruments, deeds, contracts and conveyances as authorized by the board of directors.

b. *Vice Presidents*

(1) *First Vice President*—She shall assist the president in the performance of her duties. She shall act as president in the absence of the president.

(2) *Second Vice President*—She shall preside in the absence of the president and first vice president.

c. *Treasurer*—The treasurer shall receive all revenues of the organization and shall maintain a complete and accurate account of all funds received and disbursed. She shall be the legal custodian of all monies, notes, securities and other valuables of the corporation. She shall furnish at all meetings of the board of directors, or whenever requested, the statement of the financial condition of the organization. The treasurer shall be bonded in an amount to be determined by the board of directors.

d. *Recording Secretary*—The recording secretary shall handle the correspondence of the organization when directed by the board of directors or Board of Managers, and shall maintain a record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Board of Managers and of the board of directors.

She shall serve all notices of the organization, Board of Managers and board of directors. The recording secretary shall attest the execution by the president acting in the name of the organization, of all instruments, deeds, contracts and conveyances as

authorized by the board of directors. The records of the organization shall be kept at its principal office.

.4 Delegation of Authority

In the case of the absence of any officer of the organization, or for any reason that the board of directors may deem sufficient, the board may delegate the power or duties of such officers to any other officer or to any other director for the time being, provided a majority of the entire board concur therein.

622. Article VIII Contracts, Checks, Deposits and Funds

.1 *Contracts*—The board of directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the organization, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the organization and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

.2 *Checks, Drafts, Etc.*—All checks, drafts or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the organization, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the organization and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the board of directors.

.3 *Deposits*—The funds of the organization shall be deposited to the credit of the organization in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the board of directors may select.

.4 *Gifts*—The board of directors may solicit and accept on behalf of the organization any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the general purpose or for any specific purpose of the organization.

623. Article IX Seal

The board of directors shall provide a corporate seal which shall be in the form of a circle and shall have inscribed thereon the name of the organization.

624. Article X Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Orders shall govern on the conduct of business and all cases in which they are applicable and not in conflict with these by-laws.

625. Article XI Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this organization, or in the event it shall cease to exist for the stated purposes, all the property and assets shall be distributed to the Board of Missions of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

Under no circumstances shall any of the property or assets of this organization during the existence and/or upon the dissolution thereof go and be distributed to any officer or member of this organization, except for the payment of services actually rendered.

626. Article XII Amendment

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at the annual meeting of the Board of Managers by two-thirds vote of those present and qualified to vote, provided that the proposed amendment has been presented to the board of managers at their previous annual meeting and that such amendment has been approved by the board of directors.

Section III

MASTER'S MEN INTERNATIONAL CONSTITUTION

627. Name

The name of the organization shall be "Master's Men International of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ."

628. Purpose

The Master's Men International shall be functionally related to the Department of Missions. It exists to accomplish the following:

- a. Exalt the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and to extend His kingdom.
- b. Encourage men of the church as leaders in Christ's great work.
- c. Participate in a definite church-wide, year-round campaign of evangelism at home and abroad.
- d. Become unitedly a power of righteousness in the community and in the nation.
- e. Mold into one by Christian fellowship the men of the church.

629. Membership

All adult male members of the United Brethren church, along with others who are in sympathy with the denomination and the statement of purpose of Master's Men International, are members. There are no membership dues.

630 Local Master's Men International

.1 Organization

It is suggested that the pastor and/or the chairman of the local board of administration convene the initial organization. Structure is to be minimal and flexible. Simplicity and effectiveness are necessary. The annual reorganization will coincide with other church organization and elections.

.2 Local Men's Council

The board of administration will elect 2-6 men who, along with the pastor, shall comprise the local Men's Council. They will seek out and appoint qualified persons to assist on the local church level.

