

CHURCH OF THE UNITED
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

DISCIPLINE

1993 - 1997

Revised and Published by Authority
of the 1993 General Conference

Huntington, Ind.



**United
Brethren**
ALL FOR CHRIST

CONTENTS

	Paragraph	Page		
Introduction		6		
Part I: Basic Documents		7		
1. Origin and History		8		
2. Confession of Faith	¶1-7	16		
3. Constitution	¶11-14	18		
4. Official Doctrinal Positions	¶21	20		
Part II: Standards of the Church		21		
5. Duties of Members	¶101-111	22		
6. Family Standards	¶121-131	26		
7. Social Standards	¶141-147	31		
Part III: The Ministry		35		
8. The Ministry	¶201-203	36		
9. Lay Ministers	¶211-216	39		
10. Local Conference Ministers	¶221-227	42		
11. Annual Conference Ministers	¶231-233	45		
12. Classification of Annual Conf. Ministers	¶241-243	49		
13. Specialized Ministries Licenciates	¶251-255	52		
14. Courses of Study	¶261-265	56		
Part IV: Geographic Organization		59		
15. Division of the Territory	¶301-303	60		
16. Conference Boundaries	¶311-327	62		
Part V: The Local Church		67		
17. Joining the Church	¶401-407	68		
18. Local Church Organization	¶411-413	72		
19. Local Church Commissions	¶421-428	75		
20. Local Conference	¶431-435	79		
21. Pastors	¶441-442	81		
22. Local Church Property	¶451-460	84		
23. Affiliate Local Church	¶461	87		
Part VI: The Conference		89		
24. Conference Organization	¶501-505	90		
25. Annual Conference Duties	¶511-521	93		
26. Conference Council	¶531-535	98		
27. Conference Superintendents	¶541-42	100		
Part VII: The General Church		103		
28. General Conference	¶601-604	104		
29. Election of Delegates	¶611-623	106		
30. The Bishop	¶631-634	110		
31. General Board of Administration	¶641-645	113		
32. Executive Leadership Team	¶651-654	115		
33. Church Services Department	¶661-668	117		
34. Education Department	¶671-678	120		
35. Missions Department	¶681-688	123		
36. Property	¶691-692	126		
			Part VIII: Law on Trials	129
			37. Trial of Members	¶701-707 130
			38. Trial of Local Conference Ministers	¶711-712 133
			39. Trial of Annual Conference Ministers	¶721-724 134
			40. Impeaching an Annual Conference	¶731 139
			Part IX: Appendix	141
			A. Glossary of UB Terms	142
			B. Pension Policies	147
			C. Denominational Officials	151
			D. Boards and Commissions	153
			E. Index	
			154	

INTRODUCTION

The Discipline is the basic organizational document for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. It contains our fundamental rules of doctrine, our Constitution, our moral and social standards, and the by-laws which govern how we operate. The Discipline is published every four years following General Conference. The information falls into four categories.

1. Confession of Faith

The Confession of Faith—a concise, seven-point statement on major doctrines—was adopted in 1815 and has never been changed. Altering the Confession of Faith would first require changing the Constitution, which forbids changing the Confession of Faith.

2. Constitution

The Constitution was adopted in 1841, and cannot be amended without a referendum, in which a majority of the people who elect General Conference delegates give their consent to the change.

There have been only four amendments since 1841. In 1957, the requirement for changing the Constitution was itself changed. Amendments in 1961 and 1977 allowed lay representation at General Conference and changed the eligibility requirement for ministers. The latest change, in 1993, allows General Conference to establish and participate in an international structure.

3. By-laws

Everything from chapter 4 to chapter 40 falls into this broad category. It includes our stands on moral and social issues, operational procedures for all church levels, boundaries, trial and appeal procedures, ministerial qualifications and requirements, and much more. The information in these chapters can be changed by majority vote of General Conference. Numerous changes are made at every General Conference.

4. Information

This introduction, Chapter 1—“Origin and History,” and the Appendix fall into this category. They are considered information items, and can be changed as needed by the Discipline editing committee.

CHAPTER 1

Origin and History

The Church of the United Brethren in Christ began during the latter part of the 1700s. People had become discontent with the dead formalism of the established churches. Then a revival movement swept through Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. It emphasized the idea of a “new birth” and a deeper spiritual experience.

Out of this movement came the first denomination to begin in America, rather than be transplanted from Europe.

“We are Brethren!”

Spearheading the movement were two evangelistic preachers of very different backgrounds.

One was Philip William Otterbein, a German Reformed minister who came from Germany in 1752. He discovered that formal religious practices were the common standard in the American colonies. His training and subsequent heart change prompted him to preach a message based on a deeper, life-transforming spiritual experience.

Martin Boehm was the other man. 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 became a flaming evangelist, proclaiming the salvation experience wherever he had the chance.

Both Otterbein and Boehm did extensive evangelistic preaching in inter-denominational gatherings. However, they didn’t meet until Pentecost Sunday, 1767. A “great meeting” was held that day in the barn of Isaac Long near Lancaster, Pa. These great meetings were usually held over weekends in groves, barns, or wherever a large congregation could assemble. The congregation in Long’s barn included preachers and laypersons from various denominations, including the German Reformed, Lutheran, Moravian, Mennonite, Amish, and Dunker groups.

Martin Boehm preached that afternoon. Otterbein was so thrilled with the message that this man of great stature threw his arms around the diminutive Boehm and exclaimed in German, “We are brethren!” They were different in many ways—in background, appearance, and some aspects of theology—but Otterbein realized they were alike in the areas which really counted.

From that enthusiastic greeting came the name “United Brethren.”

A New Movement Takes Root

These two leaders were joined by others in attempting to evangelize the German-speaking churches located in the Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland colonies. They cooperated in conducting great meetings where one or more of them would preach. Counseling and guidance were given to other preachers and laypersons who joined the inter-denominational venture. They selected itinerant preachers to conduct services where possible. However, in those early years, no thought was given to organizing a separate denomination.

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

The church Otterbein pastored in Baltimore, Maryland, inter-

ested in outreach, became the mother church for a number of other churches. These operated with the oversight of Otterbein. Preachers and exhorters already in the field looked to Otterbein for direction.

The Movement Gets Organized

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.

The conference of 1800 adopted the name “Church of the United Brethren in Christ,” and elected Otterbein and Boehm as bishops. Both men were 74 years old when chosen. Boehm served until his death in 1812, and Otterbein served until his death in 1813.

Between 1800 and 1815, meetings were held annually. However, ministers in Ohio felt that, because of distance, it would be better to hold meetings less often. So beginning in 1815, a “General Conference” was held every two years, with regional “annual conferences” held every year. Since 1821, General Conferences have been held every four years.

That first General Conference in 1815 adopted a Confession of Faith, which is a concise statement of our key doctrinal beliefs. Not a word of the Confession of Faith has been changed since then, and it remains our central organizing document.

The Church Moves West

Christian Newcomer was elected bishop in 1813. Under his leadership, the loose evangelistic fellowship became a more organized movement. And the church grew rapidly.

As the young nation expanded westward, so did the church. People who had been associated with United Brethren in the east migrated west and settled in Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana. Hundreds of churches began, with services conducted by itinerant, “circuit-riding” preachers who might have responsibility for a dozen or more churches. In 1820, Rev. John George Pfrimmer organized the first known United Brethren Sunday school near Corydon, Ind. In those early years, services were conducted almost exclusively in the German language.

In 1821, the church inserted into the Discipline a historic stand against slavery, 40 years before the outbreak of the Civil War. This stand hindered the church’s growth in the South. The group also inherited from the German culture a strong opposition to secret societies.

A tentative constitution for the church was adopted by the General Conference of 1837, followed by the formal adoption of a constitution in 1841. This Constitution included the church’s stands against slavery and membership in secret societies.

Early Denominational Ministries

Denominational departments and other ministries were organized as needs arose. The work of publishing a church paper gave birth to the United Brethren Publishing House, established in 1834 at Circleville, Ohio. It was moved to Dayton, Ohio, in 1853.

In 1853, the denominational mission board was organized under the name of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society. That year, we launched our first missionary endeavor, sending a 30-wagon caravan of settlers—nearly 100 people—to Oregon, where the church took root and grew. So in less than

100 years, the movement which began in Long’s barn had spread from coast to coast.

Two years later, a mission was established in Sierra Leone, West Africa.

The first educational institution was Otterbein University at Westerville, Ohio, established in 1847. The Union Biblical Seminary was founded in 1871. A number of other colleges sprang up.

In 1865, the Sunday School Association was organized, and the Church Erection Society was constituted in 1869 to begin new churches. The Women’s Missionary Association began in 1875, and soon became a major supporter of United Brethren missions.

Division

By 1889, the United Brethren church had grown to over 200,000 members, with six bishops and a full-blown denominational structure. But then controversy arose, and eventually a division occurred.

Several General Conferences discussed proposed changes regarding three major issues: allowing proportional representation at General Conference (rather than a set number of delegates for each conference, regardless of size), allowing lay representation at General Conference, and permitting membership in secret societies. In 1889, the General Conference delegates voted to change the Constitution’s requirements concerning these issues. However, they chose to ignore the proper procedures for doing so, as spelled out in the Constitution: no changes could be made without a majority vote of all United Brethren members.

A segment of the General Conference, led by Bishop Milton Wright (father of the Wright Brothers), left the General Conference meeting and resumed the session in another part of the city. They declared that the other delegates had withdrawn from the denomination by adopting a different Constitution.

This brought into existence two fellowships operating under the name “Church of the United Brethren in Christ.”

Starting Over

The majority group became known as the “Church of the United Brethren in Christ (New Constitution),” with headquarters in Dayton, Ohio. They were also known as the “liberal” United Brethren. 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.

Milton Wright’s group, which adhered to the Confession of Faith of 1815 and the Constitution of 1841, became known as the “Church of the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution).” They were also known as the “radical” United Brethren.

Siding with the Old Constitution group proved costly for many congregations. Except in Michigan and Oregon, courts awarded all United Brethren church property to the New Constitution group. So many congregations found themselves without a meeting place.

The same was true at the denominational level. There were no departments, no publishing house, no headquarters, no hierarchy of any kind. But under Bishop Wright’s capable leadership, the church reorganized itself.

Church Headquarters

The church headquarters was moved from Dayton, Ohio, to Huntington, Indiana, in 1897. A new building was dedicated in

1917 and was enlarged by the purchase of adjacent structures in 1957. All of these holdings were disposed of in 1973.

A new international headquarters building was completed next to Huntington College in May 1976.

Higher Education

When the dust had cleared following the division of 1889, only two of the many United Brethren colleges and seminaries were in the hands of the Old Constitution group: Hartsville College in southeastern Indiana, and Philomath College in Oregon. Hartsville closed in 1897, and fire destroyed its building a year later. Philomath remained open until the 1920s.

Huntington College (originally named Central College) was chartered in 1897, the same year the church headquarters moved to Huntington, Ind. Today, Huntington College is the denomination's only college. The college is accountable to the Education Commission, one of three commissions appointed by General Conference. It includes a liberal arts undergraduate school and the Graduate School of Christian Ministries, which trains most United Brethren ministers.

Christian Education

The 1897 General Conference started the Young People's Christian Association to minister to youth. The name was changed to United Brethren Christian Endeavor in 1901. Sunday school and Christian Endeavor united in 1921 into the Department of Religious Education, which was later renamed the Department of Christian Education.

