

South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. Constitution and Bylaws

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. Name and Location

The name of this body shall be the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Incorporated, with headquarters in Houston, Texas.

ARTICLE II. Territory

The District shall include the territory of the State of Texas south of the northernmost county boundary lines of the following counties: Edwards, Kerr, Kendall, Comal, Guadalupe, Gonzales, Fayette, Washington, Grimes, Walker, San Jacinto, Liberty, Tyler, Jasper, and Newton.

ARTICLE III. Relationship

The South Texas District Council is an integral part of the General Council of the Assemblies of God with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri. Therefore, the principles of unity and cooperative fellowship set forth in the Constitution of the General Council are the principles which shall govern the South Texas District Council.

ARTICLE IV. Prerogatives

In connection with its purpose to promulgate the Gospel of Jesus Christ at home and abroad by all available means, the prerogatives of the South Texas District Council shall be:

- a. To encourage and promote the evangelization of our District, our State, our Nation and the world.
- b. To encourage and promote the worship of God.
- c. To encourage and promote the edification of believers.
- d. To provide a basis of fellowship among Christians of like precious faith.
- e. To respond to human need with ministries of compassion
- f. To establish and maintain such departments and institutions as may be necessary for the propagation of the gospel and the work of this Pentecostal fellowship.
- g. To approve all scriptural teachings, methods, and conduct, and to disapprove all unscriptural teachings, methods, and practices as listed in General Council bylaws, Article IX and X.
- h. To examine and recommend candidates for the ministry, those who shall have met the requirements of the General Council as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws.

- i. To elect its own officers, to appoint committees, to arrange for its own meetings, and to govern itself.
- j. To have the right to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of such property, real or chattel, as may be needed for the prosecution of its work.

ARTICLE V. Tenets of Faith

Statement of Fundamental Truths

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this Statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our needs as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. *The Scriptures Inspired*

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

2. *The One True God*

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

The Adorable Godhead

- a. *Terms Defined* - The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, who is one Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16, 17).
- b. *Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead* - Christ taught a distinction of Persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained. (Luke 1:35, I Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; I John 1:3, 4).
- c. *Unity of the One Being of Father, Son and Holy Spirit* - Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes Him the Father and not the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter, the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the one proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in

the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty, and His name one. (John 1:18, 15:26; 17:11, 21; Zechariah 14:9).

- d. *Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead* - The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to Person; not confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence, no Person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others. (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; John 8:17, 18).
- e. *The Title, Lord Jesus Christ* - The appellation, "Lord Jesus Christ", is a proper name. It is never applied, in the New Testament, either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God. (Romans 1:1-3, 7; II John 3).
- f. *The Lord Jesus Christ, God with Us* - The Lord Jesus Christ as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel", God with us. (Matthew 1:23; I John 4:2, 10, 14; Revelations 1:13, 17).
- g. *The Title, Son of God* - Since the name "Immanuel" embraces both God and man in the one Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title, Son of God, described His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title, Son of God, belongs to the order of eternity, and the title, Son of Man, to the order of time. (Matthew 1:21-23; II John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).
- h. *Transgression of the Doctrine Of Christ* - Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title, Son of God, solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son; is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. (II John 9; John 1:1,2,13,18,29,49; I John 2:22,23; 4:1,5; Hebrews 12:2).
- i. *Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord* - The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all. (Hebrews 1:3; I Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; I Corinthians 15:24-28).
- j. *Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son* - Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of Deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the godhead (except those which express relationship. See Paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father. (John 5:22,23; I Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God.

The Scriptures declare:

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

4. The Fall of Man

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

5. The Salvation of Man

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

- a. *Conditions to Salvation* - Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of the regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).
- b. *The Evidences Of Salvation* - The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:23; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of The Church

- a. *Baptism in Water* - The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life. (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4)
- b. *Holy Communion* - The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements-bread and the fruit of the vine-is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:4), a memorial of His suffering and death (I Corinthians 11: 26), a prophecy of His second coming (I Corinthians 11:26), and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; I Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9).

With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

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

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

9. Sanctification

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

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16);
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (I Corinthians 12:13); and,
- c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12:28; I Corinthians 14:12).
- d. The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:
- e. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4); and,
- f. Adds a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God (I Corinthians 2:10-16; I Corinthians 12-14); and,
- g. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ

(Galatians 5:22-26; I Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; I Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20); (2) worship of God (John 4:23, 24); and, (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16).