.3 Leadership

The Men's Council may appoint leaders as needed. They must meet these qualifications: faithful to Jesus Christ, His church, and the church leaders; willing to serve and provide vision, passion, and an example for men; and faithful to his church membership duties. Following is a list of suggested leaders, all of whom shall be members of the Men's Council.

a. *Chairman*—The chairman is the spiritual leader of the local organization. He conducts meetings of the Local Men's Council, and oversees the total ministry of Master's Men International. As chairman, he is a member of the Commission on Missions.

b. *Program Director*—This person plans, provides, and promotes all programming with purpose, quality, and variety.

c. *Outreach Projects Director*—This person plans, provides, and promotes home and foreign mission projects with purpose, quality, and variety. He seeks to involve all men in "hands-on" ministry.

d. *Finance Director*—This person plans and promotes funding, and serves as the organization's treasurer. He annually arranges a responsible offering and/or support for the denominational Master's Men International. It is recommended that funds be funnelled through the local church treasurer.

.4 Meetings

The Master's Men International may hold monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly meetings.

.5 Financial Ministries

The Master's Men International recognizes that part of its purpose is giving. The local and foreign ministries require financial support, which can come through offerings, faith promise, financial projects, investments, and other fundraising endeavors.

.6 Other Ministries

As needs arise and diminish, various ministries could be added or set aside. These might include refugee ministry, Hispanic ministry, sports ministry, boys' ministry, and disaster relief.

631. Conference Men's Council

.1 *Personnel*—The Master's Men International of each conference shall have a governing body consisting of 3-7 men. The conference council of administration shall designate one of its members to the council. The other members shall be elected annually by the annual conference.

.2 *Chairman*—The conference Men's Council shall elect its own lay chairman. It is recommended that the chairman be named to the conference Cabinet of Missions.

.3 *Leadership*—The conference Men's Council shall assign all leadership duties to its members. The leaders and qualifications stated in 630.3 are to be implemented at the conference level.

632. General Church Master's Men Council

.1 *Name*—It shall be named "The United Brethren Master's Men International."

.2 *Personnel*—The General Church Master's Men Council shall consist of 5-9 men. It will include a bishop, a Board of Missions staff member, the general director, and at least two annual conference Men's Council chairmen. The council shall be named bi-ennially by the Board of Missions in consultation with the general Board of Church Extension. The council shall elect from its own number a chairman, not to be general director. This council shall assign leadership duties to its members, and may appoint other leaders as needed.

.3 *General Director*—This person is the denominational spokesman for Master's Men International. He should be a mature spiritual leader, preferably a layman, and able to travel promoting men's ministries. He shall be appointed by the General Council and approved by the Board of Missions. It is a non-salaried position.

SECTION VI

ANNUAL CONFERENCE CABINET OF MISSIONS

Each annual conference may provide a Cabinet of Missions as follows:

.1 *Personnel*—The members of the conference Cabinet of Missions shall consist of a director of missions elected by the annual conference, the presidents of the Master's Men International, one WMF branch president (in places where more than one branch exists within the conference, the conference council of administration will select the representative), one conference superintendent (in case of multiple superintendents, the conference council of administration will select the representative), and one

or more members at large elected by the annual conference.

.2 *Duties*—As soon as convenient following the annual conference, the conference director of missions shall convene the cabinet for the purpose of organization, at which time a chairman and a secretary shall be named. The cabinet shall seek to coordinate the mission emphases within the conference, and the cabinet is encouraged to promote one or more missionary conferences during the year.

PART FOUR: LAW ON TRIALS

CHAPTER I TRIAL OF MEMBERS

701. Preliminary to Trial

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican” (Matthew 8:15-17); that is, he shall be expelled. But no member shall be denied the regular committee trial if he requests it.

702. Method of Procedure

In case a member is accused of immoral conduct, the local church shall appoint a committee of two from its own number to visit the accused and, if possible, reclaim him; but if such a visit is unsuccessful, he shall be tried by the church to which he belongs, or by a committee thereof, chosen by the parties concerned in the following manner: the accuser shall choose one committeeman, the accused a second committeeman, and these two a third committeeman; but if these two fail to agree upon the third committeeman within fifteen days, the local conference shall appoint the third committeeman. The pastor in charge of the appointment or local church shall be chairman. If the accused be found guilty, he shall be suspended or expelled. If the accused refuse to choose his committeeman, he may be suspended or expelled by a vote of the church to which he belongs. Yet cases may happen where it would be expedient to choose a committee from other churches than those to which the parties belong; a conference superintendent may be chosen as chairman should the pastor in charge deem it best to do so. Should any member be dissatisfied with the decision, an appeal may be had to the local conference by giving notice thereof to the pastor in charge or to the secretary of the trial, within thirty days after said trial, together with his reasons for such appeal; and it shall be the duty of the secretary to furnish the local conference with a certified copy of the proceedings of the trial and of the notice of appeal. In such case, however, the same person shall not sit in judgment on the same case.