In 1977, the Christian Education and Publications departments merged into the Department of Church Ministries. This, in turn, merged in 1981 with the Stewardship department and the Archives to form the current Department of Church Services. (The Archives relocated to Huntington College in 1988 and is now under the Education Department.) The non-cross-cultural church planting work of the Department of Church Extension was folded into the Church Services department in 1993.

The Church Services department works in a number of areas, including family and children's ministries, youth (headed by a Youth Task Force), senior citizen's ministries, evangelism and discipleship, singles, Bible quizzing, and camping. The department sponsors the two annual youth conventions held at Huntington College: Jubilee for junior high and Impact for senior high. It also runs a large curriculum and literature marketing operation, which supplies Sunday school materials to churches both within and outside of the denomination. The profits help underwrite the department.

General Conference elects a fulltime director and a commission to oversee the department.

Missions

Until 1965, there were two United Brethren missionary groups, each sponsoring its own mission work: the Women's Missionary Association (renamed Women's Missionary Fellowship in 1989), and the Parent Board of Missions (called the Domestic, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society until 1957).

WMF Mission Work. After the division of 1889, the New Constitution group retained control of the WMF's mission school for Chinese people in Oregon. However, they stopped supporting the work in 1898, and sponsorship returned to the Old Constitution group.

The school closed in 1931, but it served as a bridge for opening a school near Canton, China, in 1932. This work was discontinued after the communist takeover of China in 1949. However, Dr. Y. T. Chiu, the original contact in China, moved to Hong Kong and started United Brethren mission work there in 1950. After teaching at Huntington College for six years, he returned to Hong Kong in 1960, and the Hong Kong Conference was officially organized in 1962.

The WMF also assumed sponsorship of a mission field in Big Laurel, Kentucky, in 1939. Oversight was transferred to Central Conference in 1973.

Parent Board Mission Work. The Parent Board began mission work in Jamaica in 1944. Jamaica Conference was organized in 1951, with eleven churches. Mission work began in Honduras in 1953.

Through the years, the WMF and the Parent Board jointly supported the work in Sierra Leone.

In 1961, a Joint Board of Missions account was established, and the two mission groups began working more closely together. The two mission boards merged into one Department of Missions at the 1965 General Conference.

A new field was established in Nicaragua in 1969. Honduras Conference was organized in 1961, and General Conference recognized Nicaragua as a full-fledged conference in 1993.

The department became involved in medical work in India in 1974. This ministry now includes supporting several evangelists who have started churches in various villages.

The vision of the Hong Kong Conference led to the opening of a new work in Macau, a Portuguese colony, in 1987. This work focuses on two areas: a school for teaching English, and church planting (mostly using contacts made through the school).

Through the years, Sierra Leone has been the most prominent mission field. The conference operates several dozen schools there, runs a large hospital in the town of Matru, and helps sponsor the Sierra Leone Bible College. A number of missionaries working with parachurch groups in various countries now receive support from the church. The board also cooperates with the Evangelical Congregational and Primitive Methodist denominations in jointly supporting several missionaries.

Several mission fields are now organized as conferences, which are entitled to representation at General Conference: Sierra Leone, Jamaica, Hong Kong, Honduras, and Nicaragua. All of these fields have been nationalized. North American missionaries serve only in Sierra Leone (mostly at the Matru Hospital) and Honduras.

In 1993, General Conference gave the Missions department responsibility for cross-cultural church planting in the United States (which the department had already been helping support). This includes the Hispanic outreach in Southern California, and Chinese and Jamaican churches in New York City.

General Conference elects a Director of Missions, and provides for a Missions Commission to oversee the work in this area. The Women's Missionary Fellowship elects an Executive Director, who serves as an associate director in the department. The WMF holds a business meeting and denominational mission convention every two years. The Master's Men International (formerly called the Men's Brotherhood), led entirely by laity, is the parallel organization for men.

Publications

In 1885, Milton Wright began a weekly publication called The

Christian Conservator, which served as a counter-balance for the more liberal views represented in the denomination's official publication, *The Religious Telescope*. In 1889, the *Christian Conservator* became the denomination's official publication.

The name was changed to *The United Brethren* in 1954. At that time, it became a bi-weekly publication, and later became a monthly publication. The name was shortened to *UB* in 1992.

The magazine ceased publication at the end of 1993, and was replaced by a new denominational communications strategy based on newsletters distributed free of charge to all persons who attend United Brethren churches.

Until 1982, the denomination published its own Sunday school literature, including materials for children through adults. However, the cost was too great, especially when compared to the costs of commercial curriculum producers. Therefore, the printshop was closed and churches were encouraged to purchase, through the Department of Church Services, Sunday school literature from other companies.

Other Matters

Pension. The Department of Ministerial Aid was chartered by the 1913 General Conference. A pension plan was established in 1966, and has been revised several times.

Camps. Four United Brethren conferences—Michigan, Michindoh, Central, and Pennsylvania—operate year-round camps. Several other conferences own campgrounds.

Canada. During the 1989-1993 quadrennium, Ontario Conference became aware of conflicts between our church structure and the laws of Canada. The issues included charitable status, board representation, and general issues of national sovereignty. Ontario Conference was forced to organize under its own Constitution, separate from the Constitution of 1841 which the rest of the denomination followed. This new entity adopted the name United Brethren Church in Canada. To enable them to continue as a part of the denomination, a new category was established: national conference. Since the matter has implications for all UB work beyond the United States, there will be continued study during the 1993-1997 quadrennium, with a final structure to be adopted by General Conference in 1997.

Bishops. In 1969, the number of bishops doubled, from two to four. Each of them had responsibility for a geographic district of the church, with one of them overseeing mission work.

In 1989, General Conference reduced the number of bishops to three. However, there was strong interest across the church in having just one bishop. That was done in 1993.

Lay Representation. Over the years, efforts have been made to increase the involvement of laity in conference and denominational affairs. Laypersons once had no voice or vote at annual or General conferences; now they do. The 1993 General Conference took action to require that laypersons comprise at least 40% of the members on nearly all conference and denominational boards, committees, and commissions.

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 to 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 practice 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 3

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 General Conference has authority to establish and participate in an international United Brethren church structure, and to edit Constitutional language to reflect the same.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

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

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

9. 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 4

Official Doctrinal Positions

21 Depravity

All persons 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 the sinful nature, deliberately choosing to ratify sin, and thus assumes the guilt and condemnation belonging to a sinner.

CHAPTER 5

Duties of Members

The church recognizes the validity of a collective Christian conscience. For that reason, the church has taken stands on various issues in an attempt to provide guidelines for Christian conduct. They are stated in paragraphs 113-115.

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 laypersons (Hebrews 13:7,17). Anyone who violates or habitually neglects these rules shall be referred to the membership committee 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.

101 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.

102 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.

103 Love to Others

All persons should walk as in the presence of God and accuse themselves to a close communion with God in all of their employments (Colossians 2:6; Psalm 1:1,2; Romans 8:1-6). They should never speak evil of their fellow beings (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).

104 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.

105 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 assume 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).
3. By renouncing the world and all ungodliness, seeking to lead a life of holiness and devotion to God and His cause (2 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Timothy 2:19, 21).

106 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:

1. Be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of union (Ephesians 4:3).
2. Pray earnestly for and speak truly and freely to each other (James 5:16).
3. When we meet, never part without prayer, if prayer is at all practicable.
4. Take care not to despise each other's gifts (Romans 12:3-8).
5. Never speak lightly of each other (James 4:11).
6. Defend each other's character in everything, so far as is consistent with truth (Ephesians 4:31).
7. Labor in honor, each preferring another before himself

(Philippians 2:3).

8. Seriously examine the cause, evils, and cures of heart and church divisions (Galatians 5:26).

9. 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.

107 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).

108 Obedience to Government

It is the duty of every member to lead a quiet, peaceable, and godly life among mankind, 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 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

109 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).

110 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 and other cases which require and justify a process at law (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Proverbs 25:8-10; Matthew 5:25-26).

111 Secret Combinations

1. 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.

2. 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 persons of whatever faith or religion, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ is bound by its Confession of Faith and Constitution to place itself in opposition to such a system.

3. 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).

4. 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)

CHAPTER 6

Family Standards

121 Family: Definition

We recognize that a family can take four forms:

1. A married couple (male husband and female wife) who may or may not have children.
2. A single parent household, in which a male or female parent is charged with the responsibility of raising and nurturing his/her natural or adopted children.
3. A widow or widower who is left without children at home.
4. A single person who has chosen to live on his/her own as a separate household.

122 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.

123 Family Life

Married couples (husband and wife) 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, emotion-

al, social and spiritual needs of each family member (1 Timothy 5:8). In the case of a single parent, he/she will be considered the "head of the house" along with the responsibilities that accompany this position.

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:

1. Communication with the heavenly Father through spontaneous prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), especially at mealtimes, whether in seeking His aid or giving thanks.
2. 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).
3. Spontaneous and directed teaching of Bible truths at every opportunity (Deuteronomy 6:20-21a).
4. Christian symbols and works of art in the home (Deuteronomy 6:6, 9).
5. 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).
6. Christian parents are encouraged to present their children to the Lord before the church body for the blessing (or dedication) of children and the affirmation of Christian parenting.

124 Abuse

We believe that abuse in any form, either inside or outside of the family, destroys the dignity and value God has placed in people.

125 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).

126 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 faith in Christ or assumes the position of an unbeliever and chooses to dissolve the marriage. Such persons are considered unbelievers because they place themselves 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.

127 Remarriage

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

1. When the spouse dies. In this case, the partner may remarry a believer (1 Corinthians 7:39).
2. When the marriage and divorce occurred prior to salvation (2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:1-7).
3. 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.
4. When an unbelieving partner has willfully deserted a believing partner (1 Corinthians 7:12-15).
5. 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).

128 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 ¶129.

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.

129 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.

130 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.

131 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 Christian's family members, in the event that the person 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.

CHAPTER 7

Social Standards

141 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 unemployed; the opportunity for decent housing for all; and a proper concern for total human need in our contemporary world.

The church acknowledges that mankind'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 persons. But the church also recognizes the commandment to love all men in the name of Christ. Therefore, the church admonishes all 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)

142 Peace/Bearing Arms in War

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 affirm the right of our members to serve and bear arms in the national armed forces. We also support the right of the honest conscientious objector to refuse to bear arms in military service, and to instead choose humanitarian service to his/her nation.

We wish to go on record as a church as being much in favor of national and international peace; and we urge our leaders to always pursue peace.

143 Drug Abuse

Christians are directed in the Bible 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. (Proverbs 20:1; Isaiah 5:22; Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 5:11, 6:10, 6:19; and 1 Thessalonians 5:22)

1. 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 property to those who would use it for the manufacture, storage, or sale of these harmful beverages.

2. Tobacco

The Bible reveals that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and instructs believers to live pure lives. The church

believes and experience demonstrates 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.

We urge our leaders to teach about the hazards of tobacco use and that deliverance is available through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

3. Narcotic, Hallucinogenic, Mind-Altering, and Mood-Altering Drugs

The scientific, medical, law enforcement, and welfare segments of our society have given witness to the corrupting and devastating results of narcotic, hallucinogenic, mind-altering, and mood-altering drugs. Members of the church are to exercise abstinence 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.

144 Gambling

The Bible teaches that the love of money is destructive and that productive work fits into God's plan for life. Gambling, on the other hand, 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 best interests of good government.