12. Divine Healing

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

13. The Blessed Hope

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

14. The Millennial Reign Of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11,14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19-20; Romans 11:16, 17) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3, 4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and The New Earth

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

Article VI - Standards Of Marriage And Sexuality

Section 1.

We believe that the only scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

Section 2.

We believe that Scripture commands that there be no intimate sexual activity outside of marriage. We, also, believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 26:8-10; Heb. 13:4; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9-10; 1 Thess. 4:1-8)

Section 3.

To qualify for credentials or hold a leadership position with the South Texas District Council, a person must be in agreement with Article VI and shall not engage in any of the disapproved behaviors outlined in Article VI, Section 2.

Article VII. Membership

Section 1.

All ministers holding valid fellowship certificates with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, whose credentials are registered with the South Texas District, shall be recognized as members.

Section 2.

All members of churches affiliated with the South Texas District Council, shall be recognized as members, but the voting privilege shall be limited to one delegate from said churches, who shall be elected by an affiliated assembly or appointed by the official board of an affiliated assembly. Parent affiliated churches and Cooperating Assemblies are not entitled to a voting delegate.

Article VIII. Meetings

Section 1. Regular Sessions

The District Council shall meet annually with the time and place to be decided by the District Presbytery.

Section 2. Announcement of Meetings

Announcement of meetings shall be published not later than one month prior to the time of meeting and preferably at the end of the preceding District Council.

Section 3. Special Sessions

Special Sessions of the District Council of the South Texas District of the Assemblies of God shall be called by the District Presbytery if agreed by a two-thirds vote.

Section 4. Right of Initiative

The right of initiative shall be granted to any member of the District Council when the occasion demands. A statement setting forth the reason for a special session of the Council, signed by a number equal to or in excess of one-third of the voting constituency registered at the last regular District Council, may be sufficient reason to call a special session. After reviewing the

written request and its reasons, the District Presbytery shall issue a call for a special session, if they consider the action advisable and approve it with a two-thirds vote.

Section 5. Action Without Meeting

Members of the Executive Presbytery and District Presbytery may participate and act at any meeting through the use of a conference telephone or communications device by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in such meetings shall constitute attendance and presence in person at the meeting of the member or members so participating.

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

Article IX. Officers

Section 1. Executive Officers

The executive officers shall consist of the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Executive Secretary-Treasurer. The term of office is for four years.

Section 2. Executive Presbytery

The Executive Presbytery shall consist of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, General Presbyter and two additional members to be elected by the District Council. The term of office is for four years.

Section 3. District Presbytery

The District Presbytery shall consist of the duly elected Sectional and General Presbyters, members of the Executive Presbytery and Honorary Presbyters.

Section 4. General Council Presbytery

The General Council Presbytery shall consist of the District Superintendent, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, and General Presbyter.

ARTICLE X. Local Assemblies

Section 1.

Local assemblies shall consist of true Pentecostal believers associating themselves in local independently incorporated bodies known as assemblies. They shall qualify for membership in accordance with the disciplines of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Section 2.

In order to maintain standards of righteousness in the assembly, only those known to be living consistent and overcoming lives shall be eligible for office. It is recommended that positions of

official responsibility be left vacant in local assemblies in which the number of people qualified to hold office is insufficient.

Section 3.

Classifications:

a. General Council Affiliated

(1) Provisions and requirements for General Council affiliated assemblies, including eligibility, incorporation, membership and relationship are outlined in Article XI, Section 1 of the Constitution of The General Council of the Assemblies of God and Article VI of the Bylaws of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.

(2) District Involvement

(a) General Council affiliated assemblies shall be set in order under the direction of the District Presbytery and shall be amenable to the District in doctrine, conduct, and all other matters which affect the peace and harmony of the fellowship. They shall have the right to choose their own pastors, elect officers, hold property either through **officers** or a corporate name, discipline members, and transact all other business pertaining to their life as local churches. They shall have a standard for membership which may be determined either by the assembly itself, or by agreement with the District Council.