703. Disobedience to the Order of the Church

In case of neglect of duty of any kind, imprudent conduct,

indulgence in sinful tempers or words, or disobedience to the order and discipline of the church, let private reproof be given by the pastor or leader. If there be an acknowledgment of the fault, proper humiliation and a promise to reform, the person may be borne with. On the second offense, the pastor or lay leader shall take with him one or two faithful members. However, if the accused deny guilt he may not be expelled without a regular trial as provided in 702. On a third offense, let the case be brought before the local church or before a select committee thereof, and if there be no satisfactory humiliation, the offender shall be expelled.

In case of trial under this clause, the lay leader shall act in behalf of the church, or if the lay leader be the offender, the secretary of the local board of administration shall act as prosecutor. No charges shall be entertained unless given in writing and duly subscribed.

704. Disputes

In case of a dispute between members, the pastor shall inquire into the circumstances of the case and, if necessary, shall recommend to the contending parties a reference to an arbitrating committee consisting of one arbitrator chosen by the plaintiff, another by the defendant, and a third by these two; if these two fail to agree upon the third arbitrator within fifteen days, the local conference shall appoint the third arbitrator; these three shall hear the case and decide. But if the pastor shall refuse or neglect to act, the local conference shall appoint one to carry out the rule; and if either or both disputants refuse to choose an arbitrator, the local conference shall appoint the first and second, and these two a third, but if these two fail to agree upon the third arbitrator within fifteen days the local conference shall appoint the third arbitrator. These three shall hear the case and decide.

705. Right of Appeal

Should either be dissatisfied with the decision, such may have a right to an appeal to the next local conference for a second arbitration where each party shall choose two arbitrators, and these four shall choose a fifth, a decision of a majority of whom shall be final. Any person refusing to abide by this decision shall be expelled without further trial.

706. Records of Trials

Every lay leader shall keep a record of the proceedings of church trials in a book provided for that purpose and it shall be his duty in case of an appeal to furnish his record to the local conference.

707. Order in Trials

All church trials shall be conducted in a Christian manner, without the employment of magistrates or attorneys to administer oaths and conduct investigations. The accused shall have the right to be represented by counsel who shall be a member of the church.

CHAPTER II TRIAL OF LOCAL CONFERENCE MINISTERS

708. Method of Procedure

When a local conference minister is accused of any misdemeanor, the lay leader or the secretary of the local board of

administration, to whom the charges with specifications shall be presented in writing, shall prosecute the case and shall inquire into the nature of the complaints. If there be ground for charges, he shall present to the accused a copy of the charges and notify him to choose a committeeman; the prosecutor shall choose a second committeeman; and these two a third; but if these two fail to agree upon a third committeeman within fifteen days, the local conference shall appoint a third committeeman. This committee shall try the case, the pastor in charge being chairman. If the accused fail to choose a committeeman within fifteen days, the local conference shall choose the first and second committeeman, and these two a third; but if these two fail to agree upon the third committeeman within fifteen days, the local conference shall appoint the third committeeman, and this committee shall hear the case and decide. If the accused is found guilty, he shall be silenced; provided, however, that either party shall have the right of appeal to the next local conference for a new trial.

709. Appeal from the Decision of a Local Conference

Any minister dissatisfied with the decision of a local conference may appeal to the ensuing annual conference by giving notice to the local conference secretary in writing of his intention to appeal together with his reason for so doing; and it shall be the duty of the secretary to furnish a certified copy of the proceedings, the notifications and reasons assigned to the annual conference.