Because gambling is a menace to personal character, social morality, and biblical stewardship, we therefore urge all members to abstain from participating in gambling in any form, including lotteries, and to raise a proper protest against the spread of illegal and legalized gambling. (Proverbs 28:19-20; 1 Timothy 6:7-11; Luke 16:10-13; 1 Corinthians 4:2)

145 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.

146 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)

147 Decision-Making Foundations

1. Personal Convictions

The Bible is the primary source of correct guidance, and the final authority by which Christians should determine proper conduct regarding moral issues. The Bible's specific prohibitions must always be obeyed. In areas where Scripture does not give explicit directions or absolutes, the following guidelines will assist members in making wise lifestyle decisions based on biblical principles.

- a. Pray for guidance (James 1:5).
- b. Study all biblical passages related to the issue.

c. Review the laws of the land regarding the issue (Romans 13:1-7). The Bible instructs believers to obey the laws of the land in which they live, but not to use those laws to justify disobeying biblical principles (Hebrews 13:17).

d. Seek the counsel of mature Christians (Proverbs 15:22, 27:17).

e. Carefully weigh and consider current scientific and medical evidence regarding the issue (Proverbs 18:15).

f. Consider any harmful effect your action may have on others.

g. Consider any harmful effect on your testimony (Romans 14, 1 Corinthians 10:32-33).

h. If in doubt, act according to your conscience and continue developing your convictions (Romans 14:23).

2. Corporate Convictions

The United Brethren church recognizes its responsibility to help members apply biblical commands and principles to contemporary issues.

The Bible gives clear instruction on many issues, but on other issues, it leaves room for Christians of equal spiritual commitment and insight to disagree. The church's historic position has been to stand firm on biblical absolutes, allow freedom where the Bible allows freedom, and maintain unity when disagreements arise.

CHAPTER 8

The Ministry

201 Introduction

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:

202 Qualifications

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 life does not conform to the established moral standards and social concerns of the church.

1. Marriage

A person whose present marriage relations are not in harmony with the Bible and as interpreted in the moral standards and social concerns of the church shall not be granted a license nor be continued as a licensed minister.

2. Drugs

A person who uses beverage alcohol, illicit drugs, or tobacco shall not be granted a license nor be continued as a licensed minister.

3. Immoral Conduct

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

203 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 the knowledge of Jesus Christ; to visit the sick; and to 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.

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 their conduct.

4. To Avoid Trespassing

When a pastor leaves a charge, friendships and bonds of affection between the minister and members of the particular church continue, but the pastoral relationship does not. To spare ministers and church members from embarrassment, and to encourage the new pastoral relationship that will be established, the church and former pastor should be reminded of these requirements:

a. A minister may not communicate with members of a previous congregation in such a way that it interferes with the work of the successor.

b. When any minister resigns from a pastorate, is transferred, or retires from service, the minister should cease to perform funerals, baptisms, weddings, and other pastoral functions in that local congregation, unless invited to officiate in such capacity by the pastor or by the district superintendent responsible for vacant churches.

c. Former pastors, associate pastors, and assistant pastors may officiate at services for members of a particular church, or at services within its properties, only when invited by the current assigned pastor or the district superintendent, or by the lay leader when the church is vacant and the district superintendent cannot be contacted.

d. 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.

A minister who violates any of these provisions is guilty of trespassing, and shall be accountable to the annual conference.

5. To Avoid Electioneering and Candidating

No ministers shall be permitted to electioneer favorable to their own election to any office or delegation in the church or candidate for any pastoral assignment within the denomination, and any ministers found doing so shall be accountable to the next annual conference of which they are a member to be dealt with according to the judgment of said conference.

CHAPTER 9

Lay Ministers

211 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 laypersons called by God who are willing to be trained for limited service in the church.

212 Qualifications

Persons desiring the status of lay minister must have been members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ for at least two years and of the local church to which they apply for license for at least one year. They must have demonstrated personal faith and piety, the fruit of the spirit, and faithfulness to their duties as members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. They shall not use tobacco, beverage alcohol, or illicit drugs.

213 Licensing

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

1. The applicant should confer with the pastor concerning the pastor's conviction that God is calling the applicant to serve as a lay minister.

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

- a. The applicant's 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 applicant's personal integrity, commitment to the gospel of Christ, uniqueness of gifts, relationships with others, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the applicant's life.

- b. The applicant's 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.

- c. The applicant must express the desire and willingness to engage in a course of study to be equipped 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.

214 Course of Study

Persons granted a probationary license shall engage in a reading course which will prepare them 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.

215 Transfer of Membership

Persons holding either probationary or permanent licenses as lay ministers may transfer the license together with their membership to another local Church of the United Brethren in Christ, providing the local conference from which they are moving certifies the transfer.

216 Duties of Lay Ministers

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

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

3. 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.

CHAPTER 10

Local Conference Ministers

221 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.

222 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 chairperson, 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 chairperson 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 fellow Christians?
- 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?

223 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.

224 Renewal of License

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 chairperson. However, the license shall not be subject to renewal if the local conference minister fails to attend or report in writing to the local conference in session during the year.

225 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).

226 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:

- a. 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.
- b. They 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 Education Commission] or by the minister's training program by correspondence, under the direction of the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries.
- c. They have completed the Church History course provided through 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.

227 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 the pastor, conference superintendent, 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 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 Education Commission 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, the license shall not be renewed.

CHAPTER 11

Annual Conference Ministers

231 Requirements

1. 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 the person back to the local conference. (See ¶225)

2. Examination

He shall be orally examined on the basis of 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.

- a. Have you an experience assuring you of the forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ?
- b. Have you peace with God; and is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit?
- c. Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and that therein only is revealed the true way to salvation?
- d. What reason have you for such beliefs?
- e. Do you follow after holiness?
- f. What is your motive for desiring permission to preach the gospel, and why do you desire a license from the annual conference?
- g. Do you believe that mankind is fallen from original righteousness and, apart from the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is inclined to evil continually; and that except persons be born again, they cannot see the kingdom of God?
- h. Define depravity, redemption, faith, repentance, justification, regeneration and sanctification.
- i. Does your own salvation and the salvation of other persons lie nearer to your heart than all other things in the world?
- j. Will you agree to abide by the official action of your conference and church in all matters pertaining to your ministry?
- k. Are you satisfied with the moral and social standards and the government of our church, and will you maintain them on all occasions?
- l. Are you willing, as much as is in your power, to assist in upholding our itinerant plan?
- m. Is it your purpose, if received, to remain permanently in the active ministry of this church?
- n. Will you diligently pursue the course of training prescribed for annual conference ministers?
- o. 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.

p. Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in the work of the Christian ministry?

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

r. Are your marriage relations in harmony with the Word of God as interpreted by this church?

232 Duty of Bishop

When applicants are received into the annual conference, the bishop or someone selected by the bishop shall read ¶203 (Duties) to them with such comments as deemed proper.

233 The License of an Annual Conference Minister

1. Granting the License

If upon examination the Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission should find that the applicant has met all of the requirements for admission into the annual conference and is sufficiently qualified to preach the gospel, then the commission 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.

2. Licensing Women

There shall be no discrimination between men and women in granting ministerial credentials.

3. Surrender of Credentials

Ministers licensed under this rule who afterwards join a church of another denomination or fellowship or indulge in the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs, or tobacco shall be compelled to surrender their 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 Education Commission 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 the director's 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, the chairperson 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 Education Commission or a committee named

by that commission, 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 Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission.

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 Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission 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 ¶241)

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 Credentials—Annual conference members may be received into a local church on their ministerial credentials, so long as said credentials are held in force by the conference to which they are amenable.

7. Minister's Transfer

a. Requirement for Entrance to Another Conference—Ministers moving from one conference to another shall, when applying to the latter for admission, present a transfer from the conference to which they formerly belonged to the conference to which they apply for admission. This transfer shall be signed by the presiding officer or published in the minutes of the conference from which they have been transferred. No ministers shall be received into a conference by transfer until said transfer has been granted by a vote of the conference.

b. Time Limit of Transfer—Licentiate or elders who receive 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—Ministers 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 they have been transferred, or until the transfer expires by limitation.

8. An Expelled Minister

Licentiates or elders who have been expelled or informally withdraw from one annual conference shall not be received into another without the consent of the conference from which they have been expelled or from which they have withdrawn; and when such an expulsion or withdrawal has occurred, the credentials are nullified, and notice of the same shall be sent by the secretary of the annual conference to the Communications Manager for publication.

CHAPTER 12

Classification of Annual Conference 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.

241 Elders

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

1. Requirements

After a probation of two years, licentiates may be presented to the annual conference for elders' orders if they have 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 they have served at least one year under the appointment of the stationing committee, a conference superintendent, or a general commission of the church. When these requirements are satisfied, the bishop shall propose to the Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission the following questions:

2. Questions Regarding a Candidate

- a. Is the candidate blameless touching the marriage relation?
- b. Is the candidate's social behavior characterized by self-discipline and purity?
- c. Is the candidate hospitable toward the afflicted and needy?
- d. Is the candidate faithful in the public administration of God's Word, and diligent in reading and study?
- e. Is the candidate's household subject to rules of piety?
- f. Has the candidate been true to the duties of a licentiate as outlined in ¶203?

3. 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 written answers (previously prepared) to the following questions:

- a. What are your reasons for believing the Bible to be the Word of God?
- b. How do you prove the fall of mankind by transgression?
- c. How do you prove the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ?

- d. Do you believe in the Godhead of Jesus Christ?
- e. What reason have you for such belief?
- f. Do you believe in the doctrine of the Holy Ghost as presented in our Confession of Faith?
- g. Upon what evidence do you believe this?
- h. Do you believe in the resurrection of believers in Christ to everlasting life, and in the resurrection of unbelievers to judgment and everlasting condemnation?
- i. 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.

4. Election to Ordination

If the committee and conference find the candidate worthy, the person may be elected to ordination by a majority of the votes of the conference.

5. 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.

242 Licentiate

1. Definition

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

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

2. Assignment of Licentiate

A licentiate may be assigned to a pastorate by the stationing committee or conference superintendent and bishop. However, a licentiate who fails to complete the course of study in six years shall not be reassigned 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.

243 Itinerants

1. Definition

All annual conference licentiate 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.

2. Exceptions

a. 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.

b. 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.

c. 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.

d. 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.

e. 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.

CHAPTER 13

Specialized Ministries Licentiate

According to Ephesians 4, God gave various gifted leaders to the church in order to equip and prepare the saints to do the work of ministry. In recognition of the necessity and importance of gifted leadership in the various specialized ministries in the work of the church, a license for specialized ministries may be granted under the following guidelines and qualifications.

251 Definition

Specialized ministries as defined applies to all lay staff-level positions of ministry leadership in the church. These include Director/Minister of Christian Education, Director/Minister of Music, Director/Minister of Youth Ministries, Director/Minister of Pastoral Care, or other staff level positions. It does not include support staff positions such as custodian and secretary.

252 Requirements

Applicants for a specialized ministries license must meet the following requirements:

1. Employment Status

The person must be employed by a United Brethren church on a greater than half-time basis.

2. Specialized Degree

The person must hold the equivalent of an associate degree or greater in his/her field of ministry leadership.

a. Directors/Ministers of Youth Ministries who have received the "Certificate of Completion" for the Leadership Training Program of Sonlife Ministries shall be considered to have met this requirement.

b. It will be the responsibility of the conference Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission to review and determine what course of studies is “equivalent” to an associate degree in respective fields of ministry.

3. Bible Training

The person must have taken at least twelve credit hours of study in Bible.