(b) In the event that a General Council affiliated assembly should fail to maintain minimum requirements or scriptural order in accordance with Article XI, **Section 1a** of the Constitution of The Assemblies of God or with this constitution and bylaws, or elects by majority vote to revert to the support and control of the South Texas District Council, Inc. of the Assemblies of God, then in that event, at the discretion of the District Presbytery, the assembly shall revert to the status of a district affiliated assembly, until such time as General Council status may be reestablished.

b. District Council Affiliated

Groups which have been brought into being as a result of evangelistic efforts or other means, and which are still in a formative state, shall be recognized as district affiliated assemblies in accordance with Article XI, Section 2 of the Constitution of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. Said assemblies shall be independently incorporated bodies, spiritually bonded to the South Texas District Council by the church's Articles of Incorporation. They shall be under the general supervision of the District Presbytery which shall provide for pastoral care until such time as they give evidence of sufficient maturity to

warrant recognition of sovereignty. These assemblies shall be encouraged to proceed to the status of sovereign General Council affiliated assemblies.

c. Parent Affiliated Churches

As outlined in Article XI, Section 3 of the Constitution of The General Council of the Assemblies of God provision shall be made for parent affiliated assemblies which shall be under the supervision of a parenting church, in accordance with the parenting church's constitution and bylaws.

d. Cooperating Assemblies

As outlined in Article XI, Section 4 of the Constitution of The General Council of the Assemblies of God provision may be made by the South Texas District Council and the General Council Executive Presbytery for the status of a cooperating assembly.

Section 4. Assemblies of God Total Giving Participation

All assemblies are expected to have an interest in, and contribute regularly to, the Assemblies of God Total Giving plan.

Article XI. Dissolution

The assets of the South Texas District Council of The Assemblies of God, a Texas corporation, are irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as set forth in its Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution. In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, and after providing for the payment of its debts and obligations, all remaining assets will be distributed to The General Council of The Assemblies of God, a Missouri corporation, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious and charitable purposes and which are exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The General Council of The Assemblies of God shall have full authority to sell such property and to use the proceeds derived there from for the extension of the work of the Assemblies of God.

ARTICLE XII. Amendments

Amendments to the constitution may be made by a two-thirds vote, provided that the proposed amendments have been submitted to the membership not later than ninety days prior to a regular District Council. Amendments may be originated by any ten ordained ministers of the District Council, a two-thirds vote of the District Presbytery, or by the standing Constitution and Bylaws Committee. All amendment recommendations to be acted upon by the Constitution and Bylaws Revisions Committee must be available for the Committee in the District Office in writing by December 1 of the year preceding the Council they are to be considered. The reason for the recommended amendment must be stated and must bear the name of the author of the recommended amendment.

Bylaws

ARTICLE I. Parliamentary Order

a. In keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the business sessions of the District Council shall be governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order – Newly Revised*.

b. Two parliamentarians shall be appointed to serve the chair and the body, thereby helping to facilitate the business sessions of the District Council.

ARTICLE II. Order of Business

All business sessions of the South Texas District Council shall begin with prayer and it is suggested that they shall be conducted in the following order:

- a. Devotional
- b. Report of Roster Committee
- c. Recognition of Committees
- d. Report of Superintendent
- e. Report of Secretary-Treasurer
- f. Unfinished Business
- g. Election of Officers
- h. New Business
- i. Adjournment

ARTICLE III. Voting Constituency and Quorum

Section 1. Voting Constituency

The voting constituency shall consist of all ordained, licensed and certified ministers, and recognized church delegates, who are present and registered at district meetings. General Council and District Council affiliated assemblies shall be entitled to one delegate. Parent affiliated churches and Cooperating Assemblies are not entitled to a voting delegate.

Section 2. Quorum

The voting constituency present in any business session of the District Council shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. Absentee Voting

- a. There shall be no absentee or proxy voting at the regularly scheduled District Council.
- b. The Executive Presbytery and District Presbytery may vote absentee at any regularly called or special called meetings of the Executive Presbytery and District Presbytery meetings. Voting may be by signed ballot, mail, email, electronic communication, conference

call, telephone, or other communications device. Proxy vote is permitted with verification that such voting expresses the position of the absent member; such verification can be by signed communication, mail, email, or other electronic communication, conference call, telephone, or other communications device. All means of communication and actual communication are filed with the minutes of proceedings.