CHAPTER III

TRIAL OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE MINISTERS

710. Preliminary Considerations of Trial

Accusations limited to personal trespass require a preliminary compliance with Matthew 18:15-17.

Should an annual conference minister who is guilty of immorality, trespass, imprudent conduct or disobedience to the order and discipline of the church make confession of the fact prior to the trial, he shall cease to peach, except by permission of the conference superintendent of the district, until the meeting of his annual conference. The annual conference shall then consider his case and dispose of it as, in view of all the circumstances, may seem just and right.

711. Method of Procedure

.1 Plan for the Trial

In case an annual conference minister is accused of any of the aforementioned offenses, which accusation must be in writing, and does not make confession of his guilt, the local conference to which he is amenable shall appoint another annual conference minister who shall take with him another minister or a lay leader and investigate the accusation. The procedure in all investigations preliminary to trial shall be as follows:

Where at all possible the accused and accuser shall be brought face to face in the presence of the committee.

To avoid irresponsible gossip in such investigations and to prevent repudiation of testimony in case of trial, all complaints against the accused shall be presented in writing and signed by the accuser in the presence of two disinterested elders in good

standing. No complaints shall be considered valid or taken by the committee as grounds for charges against the accused unless they are brought into harmony with this rule.

The accused shall be permitted to present to the committee in writing an answer full and complete covering all phases of the complaints then under investigation by the committee in session.

In addition to the above named rules, the committee in charge of the investigation of any of the above named offenses shall have power to question all parties concerned in such a manner as they deem proper to bring out the evidence in the case. In case the committee finds that the complaints are not of such a nature as to warrant the preferring of charges, they shall report to the next local conference that they find no cause for action.

If in the judgment of the committee the complaints are of such a nature as to warrant action, the investigators shall prefer charges against the accused at the ensuing local conference. Such charges shall in all cases be carefully formulated in writing with definite specifications showing the nature of the offense and the times and places where the offense occurred. They shall also present to the local conference a carefully prepared record of their proceedings in making the investigation, together with the written evidence upon which the charges are preferred.

.2 Order of Trial

If the charges are preferred, the local conference then in session shall appoint a prosecutor to prosecute the case in behalf of the church. The prosecutor shall be an elder in good standing in the conference to which the accused belongs, or in the conference where the offense was committed.

.3 Duties of the Prosecutors

It shall be the duty of the prosecutor to notify the accused in writing, setting forth all the charges which have been preferred against him. He shall also notify the accused to choose an elder as his committeeman to represent the church. These two committeemen shall choose a third elder or minister; but if these two fail to agree upon a third committeeman within fifteen days, the local conference shall appoint the third member of the committee, before which the case shall be tried. The prosecutor and the accused shall have the right to challenge any committeeman.

The prosecutor shall also notify the conference superintendent of the district wherein said cause of accusation occurred. The conference superintendent shall act as chairman of the trial, unless rendered ineligible because of relationship or interest or because of his being a witness in the case, in which event the prosecutor shall notify the bishop who shall appoint a chairman. If the offender or prosecutor be a conference superintendent, the bishop shall appoint a chairman in the case. If the accused be a bishop, one of the remaining bishops shall be appointed as chairman. It shall be the duty of the chairman to appoint the time and place of the trial, giving not less than twenty nor more than forty days notice to the parties concerned in said trial.

.4 Taking of Testimony

Every witness shall be asked to declare, upon his honor as a follower of Jesus Christ, that the testimony which he is about to give is true to the best of his knowledge and belief. The question of admissibility of testimony will be decided by the chairman of the trial. All testimony which may be founded upon rumor or hearsay, without definite personal knowledge, shall be ruled out.

Testimony which has no bearing upon the case on trial should not be admitted. Witnesses should never be permitted to confuse the evidence in the minds of the committee by putting forward personal opinion as testimony. The chairman should require the witness to testify specifically to facts within his own knowledge. It should be the purpose of the court to bring out the facts in all their relations and bearing upon the issue pending, in such a manner as will make them clear for the consideration of the committee.