4. Recommendations

The person must submit letters of recommendation from the senior pastor, lay leader or person serving in that capacity, and chairperson of the Personnel Relations Commission from the church he/she is attending. A letter verifying employment shall be required from the Personnel Relations Commission of the employing church.

5. Experience

The person must have served one year of ministry employment on a greater than half-time basis in his/her specialized area.

6. Conference Approval

The person must meet with the Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission and answer in writing the following questions:

- a. Have you an experience assuring you of the forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ?
- b. Have you peace with God; and is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit?
- c. Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and that therein only is revealed the true way of salvation? What reason do you have for such belief?
- d. Do you follow after holiness?
- e. Do you believe that mankind is fallen from original righteousness and, apart from the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is inclined to do evil continually; and that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God?
- f. Define the following: depravity, redemption, faith, repentance, justification, regeneration, and sanctification.
- g. Will you agree to abide by the official action of your conference and church in all matters pertaining to your ministry?
- h. Are you satisfied with the moral and social standards and the government of our church? Will you maintain them on all occasions?
- i. Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in the work of the Christian ministry?
- j. Will you wholly abstain from the use of beverage alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco?
- k. Is your marriage relationship in harmony with the Word of God as interpreted by this church?
- l. What is your motive for desiring a specialized ministries license?
- m. What role does your ministry area play in the overall ministry of the church?
- n. What is your understanding of staff relationships in the church?
- o. Explain your philosophy of ministry as it relates to your specific area of ministry.

253 Assignment

The local church which employs the person holding the specialized ministries license will be responsible for the hiring, annual review, determination of salary and benefits, and dismissal

of the person. Persons with a specialized ministries license will not be subject to the itinerant system as outlined in the Discipline. Candidates may, however, be interviewed by the Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission at its discretion.

Persons wanting to be ordained for pastoral ministry must fulfill all requirements of an annual conference licentiate as outlined in the Discipline.

254 Duties

Specialized ministries licentiates shall:

1. Maintain membership at the employing church.
2. Fulfill responsibilities as outlined by the job description of the employing church.
3. Make regular reports to the board of administration.
4. Meet annually with the Personnel Relations Commission for a ministry review.
5. Administer the Christian ordinances under the supervision of the senior pastor or an ordained elder.
6. Pursue continuing education in their field of specialization.
7. Fulfill other responsibilities as determined by the church and/or the senior pastor.

255 Accountability

1. Specialized ministries licentiates shall submit an annual written report of their activities and a copy of their annual review to the Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission.
2. The Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission may require the surrender of the license if:
 - a. The person leaves the Church of the United Brethren in Christ for employment in another denomination or parachurch ministry.
 - b. The person is terminated from the employment of a United Brethren church for impropriety, moral failure, or ineptness.
 - c. The person leaves a church and fails to be hired by another United Brethren church within a one-year period. Application for the reinstatement of a license may be made at the time of future employment.
3. It is suggested that licentiates become part of an accountability group of peers within their field of specialization for mutual encouragement and accountability.

CHAPTER 14

Courses of Training

261 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.

262 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 Education Commission or its committee, shall be referred to the Huntington College Graduate School of Christian Ministries for evaluation. Licentiates who are allowed credit on their course of training on any of the above provisions shall be exempt from examination on those subjects.

263 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.

264 Examinations

All examinations on the course of training taken by correspondence should be in writing and proctored by the director of correspondence studies or the director's 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.

265 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 15

Division of the Territory

301 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.

302 Administrative Divisions

The church shall consist of the following administrative entities:

1. Appointment

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. 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 ¶371.

4. Conference Superintendent's District

Two or more local churches or appointments under the supervision of a conference superintendent.

5. Church Extension District

One or more appointments or local churches outside the boundaries of an established conference.

6. Mission District

One or more appointments or local churches not organized as a conference which are administered by the Missions Commission.

7. Conference

Five or more churches within such boundary lines as the General Conference may establish. A conference's highest governing body, called the annual conference, consists of the bishop, conference ministers, and lay delegates elected by conference churches. A national conference consists of all United Brethren churches within a single country.

8. Church of the United Brethren in Christ

All United Brethren churches worldwide comprise the denomination known as the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Its highest governing body is the General Conference, which meets every four years. Members include the bishop, elected directors, and lay and ministerial delegates elected by the constituent conferences.

303 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 the predecessor shall turn over all such documents and records in his/her possession.

CHAPTER 16

Conference Boundaries

311 Arizona Conference

The Arizona Conference includes the State of Arizona.

312 California

The California Conference includes the State of California.

313 Canada

The Canadian national conference includes all of the Dominion of Canada. Official name: The United Brethren Church in Canada.

314 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.

315 Honduras

The Honduras Conference includes all territory in the Republic of Honduras. Official name: The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Honduras Conference.

316 Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Conference includes all territory in the Crown Colony of Hong Kong. Official name: The Church of the United Brethren in Christ Hong Kong Limited.

317 Jamaica

The Jamaica Conference includes all of the island of Jamaica. Official name: The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Jamaica Conference.

318 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.

319 Michindoh

The Michindoh Conference includes the portions of the states 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.

320 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.

321 Nicaragua

Nicaragua Conference includes all territory of the Republic of Nicaragua. Official name: The Association of Evangelical Churches of the United Brethren in Christ of Nicaragua.

322 Northwest

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

323 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.

324 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.

325 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.

326 Sierra Leone

The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Sierra Leone Conference, includes all territory in the Republic of Sierra

Leone, West Africa. Official name: The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Sierra Leone Limited.

327 Southeast Conference

Southeast Conference includes the states of Florida, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

CHAPTER 17

Joining the Church

401 Adult Membership

1. Age

Persons fourteen years of age and older may become adult members.

2. Qualifications

The following must be determined to be true before persons can be accepted into membership:

- a. They acknowledge that the Bible is God's Word, and that it alone reveals how to receive eternal life.
- b. They have experienced the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.
- c. They are determined to grow in Christ and live in obedience to Christ.
- d. They have been baptized, or are willing to be baptized as soon as is convenient.
- e. They are willing to be governed by the church Discipline.
- f. They are willing to give of their time, abilities, and resources to support the various church interests, according to their ability.

3. Voting Rights

Adult members are eligible to vote in all local elections, on referendum proposals, and in elections of delegates to the annual conference and General Conference.

402 Youth Membership

1. Age

Persons age nine through thirteen may join as youth members.

2. Qualifications

The following must be determined to be true before persons can be accepted into membership:

- a. They acknowledge that the Bible is God's Word, and that it alone reveals how to receive eternal life.
- b. They have experienced the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.
- c. They are determined to grow as a Christian and live in obedience to Christ.
- d. They have been baptized, or are willing to be baptized as soon as is convenient.

3. Voting Rights

Youth members are not eligible to vote in church elections.

403 Watch-care Membership

1. Age

Children under the age of nine may be nurtured in the church in its watch-care membership, with the goal of leading them

toward a commitment to Christ.

2. Qualifications

Before children are accepted into watch-care membership, the following must be determined to be true:

- a. They acknowledge that the Bible is God's Word, and that it alone reveals how a person can receive eternal life.
- b. They are willing to learn what the Bible says about being a Christian.
- c. They will try to meet the requirements for church membership.

3. Parental Consent

Children shall not be admitted as watch-care members unless consent has been given by the parents or guardians.

4. Reporting

Because watch-care membership does not require a profession of faith, such members shall not be reported as members in full standing. Instead, they will be reported as members in watch-care.

5. Voting Rights

Watch-care members are not eligible to vote in church elections.

404 Receiving Members

Each church may determine the procedure for accepting qualified persons into membership.

It is important that new members and the congregation bond. Thus, the church should find a satisfactory way to communicate to its entire body the favorable answers to the following questions.

1. Receiving Adult Members

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 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."
- 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. Receiving Youth Members

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 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."

c. 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."

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

3. Receiving Watch-care Members

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."

405 Transfer of Members

The Spiritual Care Commission may approve a letter of transfer to another United Brethren church. Upon completion of the transfer, the person's name shall be removed from the roll.

406 Withdrawal of Members

When members desire to withdraw from the church, they may be given a letter of withdrawal by the Spiritual Care Commission. When appropriate, this letter may be accompanied by a statement of recommendation to a specific church, regardless of denomination.

407 Revising the Roll

1. The local board may remove members from the roll with a two-thirds vote in the following situations:

a. The Spiritual Care Commission has not known the person's location for the past three years, and the local board determines that sufficient attempts have been made to locate the person.

b. A member's lifestyle, conduct, or doctrine violate the commitment agreed to in becoming a member. This action can be taken only if attempts to restore, correct, or reconcile the person do not succeed.

2. *Youth*—Upon reaching age 14, youth may be received into adult membership by meeting the qualifications for adult membership. No youth shall remain on the youth roll after age 15. The youth roll should be corrected annually.

3. *Watch-care*—After the age of nine, children who have made a commitment to Christ and show a continued interest in the church may become youth members by complying with the requirements for youth church membership. Watch-care members who persistently refuse to seek Christ or to receive religious instruction may be dropped from the roll.

CHAPTER 18

Local Church Organization

411 Organization

1. Size

A group of adults may organize as a local church when they achieve the following:

a. Adult members from 10 or more resident families.

b. An average worship attendance of 50 or more over the preceding twelve consecutive months.

2. Structure

Each local church is free to establish the structure that will best suit the needs and ministries of the congregation and community. Paragraphs 412 and 413 provide a suggested structure which churches may use as a guideline, to be followed or adapted as desired.

412 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. 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 501.

4. 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. *Election*—At the annual election, the church membership shall elect by ballot the lay delegate(s). The local board shall send a written report to the conference superintendent telling the number of votes cast for each nominee and the names of the delegates and alternates elected.

413 Local Board of Administration

The following paragraphs give a suggested structure for a local church board of administration, to be followed or adapted as the local congregation desires.

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 pastor, 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 ¶421-428). The members present at any duly called meeting constitute a quorum.

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, except for the treasurer, 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.

c. The board will nominate lay delegates.

d. 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.

CHAPTER 19

Local Church Commissions

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.

421 Evangelism and Discipleship Commission

1. Personnel

The elected chairperson, and four persons appointed by the local board.

2. Areas of Responsibility

Any evangelism and/or discipleship ministry, any spiritual renewal emphasis, and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

422 Missions Commission

1. 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.)

2. Areas of Responsibility

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

423 Worship and Music Commission

1. Personnel

The elected chairperson, pastor, and three persons appointed by the local board.

2. Areas of Responsibility

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

424 Christian Education Commission

1. 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.)

2. 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.

425 Spiritual Care Commission

1. Personnel

The elected chairperson, lay leader, pastor, and two persons

appointed by the local board.

2. Areas of Responsibility

Visitation, deacons' work, social concerns, food pantry, and other areas of ministry as assigned by the local board.

The commission shall also oversee areas related to membership. This may include interviewing and recommending persons for membership, conducting membership classes, correcting the membership roll, and the discipline and restoration of members.

426 Property Commission

1. Personnel

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

2. 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.

427 Finance Commission

1. Personnel

The elected chairperson, church treasurer, and three persons appointed by the local board.

2. 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.

428 Personnel Relations Commission

1. Personnel

The elected chairperson, the chairman of the delegates, and three persons appointed by the local board.

2. Areas of Responsibility

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

b. Be sensitive to the relationship between the pastor and the local church.

c. Cultivate the pastor-church relationship.

d. Interpret to the congregation the nature and function of the pastoral office.

e. Make recommendations to the Finance Commission concerning the pastor's salary and benefits.

f. Make recommendations to the local board concerning vaca-

tion, pulpit supply, and attendance at conventions and seminars.

g. Cooperate with the conference stationing committee in securing a pastor when the need arises.

h. Make recommendations to the local board concerning job descriptions of other employed personnel.