ARTICLE IV. Election of Officers

Section 1. Officers

The Officers of the District Council, except as hereinafter provided, shall be elected at its annual meeting, according to the manner of elections provided. They shall be chosen from the membership of the District Council and shall be ministers who have been ordained and of mature experience and ability. No district or sectional officer shall serve more than one district or sectional elective office. Upon election and acceptance of a second office, the elected shall automatically terminate the former office. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Secretary-Treasurer must have been members of the District Council for at least two full years and the Sectional Presbyters must have been members for at least one year. An exception shall be allowed when candidates have previously served in official capacity within the General Council fellowship. A two-thirds vote shall be necessary to constitute an election.

Section 2. Nomination and Election of Administrative Officers

All nominations for the offices of Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Executive Presbyter, and General Council Presbyter shall be made by secret ballot, it being understood that the first ballot cast shall be a nominating ballot. All names thus presented shall be revealed to the body. After prayer for guidance, the vote shall be cast. Any candidate receiving two-thirds of all ballots cast on a nominating ballot shall be considered elected. If no election is reached on the second electoral ballot, all names except the three receiving the highest number of votes shall be dropped; if no election is reached on the third electoral ballot, the two receiving the highest number of votes will be balloted upon until one receives two-thirds of votes cast. If no candidate receives a two-thirds vote by the fifth electoral ballot, the requirement for election shall be reduced to a simple majority on the sixth ballot. This election procedure shall be used for all district elections unless specified otherwise by this constitution and bylaws.

Section 3. Executive Presbytery

The Executive Presbytery shall consist of six ordained ministers, four of whom shall be the District Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Assistant Superintendent, and General Council Presbyter. The other two ordained ministers shall be nominated by secret ballot and elected by a two-thirds vote. Any candidate receiving two-thirds of all ballots cast on a nominating ballot shall be considered elected.

Section 4. Nomination of Sectional Presbyters

The Sectional Presbyters shall be nominated by the sections and elected by the District Council. The nominee for Presbyter shall have been a ministerial resident of the section represented for

at least one year prior to nomination and shall be an ordained minister. The nomination shall be by secret ballot and by a two-thirds vote. The voting constituency for the nominee shall consist of the qualified ministers of the section and one duly appointed or elected delegate from each church.

- a. No Sectional Presbyter shall serve on a full-time basis.
- b. The Sectional Presbyter shall be nominated during the Fall Sectional Councils.
- c. The Sectional Presbyter shall be elected for a two-year term or to fill the time remaining in the event the office is vacated prior to the normal election.
- d. The District Council reserves the right to reject any and all nominees selected by the section if it deems such action is warranted.
- e. All newly-nominated Sectional Presbyters shall be ratified by the District Presbytery at its regular called meeting.

Section 5. Election of Sectional Committees

Sectional Committees shall be composed of four or more ordained ministers who regularly attend District Councils, Sectional Councils, Minister's Institutes, and Sectional Fellowship meetings, are supporting the District and Sectional financial programs, and shall be elected for two years by a simple majority vote. Members of the committees shall have been a ministerial resident in the section for at least one year prior to election. Nomination and election shall be by secret ballot. An exception can be made by the Executive Presbytery in the event there are not enough qualified ordained ministers residing in a section by giving consideration to reducing committee size to three members or by reducing the residency requirement for ordained ministers.

Section 6. Nomination and Election of General Council Presbyters

The General Council Presbyters from the South Texas District shall be as follows: the Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, and one ordained pastor, of a church located in the district, who has been a member of the South Texas District for at least one full year prior to election. Nominations for General Council Presbyter shall be made by a secret ballot. All names thus presented shall be presented to the body for voting.

In the event of a vacancy, the District Presbytery can appoint one to serve as general presbyter until that office is regularly filled at the next meeting of the District Council.

Section 7. Nominee for General Council Executive Presbyter

By virtue of the office, the District Superintendent shall serve as one of two nominees for General Council Executive Presbyter. At the District Council prior to the General Council, a second nominee who is not an elected full-time District Official from the South Texas District shall be selected by a two-thirds vote, to be presented to the General Council along with nominees from other Districts in the South Central Region, for election as non-resident Executive Presbyter. The nominee must be an ordained minister of mature experience and ability, whose life and ministry are above question, but there is no minimum residence requirement.