Care should be taken in the selection of a committee, that only such persons are chosen as may be capable of weighing the testimony and giving it its proper value. It is the prerogative of the committee to decide upon the credibility of a witness. If the testimony comes from an intelligent witness of high Christian character, they should know it and give it added weight because of that fact. If it comes from one who is honest but ill-informed, that fact should be considered. If one of doubtful reputation is before them, they should know and weigh that fact in its bearing upon his testimony. If the witness is biased or prejudiced toward the accused, his testimony should be evaluated accordingly.

.5 Result of Trial

Should a majority of the committee before whom the case is tried be satisfied that the accusation is sustained and that the evidence proves beyond a reasonable doubt that the accused is guilty of serious offense, they shall require him to hold his peace until the annual conference where he shall be accountable.

.6 Record of Trial

It shall be the duty of the committee to transmit in writing the entire proceedings of said trial to the annual conference, where the accused shall have a hearing before the conference or a select committee thereof. If the findings of the trial in the local conference are sustained, the accused shall be suspended or expelled as the conference may determine, unless because of repentance or restitution the conference shall be satisfied that he should be pardoned.

.7 Refusal to Prepare or Appear for Trial

Should the accused ignore the church after being duly notified to prepare for trial, or should he refuse or neglect to choose his committeeman or to notify the prosecutor of his choice within fifteen days, he shall in accordance with Discipline be removed from his pastorate, and the bishop, with the consent of the conference superintendent, shall provide for the supply of the vacancy until the annual conference. Should the accused refuse or fail to appear at the ensuing annual conference, that body shall review the evidence presented from the local conference and deal with the case according to its best judgment.

.8 Right of Counsel

Nothing in the above named procedure shall be construed as to deny the accused the right of counsel in preparing and maintaining his defense. The counsel thus chosen shall be an elder in good standing in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and a member of the annual conference to which the accused belongs. Provided, however, that if the annual conference to which the accused belongs does not possess members with the required qualifications, the accused, with the consent of the bishop, may make choice of an elder from another conference.

.9 Expense of Trial

In cases where the investigation of complaints and trial of annual conference members involves expense, or in cases where the accused takes recourse to the civil courts to contest the decision of the church, the annual conference involved shall provide the funds necessary to defray the expense of those making the investigation and conducting the trial, or defending the church in the civil courts. Should the presence of the bishops or other general officials become necessary to the defense of the church, their expense shall be paid out of the administrative fund.

712. Annual Conference Trial Course

Whenever a written accusation of any of the said aforementioned offenses shall be first lodged with the annual conference against one of its ministers and that conference shall deem it best to place the accusation upon a trial course, the foregoing course shall be pursued, except that the annual conference shall appoint a committee to act, instead of a local conference, in the appointment of a minister to lead in the investigation, to hear the report on the investigation, to appoint a prosecutor if the accusation appears to be well founded and to appoint a third committeeman when the two committeemen chosen fail to agree on the choice of the third.

713. Appeal from the Decision of Annual Conference

Any member of an annual conference who may be dissatisfied with the decision of his conference shall, within thirty days after the session of the annual conference, notify the secretary of said conference of his intention to appeal to the General Conference, together with his reason for so doing; and it shall be the duty of the secretary to furnish the General Conference with a certified copy of the notice, and the reason thereof, and of the proceedings of the annual conference in the case.

CHAPTER IV

IMPEACHMENT OF AN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

714. Method of Impeachment

.1 Ground of Impeachment

In case complaints or rumors as to maladministration or disobedience to the Constitution or Discipline of the church in any annual conference or bounds thereof should be considered sufficiently grave to one-fifth of the members of the General Conference to warrant a trial for impeachment, they may order such trial by filing a written request with their names signed thereto to the Board of Bishops, who shall appoint a committee of seven members of the General Conference who shall constitute a trial committee. The bishops shall notify the delegates of the accused conference of their right to appear in defense of their conference; an equal number of the first signers of the order shall present themselves as prosecutors.

.2 Committee Regulations

The committee shall adopt such rules to govern its sittings and deliberations as it deems best, in harmony with our customs and usages, and shall adjudge as to the guilt or innocence of the conference accused. In case innocence is established, they shall

so report to the General Conference. In case guilt is established, they shall so report with recommendations fixing the penalty or penalties adjudged due the offender. The General Conference may adopt these recommendations or modify them as in its wisdom it sees fit and impose the penalty or penalties agreed upon.