3. 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.)

CHAPTER 20

Local Conference

431 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.

432 Personnel

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

433 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.

434 Officers

1. Chairperson

The conference superintendent shall be the chairperson of the local conference (except in the case of a special session called by the bishop). A conference superintendent who calls a session but is not able to be present may appoint an elder of the annual conference, in consultation with the bishop, to preside.

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.

435 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, members shall transfer their membership to the local church of their 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.

CHAPTER 21

Pastors in Charge

441 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 within 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 pastoral care.

8. 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.

9. To promote general church interests.

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

442 Removal of Pastors

The bishop or superintendent may remove pastors from assigned pastorates for any of these reasons:

1. Pastors charged with immoral or imprudent conduct, who persist in ignoring the church by refusing to prepare or appear for trial, or who refuse to resign upon the request of the bishop or superintendent, shall be subject to removal.
2. Pastors may be asked to resign if they become so involved in debt or other delinquencies in their business relations in the community of service that they destroy their influence as a Christian minister, and if they also refuse to correct the cause of offense after being admonished to do so. Pastors who refuse to resign shall be subject to removal.
3. Pastors who become officially incompetent through mental or bodily disability or who, being insubordinate, refuse to work in harmony with the church program or the church Discipline, may be removed from the pastorate. This shall not be construed so as to deprive the accused of all the rights and privileges of a committee trial as provided in the Discipline.
4. Pastors who are disabled, as determined by the bishop or conference superintendent, for an extended period of time may be temporarily relieved of all responsibility of their assigned pastorate until the bishop or superintendent determine that they are capable of resuming full responsibility. Matters pertaining to compensation and benefits shall rest with the bishop, superintendent, local board of administration, and pastor.

Local Church Property

451 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.

452 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.

453 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.

454 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 appointments and local church facilities.

455 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.

456 Property of Closed Churches

Local church property, both personal and real, of appoint-

ments 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 the 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.

457 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.

458 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.

459 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.

460 Vacant Parsonages

1. 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.

2. 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.

Affiliate Local Church

471 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 ¶111 in "Duties of Members."
3. They agree to the duties as recorded in the Discipline, except ¶111 concerning secret combinations, and subscribe to the Moral and Social Standards.
4. Ministers of such congregations shall be or shall become members of annual conferences of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ on the same basis as any other minister. They 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 (Chapter 5) 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 (¶111) 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 United Brethren in Christ to revert to the status of an affiliate local church.

Conference Organization

501 Organization

1. Size

A conference shall consist of at least five organized churches.

2. Structure

Each conference shall organize with the following:

- a. A conference council of administration.
- b. A stationing committee.
- c. A Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission (or its equivalent).
- d. At least one conference superintendent.

Beyond those requirements, each conference is free to establish the structure that will best suit its own needs and ministries. Paragraphs 503-535 provide a suggested structure which conferences may use as a guideline, to be followed or adapted as desired.

3. Lay/Clergy Representation

Laypersons and clergy shall each comprise at least 40% of the representation on all conference levels of structure. The only exceptions are the Ministerial Licensing and Ordination commission and the stationing committee, on which laypersons may serve.

502 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 Church Services Commission.

503 Personnel

The members of the annual conference are the bishop, elders, and licentiates who have been duly received by the conference, and the lay delegates and laypersons 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 laypersons thus chosen shall have all rights and privileges of ministers in the annual conference except on decisions otherwise restricted by Discipline.

504 Absentee

The names of members of the conference who absent themselves from the sessions of the conference three years in succession without giving a satisfactory reason for so doing may be erased from the roll of the conference.

505 Officers

1. Bishop

The bishop or an elder of the church designated by the bishop shall preside over the affairs of the conference and its business sessions.

2. Assistant Chairperson

The conference council of administration shall annually name an assistant chairperson 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.

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 chapter 27.)

506 National Conference

We recognize that the churches within a single country may be unable to fully subscribe to the United Brethren Constitution and Discipline because of such matters as legal requirements, property ownership, tax exempt status, conflicts with national laws and regulations, issues of national sovereignty, cultural differences, and other concerns. Therefore, to allow for such situations and retain the unity of the church, a conference consisting of all of the United Brethren churches in a single country may provisionally organize as a national conference with the approval of the General Board. The permanent status of such conferences shall be decided in 1997.

CHAPTER 25

Annual Conference Duties

511 Examine its Members

The annual conference shall establish procedures for examining all ministerial members of the conference and others serving pastorates within the conference regarding their moral character, doctrinal soundness, administrative integrity, and pastoral competency.

512 License and Ordain Candidates for the Ministry

The annual conference shall license candidates for the ministry and ordain elders. (See 224-225, and 231-243.)

513 Provide a Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission

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

The commission, 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 commission and conference.

The conference Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission shall have responsibility in the following areas:

1. To provide orientation and study resources for candidates for a local conference license, and a continuing record of the licensee's educational progress.

2. 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.

3. To receive annual reports on each ministerial student enrolled in a theological school.

4. To give direction and guidance to the educational program of the ministerial candidate who is not regularly enrolled in a theological school.

5. To examine candidates for annual conference ministerial membership and to make recommendations to the conference.

6. To report to the conference with recommendations when a licentiate has completed the educational requirements for ordination.

7. 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.

514 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.

515 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.

516 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.

517 Assign Pastors

1. The Itinerant Plan

The itinerant plan is the church's method for doing the following:

- a. Using a stationing committee to assign all licensed ministers employed by local churches.
- b. 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.

2. Stationing Committee

The stationing committee shall consist of the conference superintendent(s), and up to two additional conference elders currently serving pastorates, and may include one to four laypersons from conference churches. These elders and laypersons must be elected to the committee by ballot. The bishop shall be an ex officio member. In the overseas conferences, the Director of Missions will serve on the stationing committee.

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 commission or conference council of administration, the committee may appoint one minister to serve two or more congregations.

3. 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) or personnel relations commission acting on behalf of the board of administration.

4. Consultation Privileges

A personnel relations commission or 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 commission or the delegate(s) of the church(es) involved.

5. Cross-Conference Assignments

The bishop 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 relations commission of the church(es) and pastor(s) involved.

Ministers assigned to another conference shall have full voting privileges for three years in that conference, but only if they waive, in writing, their voting privileges in the conference of which they were a member. If they do not transfer their conference membership within three years, the voting privileges shall cease.

6. Appointment of Local Conference Ministers

If necessary, a local conference minister may be appointed as pastor. However, the person must have successfully completed at least one year of the study course.

7. Report of the Stationing Committee

The stationing committee shall make regular reports as required by the annual conference or the council of administration.

8. Filling Vacancies

The bishop shall provide interim ministers to fill vacancies in conference churches, and 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.

518 Station Superintendents

Conference superintendents shall be stationed by the bishop and two elders from each conference superintendent's district.

519 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.

520 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.

521 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.

CHAPTER 26

Conference Council

531 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.

532 Personnel

1. Ex Officio Members

The bishop, the superintendent(s), and the treasurer shall be members of the conference council of administration with vote.

2. Members at Large

The annual conference shall annually by majority ballot elect from its membership three to seven members at large to the conference council of administration, at least half of whom shall be laypersons. Clergy and laity should each comprise at least 40% of the members.

533 Officers

1. Chairperson and Assistant Chairperson

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

2. 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.

534 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.

535 Duties

1. Elect Chairperson of Superintendents

In case of multiple superintendents, the conference council of administration shall elect by ballot the senior or chairperson of the superintendents.

2. Act 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

CHAPTER 27

Conference Superintendents

541 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 bishop shall appoint the conference superintendent, subject to approval of the General Board of Administration. (See 302.5.)

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.

542 Duties and Powers of Conference Superintendent

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

1. 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.

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

2. Administer the Conference Program

The conference superintendent shall initiate the promotion

and administration of the conference program, and shall periodically review this program with the other superintendents or the conference council.

3. Act as Resource Leader

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

4. Serve on the Stationing Committee

The conference superintendent(s) shall serve on the committee to station pastors. If a conference has only one conference superintendent, that person will chair the stationing committee. If there is more than one conference superintendent, the committee to station pastors shall elect a superintendent to serve as chairperson.

5. Serve on the Conference Council

The conference superintendent shall be a member of the conference council of administration. If a conference has only one conference superintendent, this person will chair the conference council. If there is more than one conference superintendent, the conference council shall elect a superintendent to serve as chairperson.

6. Provide for Local Conferences

The conference superintendent shall provide for the conducting of local conference sessions.

7. Serve as Church Extension Supervisor

The conference superintendent shall be the church extension supervisor of that district under the direction of the conference council of administration, unless the annual conference determines to elect a director of church extension.

8. 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. The superintendent 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.

9. Propose Pastors' Salaries

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

10. Make Reports

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

CHAPTER 28

General Conference

601 Purpose

The General Conference shall administer all affairs pertaining to the commissions, agencies, conferences, churches, church extension districts and mission fields, and shall establish policies pertaining to the mission and ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

602 Personnel

The members of the General Conference are the bishop, the directors elected by the General Conference, and the delegates elected by the conferences.

1. Elected Delegates

Each conference shall be entitled to at least two delegates: one lay person and one minister. The number of additional delegates for each conference shall be added two at a time—one minister and one layperson—and shall be based on the following formula:

- a. 50% on the average of the main weekly worship service attendance and adult membership.
- b. 50% on the total of all financial contributions to the general church during the last full year prior to the election of General Conference delegates.

2. Church Extension District

A church extension district shall be entitled to one ministerial delegate and one lay delegate if the average of its membership and worship attendance equals at least 250.

3. Expenses

General Conference shall pay the travel expenses of all delegates from conferences which do not receive financial support from the General Conference or its agencies for day-to-day operations (for example, pastors' salaries and general administration). General Conference shall pay the travel expenses of two delegates from all other conferences.

603 Officers

1. The Bishop

The bishop shall be chairperson of the General Conference.

2. The Directors

The Directors of the various departments shall assist the bishop in administering the affairs of the General Conference.

3. The Secretary

The Executive Leadership Team shall appoint a secretary to record the proceedings of the General Conference. This appointment does not make the person a voting member of General Conference.

604 Duties and Powers

1. The General Conference shall determine the mission and ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and provide plans and policies appropriate for the denomination.
2. The General Conference shall perform all duties assigned in the Constitution and Discipline.

3. The General Conference shall review the work of its own officers, commissions, and committees.

4. The General Conference shall elect at each quadrennial session a bishop, directors, General Board of Administration members, members of the Church Services and Education commissions, and members of the Missions Commission as determined in the Joint Ministry Agreement.

5. The General Conference shall consider the revision of the Discipline.

6. The General Conference shall establish financial policies to direct the General Board and its Executive Leadership Team in developing the annual budget for the general church.

7. The General Conference shall guard the church's historic position of firmly upholding biblical absolutes, allowing freedom in areas not clearly mandated by Scripture, and encouraging tolerance and unity when differences arise.

8. When practices, teachings, or decisions within a conference or national conference challenge the doctrinal integrity, cooperative relationship, and/or international ministry of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, the General Conference shall have the authority to apply whatever disciplinary action it considers appropriate.

CHAPTER 29

Election of Delegates

611 Duties of the Bishop

1. The bishop shall, as early as possible, announce the number of delegates to which each conference, national conference, and church extension conference is entitled. This number will be based on the official statistics at the end of the third year of the quadrennium, as compiled from pastors' annual reports.