Article V. Duties of Officers and Presbyters

Section 1. Duties of Superintendent

- a. To serve exclusively in a full-time capacity.
- b. To emphasize and implement the prerogatives of the South Texas District Council and superintend its work.
- c. To act as President of the Corporation in all legal matters.
- d. To preside at all meetings of the District Council.
- e. To supervise the work of the District Office during the interim between sessions of the District Council, and to be responsible for special assignments and functions of all District Officers and Department Heads.
- f. To preside at all meetings of the Credentials Committee and to receive all communications addressed to that body, or to be responsible for the appointment of an ordained minister to act in such capacity.
- g. To administer discipline in all cases when requested to do so by the District Presbytery.
- h. To preside at all meetings of the District Presbytery and to receive all communication addressed to that body.
- i. To perform any other functions usual and customary for the presiding officer, or such as may be directed by the District Presbytery or District Council.
- j. By virtue of office, to serve as a General Presbyter and ex-officio member of all committees.
- k. To maintain compliance to the South Texas District Operations Manual.

Section 2. Duties of the Assistant Superintendent

- a. To assist the Superintendent.
- b. To preside at meetings in the absence of the Superintendent.
- c. To fill the unexpired term of office of the Superintendent in the event such office becomes vacant.
- d. To perform any other duties upon being requested to do so by the Superintendent.
- e. To act as Vice-President in all legal matters of the Corporation.

Section 3. Duties of Secretary-Treasurer

- a. To serve exclusively in a full-time capacity.
- b. To keep a true record of the District Council and meetings of the District and Executive Presbytery.
- c. To provide the District Office with a true record of proceedings, in cooperation with the chairman of the Credentials Committee, section or district, and to process credentials under the direction of the Credentials Committee.
- d. To serve as Executive Secretary of the corporation in all legal matters and custodian of the corporate seal.
- e. To maintain a record of all ministers and churches in the district.

- f. To receive and record all contributions to the District Council and to disburse funds as directed by the Executive or District Presbytery.
- g. To establish and maintain a reliable system of bookkeeping and to provide a report of finances as requested by the District Presbytery.
- h. To have the financial records of the District Office audited annually immediately after the close of the fiscal year, December 31
- i. To administer discipline in all cases when asked to do so by the District Presbytery.
- j. To serve as General Council Presbyter and ex-officio member of all committees.
- k. To manage properties, equipment and oversee maintenance.
- l. To be accountable to the District Superintendent for special assignments and functions.
- m. To maintain compliance to the South Texas District Operations Manual.

Section 4. Duties of the General Council Presbyter

- a. To represent the South Texas District Council to the General Council and the General Council and its interests to the South Texas District Council.
- b. To serve as a member of the District Executive Presbytery and the Board of Regents of Southwestern Assemblies of God University.
- c. To serve with the District Presbytery in all district matters.

Section 5. Duties of Executive Presbytery

- a. To serve as the Executive Board of the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Incorporated.
- b. To manage all property of the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Incorporated; with authority to purchase, sell, lease, encumber, or otherwise dispose of all property of the corporation.
- c. To supervise and have general oversight of District Office finances and all departments.
- d. To act as the District Credentials Committee and to supervise all matters pertaining to disciplinary action.
- e. To fulfill other responsibilities assigned or delegated to it by the District Presbytery. It shall arrange for its own meetings and report to the District Presbytery at appropriate times.

Section 6. Duties of the District Presbytery

- a. The District Presbytery shall meet semiannually or more frequently if necessary. Their expenses shall be paid as a per diem amount to be determined by the Executive Presbytery.
- b. To set the salary and other remunerations of the administrative officers.
- c. To appoint a laymen representative to serve on the Southwestern Assemblies of God University Board of Regents with members of the General Council Presbytery.

- d. To review all applications for reinstatement of ministerial credentials unless such privilege is waived.
- e. To appoint a replacement for the office of Secretary-Treasurer in event such office becomes vacant between council sessions.
- f. To appoint a replacement to serve as general presbyter until that office is regularly filled at the next meeting of the district council. (As per, General Council Bylaws, Article 2, Section 3c)
- g. To appoint the finance committee and serve as the budget committee.
- h. To approve the District Operations Manual.