APPENDIX

ELECTED OFFICERS FOR 1989-1993

Bishops

East District: C. Ray Miller, A.B., M.Div., D.D., D.Min., Chairman of the Board of Bishops

Overseas District: Jerry F. Datema, A.B., Th.B.

West District: Clarence A. Kopp, Jr., A.B., B.D.

Directors

Department of Church Services: Paul E. Hirschy, A.B., M.Div.

Department of Education: Eugene B. Habecker,
A.B., M.A., J.D., Ph.D.

ASSOCIATED DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Administration

General Treasurer/Office Manager: Mrs. Marda Hoffman, B.S., M.A.

Church Services

Associate Director/Editor: Steve Dennie, A.B.

Missions

Executive Director of WMF: Mrs. Hazel R. McCray

Associate Director: Harold Wust, A.B., M.Div.

Associate Director: Carlson Becker, A.B., M.Div.

Education

Archivist: Mrs. Jane Mason, A. B.

Officers and department personnel may be contacted at:

UB Headquarters, 302 Lake Street,
Huntington, IN 46750 (219) 356-2312

BISHOPS EMERITI

Clarence E. Carlson, D.D., Hill View Retirement Home, 1610
28th Street, Portsmouth, OH 45662

Clyde W. Meadows, A.B., S.T.M., D.D., 23 Midcliff Drive,

Columbus, OH 43213

Duane A. Reahm, A.B., D.D., 3474E-722N, Huntington, IN
46750

Wilber L. Sites, Jr., A.B., M.Div., D.D., D.Min., 2719 Fillmore
Drive, Chambersburg, PA 17201

Raymond Waldfogel, A.B., M. Div., D.D.-6800 County Rd. 35,
Auburn, IN 46706.

George E. Weaver, A.B., M.A., D.D., 2620 Westmoor Road,
Findlay, OH 45840

GENERAL BOARDS

Board of Administration

Chairman: C. Ray Miller. Bishops: Jerry F. Datema, Clarence
A. Kopp, Jr. Directors: Paul E. Hirschy, Eugene B. Habecker.
Ministers: designated superintendents of the annual confer-
ences. Laymen: Eugene Cartwright, Wilbur Clymer, Jack Diehl,
Bernard Hull, J. Edward Roush, and Carl Winger.

General Executive Committee

Chairman: C. Ray Miller. Bishops: Jerry F. Datema, Clarence
A. Kopp, Jr. Directors: Paul E. Hirschy, Eugene B. Habecker.
Ministers: Paul Baker, Charles Malson, Al Price. Laymen: J.
Edward Roush, and Bernard Hull.

Board of Education

Chairman: C. Ray Miller. Bishop: Jerry F. Datema. Ministers:
Wilbur L. Sites, Jr., Paul Baker, Kirby Keller. Laymen: Donald
Duff, Bernard Hull, and Evelyn Celander.

Board of Church Extension

Chairman: Clarence A. Kopp, Jr., Bishops: Jerry F. Datema, C.
Ray Miller. Ministers: Ronald Cook, Virgil Hull, Dennis Hunt
Charles Malson, and Maurice Martindale.

Board of Missions

Chairman: C. Ray Miller. Bishop: Jerry F. Datema. Ministers:
Russell Birdsall, David Burkett, Fred Johns, Kyle McQuillen.
Laymen: Dr. James Teeter, Dr. Samuel Rowen, Dr. William
Smith-Hinds. Directors: Ruth Snider, Joan Sider, Barbara
Rogers, Sharon Frank, Ruby Paent, Bernadine, Hoffman, Dottie
Foreman, Darylene Overmyer, and Mary Lou Birdsall.

Board of Church Services

Chairman: Dennis Miller. Bishop: Clarence A. Kopp, Jr. Min-
isters: Howard Cherry, Pat Jones, Steve Malson, Robert Sim-
mons. Laymen: Dave Rahn, Ron Ramsey, and Nancy Smith.