2. The bishop will circulate the list of elected delegates and alternates no later than February prior to the General Conference. This circulated list shall be sufficient credentials for all delegates.

612 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. Eligibility of Elders

Only elders who are actively pastoring a church in that conference or serving in an appointed or elected position in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ shall be eligible for nomination and election.

3. Nomination of Laity

In the third year of the quadrennium, the local board of administration may nominate an eligible layperson 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 laypersons and nominated elders of the conference shall constitute the ballot for the election of delegates to General Conference.

4. 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 the person's position in the local church or annual conference.

5. 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.

613 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.

614 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.

615 Duty of Local Board of Election

The lay leader (serving as chairperson), 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—

1. To be present and to receive ballots at any and all meetings of the local church during the month of October.

2. To record the name of each voter.

3. To record, after the last service in which ballots can be received, the name of each elder and layperson voted for, together with the number of ballots received.

4. To sign, seal, and forward the bill of election by November 15 to the annual conference board of tellers.

5. 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.

616 Time of Election

The election shall be held in the month of October preceding the sitting of the General Conference.

617 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.

618 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.

619 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 laypersons 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 chairperson.
4. Those elected shall be notified by December 1.
5. The board shall send a complete transcript of the election to the bishop 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.

620 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.

621 Publication

The bishop shall publish the names of those elected delegates and alternates in the denominational periodical no later than the February issue, and furnish a copy to the secretary of the General Conference. The published list, as certified by the bishop, shall be sufficient credentials for all delegates in the General Conference.

622 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 that person's place and to descend to the last alternate.

623 Contested Elections

In case of contest of election, the annual conference board of

tellers shall furnish each contestant with an exact copy of the election returns, when requested.

A contestant who feels that a recount is necessary 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.

CHAPTER 30

The Bishop

The General Conference shall elect an ordained minister to serve as bishop. This person must have served as a United Brethren elder for at least six years.

631 Election of the Bishop

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

632 Duties of the Bishop

1. Live Near Huntington, Ind.

The bishop shall reside in the area of Huntington, Indiana.

2. Set Vision and Direction

The bishop shall encourage spiritual development, and help establish the vision and direction of the General Conference ministries and of its constituent churches. The bishop will be responsible to work with conference and national conference

leaders, encouraging them to develop and pursue the vision for their ministries.

3. Oversee Administration

The bishop shall be responsible for the general administration of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The bishop will oversee the work of the Office Manager/Treasurer, the Communications Manager, and the Commission on Ministry.

4. Serve on Commissions

The bishop shall be an ex officio member of all commissions of the General Conference.

5. Preside at Meetings

The bishop shall preside at the General Conference, the General Board of Administration, the Executive Leadership Team, and conference sessions. The bishop may preside at national conference sessions, if invited. When unable to attend any of these meetings, the bishop shall designate another elder to preside.

6. Conduct Ordinations

The bishop may conduct ordination services or assign this responsibility to another ordained minister.

7. Ensure Accountability

The bishop shall ensure that accountability procedures are established for all officers, committees, commissions, and employees of the general church. The bishop shall also hold conference leaders accountable for ministry performance and moral and personal conduct.

8. Interpret Discipline

The bishop shall interpret the Discipline, and this ruling shall stand until the next meeting of the General Board or General Conference.

9. Serve on Conference Committees

The bishop shall serve as an ex officio member of each conference council of administration and stationing committee. However, the bishop will not be permitted to be chairperson of those groups and will attend meetings at his discretion.

10. Appoint Superintendents

The bishop shall be responsible to fill vacancies in the office of conference superintendent until the reorganization of the conference.

11. Comply with International Agreements

The bishop shall ensure that United Brethren entities comply with any joint ministry agreements.

12. Represent the Denomination

The bishop shall, at his discretion, participate in or designate someone to represent the denomination to parachurch and inter-denominational ministries.

633 Accountability

1. The bishop shall be accountable to the General Board of Administration for ministry performance and moral and personal conduct.

2. If the bishop becomes involved in immoral or imprudent conduct or otherwise proves to be incompetent in that office, the General Board will request the bishop's resignation or may remove the bishop from office by a two-thirds vote.

634 Succession

If a vacancy occurs in the office of bishop due to death, disability, resignation, or removal, the Executive Leadership Team shall appoint an elder from their number to serve as acting bishop until the next meeting of the General Board or General Conference. 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 31

General Board of Administration

641 Purpose

The General Board of Administration shall conduct the business of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ between sessions of the General Conference in accordance with the plans and policies established by the General Conference.

642 Personnel

The General Board shall consist of the following:

1. The bishop.
2. The directors elected by the General Conference.
3. The highest elected leader of each conference which does not receive financial support from the General Conference or its agencies for day-to-day operations (for example, pastors' salaries and general administration).
4. Twelve lay persons and four pastoring elders elected by General Conference.
5. Additional persons as specified in any Joint Ministry Agreement.

643 Officers

1. *Chairperson*—The bishop shall be the presiding officer of the General Board of Administration.
2. *Assistant Chairperson*—At the time of its organization, the General Board shall elect one of its members to be the assistant chairperson.
3. *Secretary*—The General Board shall elect one of its members to be the recording secretary.

644 Duties

1. The General Board of Administration shall carry out the plans and policies established by the General Conference.
2. When issues arise that are not covered by policies established by the General Conference, the General Board shall determine the policy which will be followed until General Conference meets and deals with the issue.
3. The General Board shall decide questions of interpretation in the Constitution and Discipline. Between sessions of the General Board, the bishop's interpretation will stand until the next meeting of either the General Conference or the General Board.
4. The General Board will adopt the general budget according to the policies established by the General Conference.

5. The General Board shall fill vacancies involving the bishop, any director elected by the General Conference, its own members, and commission members elected by the General Conference.

6. The General Board shall provide for the annual evaluation of the bishop.

645 Meetings

The General Board of Administration shall meet annually.

CHAPTER 32

Executive Leadership Team

651 Purpose

The Executive Leadership Team shall conduct business between sessions of the General Board in accordance with the plans and policies of the General Conference and General Board.

652 Personnel

The Executive Leadership Team shall consist of the bishop, the directors elected by General Conference, and four lay people and two clergy selected by the General Board.

653 Officers

The bishop shall serve as the chairperson. The Executive Leadership Team shall select an assistant chairperson and a secretary from its membership.

654 Duties

1. The Executive Leadership Team will receive reports from the bishop, directors, and General Treasurer.
2. The Executive Leadership Team will appoint necessary committees to prepare for and conduct the work of the General Conference and the General Board (i.e. Finance, Nominations, etc.).
3. The Executive Leadership Team will recommend to the General Board personnel for General Treasurer/Office Manager, Communications Manager, Certified Public Accountant to conduct the annual audit, committees dealing with pension and insurance matters, and other personnel recommendations as directed by the General Board.

655 Meetings

The Executive Leadership Team will meet at least annually. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

CHAPTER 33

Church Services Department

661 Purpose

The Church Services Commission 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.

662 Personnel

1. Members

The commission shall consist of the following:

- a. The bishop.
- b. Seven members elected by the General Conference.
- c. Up to six additional members appointed by the commission.

2. Lay/Clergy Ratio

The total commission membership shall include at least 40% laypersons and 40% clergy. The director elected by General Conference and any associate directors shall be advisory members.

663 Commission Officers

1. Election

The commission shall elect a chairperson, assistant chairperson, and recording secretary at its first regular meeting after General Conference. These officers shall hold office until their successors are elected. All officers shall be United Brethren members.

2. Chairperson

The chairperson will preside at commission meetings. Neither the bishop nor the director of the department may chair the commission.

664 Meetings

The Church Services Commission shall meet at least annually. Special meetings shall be called by the chairperson. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

665 Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of the officers. This committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson or upon the request of two of its members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

The executive committee will cooperate with the bishop in conducting the director's regular evaluation.

666 Duties and Powers

1. The commission shall be responsible for the direction, policies, administration, and general management of the Department of Church Services.
2. The commission shall report to the meetings of the General Conference, the General Board of Administration, and the Executive Leadership Team.
3. The commission may suggest to the General Conference nominating committee persons it would like to be considered as candidates for director.
4. The Church Services Commission will help congregations improve their effectiveness in Christian education, youth ministry, family ministry, and other local church ministries.
5. The commission will oversee non-cross-cultural church extension.
6. The commission is responsible for the denomination's marketing services.

667 Vacancies

The Church Services Commission may fill vacancies among members appointed by itself. When vacancies occur among members elected by the General Conference, the commission may suggest persons to be considered for appointment by the General Board or the Executive Leadership Team.

668 Funds

The General Treasurer shall hold commission funds subject to the direction of the commission. No funds shall be distributed by this treasurer unless duly authorized by the person or persons designated by the commission to do so.

CHAPTER 34

Education Department

671 Purpose

The Education Commission exists to create and promote interest in Christian higher education throughout the denomination.

672 Personnel

1. Members

- The Education Commission shall consist of the following:
- The bishop.
 - Seven members elected by the General Conference.
 - Up to six additional members appointed by the commission.

2. Lay/Clergy Ratio

The total commission membership shall include at least 40% laypersons and 40% clergy. The director elected by General Conference and any associate directors shall be advisory members.

673 Commission Officers

1. Election

The commission shall elect a chairperson, assistant chairperson, and recording secretary at its first regular meeting after General Conference. These officers shall hold office until their successors are elected. All officers shall be United Brethren members.

2. Chairperson

The chairperson will preside at commission meetings. Neither the bishop nor the director of the department may chair the commission.

674 Meetings

The Education Commission shall meet at least annually. Special meetings shall be called by the chairperson. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

675 Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of the officers. This committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson or upon the request of two of its members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

The executive committee will cooperate with the bishop in conducting the director's regular evaluation.

676 Duties and Powers

- The Education Commission shall be responsible for the direction, policies, administration, and general management of the Department of Education.
- The commission shall report to the meetings of the General Conference, the General Board of Administration, and the Executive Leadership Team.

3. The commission may suggest to the General Conference nominating committee persons it would like to be considered as candidates for director.

4. The commission is responsible for policies which affect the work of higher education in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

5. The commission is responsible for the oversight of Huntington College in Huntington, Indiana.

6. The commission is responsible for the development and direction of international higher education interests.

7. The commission is responsible for ministerial education.

677 Vacancies

The Education Commission may fill vacancies among members appointed by itself. When vacancies occur among members elected by the General Conference, the commission may suggest persons to be considered for appointment by the General Board or the Executive Leadership Team.

678 Funds

The General Treasurer shall hold commission funds subject to the direction of the commission. No funds shall be distributed by this treasurer unless duly authorized by the person or persons designated by the commission to do so.

CHAPTER 35

Missions Department

681 Purpose

The Missions Commission is established in compliance with Christ's commission to go into the uttermost parts of the world as His witnesses and to carry out the missionary program of the General Conference.

682 Personnel

1. Members

The Missions Commission shall consist of the following:

- The bishop.
- The WMF president.
- The elected MMI representative.
- Five United Brethren members elected by the General Conference.
- Three members appointed by the Women's Missionary Fellowship.
- Up to three members appointed by the General Board of Administration or the United Brethren Church in Canada, according to Joint Ministry Agreement specifications.

2. Lay/Clergy Ratio

The total commission membership shall include at least 40% laypersons. The director elected by General Conference and any associate directors shall be advisory members.