Section 7. Duties of Sectional Presbyters

- a. To serve as members of the District Presbytery.
- b. To promote and supervise the work of the section.
- c. To supervise the missionary work of the Section in cooperation with the District Missions Director.
- d. To encourage and arrange for church planting through the church planting policy of the district.
- e. To encourage ministers to support the District Council spiritually, morally and financially.
- f. To make periodic reports of the progress of the work in the section to the District Superintendent.

Article VI. Liabilities of Officers and Presbyters

Section 1. District Liability

The District’s authority with regard to ministers is limited to those ecclesiastical matters specified in these bylaws and in no event shall extend to non-ecclesiastical activities. Accordingly, no minister shall be considered to be an employee of the District other than those who serve on the District Office staff.

Section 2. Indemnification of Officers and Presbyters

The Corporation shall indemnify any and all persons who may serve or who have served at any time as directors or officers, against any and all expenses, including amounts paid upon judgments, counsel fees, and amounts paid in settlement (before or after suit is commenced) actually and necessarily incurred by such persons in connection with the defense or settlement of any claim, action, suit, or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties, or a party, or which may be asserted against any of them or any of them, by reason of being or having been directors or officers or a director or officer of the Corporation, except in relation to matters as to which any such director or officer of former director or officer shall be adjudged in any action, suit, or proceeding to be liable for his own negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duties. Such indemnification shall be in addition to any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any law, bylaw, agreement, or otherwise.

Article VII. Terms of Office and Vacancies

Section 1. District Officers, General Council Presbyters and Executive Presbyters

a. The term of office for the District Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, General Council Presbyter and Executive Presbyters shall be for four years with elections as follows: The District Superintendent shall be elected for four years. The Executive Presbyters shall be elected the next year for a term of four years. The following year the Secretary-Treasurer and General Presbyter shall be elected for a term of four years. The Assistant Superintendent shall be elected the next year for a term of four years.

b. Should the office of District Superintendent become vacant, the Assistant Superintendent shall fill the unexpired term.

c. In the event the office of Assistant Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, General Council Presbyter or Executive Presbyter becomes vacant the District Presbytery shall be authorized to appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired term.

d. If a vacancy occurs while District Council is in session, then **election** by secret ballot from those present at the District Council shall occur according to Article IV of these bylaws to fill the unexpired term of office.

Section 2. District Presbyters

a. District Presbyters shall be elected for a term of two years.

b. In the event a vacancy shall occur in the office of the Sectional Presbytery, the vacancy shall be filled by a called sectional business meeting to be presided over by the District Superintendent or an appointee. Such election shall be for the unexpired term.

c. If there is division within the section where the vacancy exists, the District Superintendent shall have the option of asking the Executive Presbytery appoint an interim presbyter to serve out the unexpired term.

Section 3. Transition of District Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer

The outgoing District Superintendent or Secretary-Treasurer shall remain in office for a period of thirty days after the adjournment of the council sessions. In order to familiarize themselves with the routine of the administrative offices, the incoming officers shall begin their official service one week prior to the termination of the services of the outgoing officers.

Section 4. Removal for Cause

The Executive Presbytery by two-thirds vote may recommend the removal of a district officer prior to the end of a term if, in its judgment, there is clear and convincing evidence of incapacity, inefficiency, incompetence, or other grounds, not constituting a basis for formal discipline pursuant to Article X of the General Council Bylaws, that renders the officer unfit for office and compromises the mission of the District. This recommendation by the Executive Presbytery shall be presented to the District Presbytery and requires a two-thirds vote to remove the District Officer. A representative from the General Council may be present for guidance and oversight in meetings which may result in the removal of a district officer.

Article VIII. Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

Standing committees shall be established or appointed as necessity may indicate. They shall be appointed by the District Superintendent or Presbytery, who will determine their term of office. All District Council Committees shall be appointed at least ninety days prior to District Council and serve through the following District Council.

Section 2. Special Committees

Special committees may be created by the District Council in session or by District Superintendent or Presbytery as may be required. All special committees called for by the District Council in session shall be appointed within 90 days following the District Council.

Article IX. Ministry

Section 1. General Council Credentials

Provisions for ministry including qualification, credentialing, classifications, relations, cooperation, doctrinal standards, and discipline are outlined in Articles VII, IX and X of the General Council Bylaws.