683 Commission Officers

1. Election

The Missions Commission shall elect a chairperson, assistant chairperson, and recording secretary at its first regular meeting after General Conference. These officers shall hold office until their suc-

cessors are elected. All officers shall be United Brethren members.

2. Chairperson

The chairperson will preside at commission meetings. Neither the bishop nor the director of the department may chair the commission.

684 Meetings

The commission shall meet at least annually. Special meetings shall be called by the chairperson. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

685 Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of the officers and any other persons as required in the Joint Ministry Agreement. This committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson or upon the request of two of its members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

The executive committee will cooperate with the bishop in conducting the director's regular evaluation.

686 Duties and Powers

1. The Missions Commissions shall be responsible for the direction, policies, administration, and general management of the Department of Missions.

2. The commission shall report to the meetings of the General Conference, the General Board of Administration, and the Executive Leadership Team.

3. The commission may suggest to the General Conference nominating committee persons it would like to be considered as candidates for director.

4. The commission shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to missionaries—recruitment, training, appointment, support, travel, duties, supervision, etc.

5. The commission shall help churches in United Brethren mission conferences and districts be effective in their ministries.

6. The commission shall oversee the work of Women's Missionary Fellowship and Master's Men International, and approve changes to the WMF and MMI constitutions.

7. The commission shall oversee cross-cultural church extension work in the United States.

687 Vacancies

When vacancies occur among members elected by the General Conference, the commission may suggest persons to be considered for appointment by the General Board or the Executive Leadership Team. Other vacancies shall be filled by the group that originally appointed the person.

688 Funds

The General Treasurer shall hold commission funds subject to the direction of the commission. No funds shall be distributed by this treasurer unless duly authorized by the person or persons designated by the commission to do so.

CHAPTER 36

Property

691 General

1. Security of Property

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 the bishop's 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 chairperson 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.

692 Boards of Trustees

1. Local Church Trustees (See ¶426 and ¶451-460)

2. Annual Conference Trustees

The annual conferences may elect boards of trustees to ac-

quire, 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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 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 37

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 who requests the regular committee trial shall be denied 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 that person. But if such a visit is unsuccessful, the accused shall be tried by the church in which membership is held, or by a committee thereof chosen by the parties concerned in the following manner: the accuser shall choose one committee member; the accused a second committee member, and these two a third committee member. But if these two fail to agree upon the third committeeman within fifteen days, the local conference shall appoint the third committee member.

The pastor in charge of the appointment or local church shall be chairperson. If found guilty, the accused shall be suspended or expelled. An accused member who refuses to choose a committee member may be suspended or expelled by a vote of the church in which membership is held.

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 chairperson 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 the 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 along one or two faithful members. However, if the accused denies guilt, that person 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 the lay leader's duty in case of an appeal to furnish this 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 38

Trial of Local Conference Ministers

711 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.

712 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 inten-

tion 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 39

Trial of Annual Conference Ministers

721 Preliminary Considerations of Trial

Accusations limited to personal trespass require a preliminary compliance with Matthew 18:15-17.

An annual conference minister who is guilty of immorality, trespassing, imprudent conduct, or disobedience to the order and discipline of the church, and who makes confession of the fact prior to the trial, shall cease to preach, except by permission of the conference superintendent of the district, until the meeting of the annual conference. The annual conference shall then consider the case and dispose of it as, in view of all the circumstances, may seem just and right.

722 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 guilt, the local conference to which the minister is amenable shall appoint another annual conference minister who shall take along 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 Prosecutor

It shall be the duty of the prosecutor to notify the accused in writing, setting forth all the charges which have been preferred. The prosecutor shall also notify the accused to choose an elder as a committee member to represent the church. These two committee member shall choose a third elder or minister; but if these two fail to agree upon a third committee member 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 committee member.

The prosecutor shall also notify the conference superintendent of the district wherein said cause of accusation occurred. The conference superintendent shall act as chairperson of the trial, unless rendered ineligible because of relationship or interest or because of being a witness in the case, in which event the prosecutor shall notify the bishop who shall appoint a chairperson. If the offender or prosecutor be a conference superintendent, the bishop shall appoint a chairperson in the case. If the accused be the bishop, one of the directors shall be appointed as chairperson.

It shall be the duty of the chairperson 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

Witnesses shall be asked to declare, upon their honor as followers of Jesus Christ, that the testimony they are about to give is true to the best of their knowledge and belief. The question of admissibility of testimony will be decided by the chairperson 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 chairperson should require witnesses to testify specifically to facts within their 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 the testimony. If the witness is biased or prejudiced toward the accused, the 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 the accused to hold his peace until the annual conference to which the accused 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 the accused 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 the accused refuse or neglect to choose a committee member or to notify the prosecutor of the choice within fifteen days, the accused shall in accordance with Discipline be removed from the 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 a 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 bishop or other general officials become necessary to the defense of the church, their expense shall be paid out of the administrative fund.

723 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

committee member when the two committee members chosen fail to agree on the choice of the third.

724 Appeal from the Decision of Annual Conference

Members of an annual conference who may be dissatisfied with the decision of the conference shall, within thirty days after the session of the annual conference, notify the secretary of said conference of their intention to appeal to the General Conference, together with their reasons 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 40

Impeachment of an Annual Conference

731 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 bishop, who shall appoint a committee of seven members of the General Conference who shall constitute a trial committee. The bishop 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

APPENDIX A

Glossary of UB Terms

Adult Membership. The membership category for anyone ages 14 and older who has made a commitment to Christ and agreed to other requirements. (See ¶401)

Affiliate Local Church. A congregation which doesn't need to meet the requirements for full-member churches, particularly regarding property ownership and membership in secret societies. All affiliate churches joined us because they didn't want to be part of the merger which created the United Methodist Church. These churches are not entitled to a vote in the annual conference. (See chapter 23)

Annual Conference. The highest governing body of a conference. It meets annually, and consists of all ministers of that conference and laypersons from each church. (See chapters 24-25)

Appointment. A preaching point organized or not organized into a local church.

Bishop. The highest elected leader in the denomination, chosen for a four-year term. A bishop must have been a United Brethren elder for at least six years. (See chapter 30)

Board of Administration. A local church body which typically meets monthly to oversee the various affairs of the church. Only the local conference has more authority. (See ¶413)

Board of Tellers. A group of people, either at the local church or conference level, who count and record the ballots cast in elections. (See ¶612.5, ¶615, and ¶619)

Church Extension District. One or more appointments or local churches outside the boundaries of an established conference.

Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The denomination's official name.

Church Services Department. The denominational department which seeks to help churches improve their effectiveness in youth ministry, Christian education, family ministry, leadership development, and other local church ministries. The department sponsors the denominational youth conventions, oversees non-cross-cultural church planting, and runs the denomination's marketing operation. A commission consisting of the bishop, seven members elected by General Conference, and up to six other members appointed by the commission oversees the department. (See chapter 33)

Commissions. Churches typically organize with various commissions to oversee specific aspects of the church's ministry. The Discipline suggests eight different commissions. (See chapter 19)

Conference. Five or more churches within boundary lines set by General Conference. A conference must organize with a conference council, a stationing committee, a Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission, and at least one superintendent. (See chapters 24-25)

Conference Council. The executive committee of the annual conference, which handles business between sessions of the annual conference. It consists of the bishop, superintendent(s), treasurer, and 3-7 other persons elected by the conference. (See chapter 26)

Confession of Faith. A concise statement of seven fundamental doctrines. This document was adopted in 1815 and has never been changed. (See chapter 2)

Constitution. A statement adopted in 1841 which details basic organizational procedures and stands on several issues. It can't be changed without a referendum, followed by approval by General Conference. (See chapter 3)

Deacon/Deaconess. A person elected to give spiritual leadership in the church, especially to develop and nurture the spiritual lives of members and preserve the church's witness. The Spiritual Care Commission oversees the work of the deacons/deaconesses. (See ¶413.3e)

Departments. There are three denominational departments: Missions, Church Services, and Education. General Conference elects a director to oversee each department. (See chapters 33-35)

Director. A person elected by General Conference to oversee one of the general church departments (Missions, Church Services, and Education).

Discipline. The entire book you are holding in your hands. It consists of the Confession of Faith, Constitution, by-laws, and various information items.

Education Department. The denominational department which exists to promote interest in Christian higher education. Its primary focus is Huntington College. Oversight comes from a commission consisting of the bishop, seven members elected by General Conference, and up to six other members appointed by the commission. (See chapter 34)

Elder. An ordained minister. (See ¶241)

Executive Leadership Team. The executive committee of the General Board. It handles business between General Board meetings. Members include the bishop (chairperson), departmental directors, and four laypersons and two clergy selected by the General Board. (See chapter 32)

Financial Secretary. A person appointed by the church's Finance Commission to receive and record all offerings. (See ¶427)

General Benevolence. The system for financially supporting denominational ministries. Each conference (except for the missions conferences) is asked to contribute a percentage of the denomination's budget, based on a formula which considers that conference's total membership, attendance, and past giving. The various departments also engage in other fundraising.

General Board of Administration. The highest governing body between General Conferences. It meets annually. The members are the bishop (chairperson), the departmental directors, the highest elected leader of each self-supporting conference, 12 laypersons and four pastoring elders elected by General Conference, and any other persons required by joint ministry agreements. (See chapter 31)

General Conference. Our highest governing body, which meets every four years. Members elect their own lay and clergy delegates. (See chapter 28)

Graduate School of Christian Ministries. Huntington College's graduate school offers masters degree in Christian Ministries and Educational Ministries. (See chapter 14)

Huntington College. The denomination's only college, located in Huntington, Ind. It operates under the authority of the Education Commission, and ultimately, of General Conference.

Itinerant Plan. The church's method for assigning ministers to churches.

Itinerant. A minister who has made a commitment to be subject to the counsel of other ministers and to serve wherever the church places him or her. All annual conference licentiates and ordained elders are itinerants. (See ¶243)

Joint Ministry Agreement. An agreement which helps the general church and a conference located outside of the United States to legally work together.

Lay Delegate. A person elected by the congregation to represent them to the conference. Churches may have multiple lay delegates, depending on the church's size. (See ¶412.4)

Lay Leader. A non-ministerial member elected by a congregation to give active leadership. (See ¶412.1)

Lay Minister. A layperson called by God and licensed to perform specified acts of ministry. Must have been a UB member for at least two years. (See chapter 9)

Licentiate. A minister who is not yet ordained.

Local Church. A group of adults from ten or more resident families that, prior to its official organization, had an average worship attendance of 50 or more during the preceding year.

Local Conference. The highest governing body of a church. Its members include the bishop, the conference superintendent, all church members who hold a local conference license, and all members of the board of administration. Only the local conference can grant and renew local conference licenses, try appeals, and disband the church. (See chapter 20)

Local Conference Minister. The first step toward ordination. A local conference license to preach is granted by a church's local conference to one of its members. It is typically followed by an annual conference license, and then ordination. (See chapter 10)

Master's Men International. The denominational men's organization which focuses on supporting missions and various service projects.

Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Commission. A conference committee of 3-5 elders that deals with various issues relating to the recruiting, training, examining, and ordination of ministers. (See ¶513)

Mission District. One or more appointments or local churches not organized as a conference which are administered by the Missions Commission.

Missions Department. The department responsible for the denomination's missions work. Oversight is given by a commission consisting of the bishop, the WMF president, an elected MMI representative, five members elected by General Conference, three members appointed by the WMF, and up to three other members. (See chapter 35)

National Conference. A conference which, for any of various reasons, may not be able to fully subscribe to the UB Constitution and Discipline. Currently, only the UB Church in Canada falls into this classification. (See ¶506)

Nominating Committee. A group of persons who prepare a ballot for a church election, whether at the local, conference, or denominational level.

Ordination. A recognition that a minister has been set apart for the gospel ministry.

Overseas Conferences. Normally, this refers to the conferences outside of North America—Jamaica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Hong Kong—which are under the authority of the Missions Commission.

Pastor. The minister assigned to lead a church. When there is a church staff with more than one minister, this person is known as the senior pastor. (See ¶441)

Personnel Relations Commission. The local church commission which deals with salaries, benefits, and various other matters pertaining to church staff. (See ¶428)

Referendum. When the entire UB constituency is invited to vote on an issue, such as an amendment to the Constitution. This voting is done during the October before General Conference in conjunction with the election of General Conference delegates.

Secret Combination (or Society). A fraternal benefit society, such as the Masons and Oddfellows, as defined in ¶111. UB members are forbidden to belong to secret societies.

Specialized Ministries Licentiate. A layperson on a church staff who serves in and is trained for a specific area of ministry, such as youth or music ministry. (See chapter 13)

Stationing Committee. A conference committee consisting of the bishop, superintendent(s), up to two other pastoring elders, and up to four laypersons. This committee assigns ministers to churches. (See ¶517.2)

Superintendent. One of more persons elected as the highest officials of an annual conference. (See chapter 27)

Superintendent's District. Two or more local churches or appointments under the supervision of a conference superintendent.

Trustees. Local church members charged with responsibility for property matters. The Property Commission members serve as the trustees.

Watchcare Membership. A category of membership for children up through age 9. A personal commitment to Christ is not required. Watchcare members may not vote in church elections. (See ¶403)

Women's Missionary Fellowship. A women's organization which focuses on raising support, financial and otherwise, for mission work. The WMF has its own organizational structure, a biennial convention, and a fulltime executive director. Most UB churches have a local chapter.

Youth Membership. A category of membership for children ages 9-13. A personal commitment to Christ is required. Youth members may not vote in church elections. (See ¶402)

APPENDIX B

Pension Policies

The following information concerning the Ministerial Aid and Pension programs is not part of the official Discipline, which can be revised only by General Conference. These programs may be amended by the General Board of Administration. This material is published within the Discipline only as a means to communicate the information.

Ministerial Aid Purpose

The Ministerial Aid Fund is designed to provide financial assistance to ministers who were not eligible to enter the denominational pension program when it began in 1966.

Supervision

The General Board of Administration is responsible to appoint personnel to supervise the Ministerial Aid program.

Eligibility

1. Individuals who were serving or who had service before the denominational pension program began in 1966, but were not eligible to enter.

2. Ministers, missionaries, and general church officials who have served at least 10 years with the denomination.
3. When an eligible recipient dies, the spouse will receive benefits according to the number of years they served the church together, if they served at least 10 years.
4. Individuals must have been granted a retired status by their annual conference. Missionaries must be recommended by the Director of Missions.
5. Ministerial Aid application forms must be filed with the conference and approved by the general church Ministerial Aid committee.

Payments

1. The General Board of Administration will establish the amount to be paid per service year.
2. The amount to be received will be divided into four payments and mailed in January, April, July, and October.
3. The maximum payment to an individual shall not exceed \$2000 per year.
4. Payment begins with the first quarterly payment immediately after approval.

Pension Program

Purpose

The pension program of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ provides retirement funds for participants.

Structure

The pension program is composed of two parts:

1. A "Defined Benefit Plan" funded entirely by the denomination.
2. A "Tax Deferred Annuity Plan" chosen by the denomination and funded by the individual participant.

Supervision

The General Board of Administration is responsible for appointing personnel to supervise the pension program. The Bishop, Director of Missions, and Director of Church Services serve as pension trustees.

Eligibility

1. Ministers with an annual or a local conference license and missionaries become eligible to participate in the pension program upon reaching an insurance age of 21 and completing one year of service in the denomination.
2. Participants must contribute a minimum amount of their salary package into the designated TDA each year. Persons who fail to make the minimum contribution during the calendar year will forfeit service credit for that year (service credit is used to calculate benefits under the Defined Benefit Plan). Persons who fail to make this contribution for three successive years will be automatically terminated from the Defined Benefit Plan.
3. Participants must maintain active employment in the denomination to continue being eligible.

Funding

1. The contributions to the Defined Benefit Plan are actuarially determined and paid by the denomination.
2. The contributions to the Tax Deferred Annuity Plan are funded by the individual participant.

Benefits Provisions

1. The normal retirement date is the first of the month following the participant's 65th birthday.
2. Benefits are in addition to Social Security benefits.
3. Benefits from the Defined Benefit Plan are determined by a formula which includes a certain percentage of the average monthly compensation for each service year.
4. Benefits from the Tax Deferred Annuity Plan are determined by the amount of contribution, interest rate, and number of years invested.
5. Participants may choose early retirement benefits at age 62.
6. The Defined Benefit Plan does not include an insured disability benefit. Any participant who suffers a total, permanent disability is immediately 100% vested and may choose to receive benefits under one of the following:
 - a. Receive an immediate benefit equal to the actuarial equivalent of his accrued benefit. In this case, the group term life benefit ends.
 - b. Be carried to retirement as an "active" participant at the projected benefit level in effect when the disability occurred. In this case, the group term life benefit remains in force.
7. Death benefits prior to the normal retirement date are not provided by the Defined Benefit Plan. However, a death benefit is provided by a Group Term Life Insurance policy. The death benefit will be equal to 100 times the projected monthly retirement benefit.

Break in Service

Former participants will become participants immediately upon returning to the employ of the employer, regardless of whether they had a nonforfeitable right to all or part of their accrued benefit when they were terminated. Reinstatement in the plan will be processed under one of the following:

1. Former participants who did not take a distribution upon leaving the plan, (i.e., they deferred their benefit or had no vested interest) will be given credit for benefit purposes for previous years of service.
 2. Former participants who took a distribution upon leaving the plan could reimburse the plan funds received in excess of personal contributions plus interest at the rate of 5% per year, and be given credit for benefit purposes for previous years of service. Persons who choose not to reimburse the plan forfeit any credit for benefit purposes for previous years of service. Reimbursement to the Defined Benefit fund must be done within the first year of eligibility.
 3. Former participants who take a distribution upon leaving the plan could reimburse the plan for the amount received, plus interest at the rate of 5% per year, and be given credit for benefit purposes for previous years of service. Persons who choose not to reimburse the plan forfeit any credit for benefit purposes for previous years of service. This must be done in the first year.
- Former employees who are not former participants will be given credit for any previous eligibility service they have completed. Therefore, they become eligible to participate on the January 1 after the total of their service before and after their break-in-service equals one year.

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence will automatically be authorized for up to six months after active employment ends. The leave of absence will

end if the person becomes actively employed outside the church. Group life insurance benefits being provided under the Defined Benefit Plan will be continued during the leave of absence.

Early Withdrawal or Cancellation of TDA

Participants are not permitted to withdraw funds or cancel TDA accounts established with the minimum required contributions. However, participants who have contributed more than the minimum requirement may be permitted to withdraw excess contributions.

Termination Provision

When participants end their employment before reaching their normal retirement date, their vested accrued benefit is held for distribution until that time. However, when the vested accrued benefit at the termination date is less than \$3500, the participant must take an immediate lump sum distribution.

Optional Forms of Receiving Benefits

Participants will be able to choose how they receive benefits from a variety of options. Personal consultation with the pension agent will be helpful in making the best choice.

Vesting Schedule

Years	Vested %
1	0%
2	0%
3	20%
4	40%
5	60%
6	80%
7	100%

APPENDIX C

Denominational Officials

Elected Officers for 1993-1997

Bishop: Dr. Ray A. Seilhamer
Department of Church Services: Rev. Paul E. Hirschy
Department of Education: Dr. G. Blair Dowden
Department of Missions: Rev. Kyle W. McQuillen, Jr.

Associated Personnel

Administration

General Treasurer/Office Manager: Marda Hoffman
Communications Manager: Steve Dennie
Executive Secretary: Phyllis Lahr
Payroll Clerk: Janet Bilyew
Receptionist: Sue Cherry
Archivist: Jane Mason

Missions

Executive Secretary of WMF: Donna Hollopeter
Executive Secretary of Missions Department: Mabel Mundy
Secretary: Linda Kreger.

Church Services

Literature Secretary: Euanna Holloway
Executive Secretary: Jodi Fiedler
Secretary: Phyllis Stouder

Officers and department personnel may be contacted at:

United Brethren Headquarters
302 Lake Street
Huntington, IN 46750
Phone: (219) 356-2312
FAX: 356-4730

Bishops Emeriti

Clyde W. Meadows, 23 Midcliff Drive, Columbus, OH 43213.
Bishop 1961-1969.

Wilber L. Sites, Jr., 2719 Fillmore Drive, Chambersburg, PA 17201. Bishop 1977-1989.

Raymond A. Waldfogel, 1537 Guilford St., Huntington, IN 46750. Bishop 1969-1981.

George E. Weaver, 2620 Westmoor Road, Findlay, OH 45840.
Bishop 1969-1977.

C. Ray Miller, 2260 Dieringer Dr., Huntington, IN 46750.
Bishop 1973-1993.

Clarence A. Kopp, Jr., 2038 College Ave., Huntington, IN 46750. Bishop 1981-1993.

Jerry F. Datema, 1537 Himes St., Huntington, IN 46750.
Bishop 1981-1993.

APPENDIX D

Boards and Commissions

General Board of Administration

Chairperson: Ray A. Seilhamer. *Directors:* Paul E. Hirschy, Kyle W. McQuillen, Jr., G. Blair Dowden. *Ministers:* Dennis R. Miller, Robert Simmons, Chuck Malson, Michael Newman, Brian Magnus, and one designated superintendent from each of the ten United States conferences. *Laypersons:* Ray Ankerbrand, Gary Bateman, Eugene Cartwright, Don Duff, Jack Diehl, Robert Eberly, Girv Fretz, James Hotchkiss, Brian Hughes, Bernard Hull, Paul Michelson, Dave Rahn, Ed Souers.

Executive Leadership Team

Chairperson: Ray A. Seilhamer. *Directors:* Dr. G. Blair Dowden, Paul E. Hirschy, Kyle W. McQuillen, Jr. *Ministers:* Patrick B. Jones, Brian Magnus, Dennis R. Miller. *Laypersons:* Bernard Hull, Paul Michelson, Dave Rahn, Ed Souers.

Education Commission

Ministers: Kirby Keller, C. Ray Miller, Ray A. Seilhamer, Robert Simmons. *Laypersons:* Donald Duff, Bernard Hull, Paul Lehman, J. Edward Roush.

Missions Commission

Chairperson: David Burkett. *Ministers:* Brent Birdsall, Ray A. Seilhamer. *Laypersons:* Ed Alspaugh, Pat Bergdall, June Brown, Robert Eberly, Dottie Foreman, Sharon Frank, Jennie Osgood, Joan Sider, Stan Snider, Judy Wheatley.

Church Services Commission

Ministers: David Datema, Ted Doolittle, Brooks Fetters, Daniel Kopp, Ron Ramsey, Ray A. Seilhamer. *Laypersons:* Olinda Barnes, Eileen Cotton, Gary Habermas, Mark Lamport, Twyla Lee, Cliff Miller, Dave Rahn.