Section 2. Ministerial Relations

Recognizing the critical importance of healthy and cooperative relationships among ministers and congregations for building the kingdom of God, the following is recommended:

- a. That all ministers shall be amenable to the District Council in matters of doctrine and conduct.
- b. That all ministers shall be expected to affiliate with the District Council and to work and cooperate with the same. Failure to do so shall bring their ministry into question.
- c. That all ministers moving into this district from another district to reside shall be required to file with the Secretary a transfer from the former district within sixty days.
- d. That all ministers must refrain from taking such an attitude toward those convicted of offenses of willful violations of Council principles, wrong doctrines, or misconduct that would tend to nullify or set at naught the solemn verdict of the brethren entrusted with this responsibility.
- e. That all ministers must refrain from identifying themselves with any of the secret orders.
- f. That all ministers shall endeavor to safeguard the churches of the district from unreliable and unsafe teachers and ministers who seek entry into the Assemblies without proper identification and recommendation.
- g. That no minister shall serve on the board of any church of which he is not the Pastor unless such restriction is waived by the Sectional Presbyter.

Article X. Finances

Section 1. Supervision of Finances

All finances shall be under the immediate supervision of the Executive Presbytery.

Section 2. District Office Support

- a. The District Office shall be supported by a monthly offering of at least three-fourths of the tithes of every minister (except Senior-Retired Ministers and World and U.S. Missionaries) from both secular and ministerial income. A minister will be requested to give a reasonable explanation to district officials upon failure to cooperate with this plan.
- b. Pastors of smaller churches may request through the sectional committee that a portion of the tithe sent to the district office be refunded to the church.
- c. It is recommended that the District Office shall be supported by one percent (1%) of the monthly general fund income of each of the churches of the South Texas District Council.

Section 3. Sectional Support

- a. Each section shall be supported by all credentialed ministers by a monthly offering of at least ten dollars per month (except Senior Retired Ministers). A minister will be requested to give a reasonable explanation to the Sectional Presbyter and committee upon failure to cooperate with this plan.
- b. Sectional Presbyters shall be responsible to present, at the Spring District Presbytery meeting, a financial statement detailing the previous year's finances, including all ministers' giving.

Section 4. Officer's Bonus

- a. The Superintendent and the Secretary-Treasurer shall be given a bonus of one week's salary during each annual District Council in addition to their regular support.
- b. The Assistant Superintendent shall be given a bonus for the annual District Council in an amount to be determined by the Executive Presbytery.

Section 5. Officer's Remuneration

Salaries, other remunerations and vacations of all administrative officers shall be set by the District Presbytery.

Section 6. District Council Expenses

Each minister and church of the district shall be notified of the District Council expenses at least one month prior to the council and shall be asked to send an offering for the same to the District Office.

Section 7. Finance Committee

A Finance Committee of five capable people shall be appointed by the District Presbytery to make an annual study of the total financial operation of the district. They shall report their findings and recommendation to the District Presbytery, who in turn, shall serve as a budget committee.

Article XI. Local Assemblies

Section 1. Guidelines

Foundational guidelines for all churches in the South Texas District Council, whether General Council affiliated or District Council affiliated, are included in Article XI of the Constitution of The General Council of the Assemblies of God and article VI of the Bylaws of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Section 2. Parent Affiliated Assemblies

Provision shall be made by the South Texas District Council for parent affiliated assemblies which shall be under the supervision of a parenting church, in accordance with the parenting churches constitution and bylaws.

Section 3. Cooperating Assemblies

Provision may be made by the South Texas District Council and the General Council Executive Presbytery for the status of a cooperating assembly, which would allow churches that subscribe to Article V. Statement of Fundamental Truth of the General Council Constitution to enter into a cooperative status with the District and the General Council on a temporary basis (4-year term, renewable by the request of the local church congregation, at the discretion of the District Council, in cooperation with the General Council Executive Presbytery) before officially affiliating with the District Council and the General Council.

Section 3. Reversion of Property

The South Texas District Council recommends that a reversionary clause be placed in the charter and/or constitution of each church affiliated with the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. The following serves as an example:

"In the event this assembly ceases to operate as a church, or ceases to abide by the Tenets of Faith of the Assemblies of God, or ceases to operate in affiliation with The General Council of the Assemblies of God or the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc, then the property shall automatically revert to and be transferred to the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. or its successor in interest, without trust limitations imposed."

Article XII. Departments

Section 1. Authorization

The departments of the South Texas District Council shall be established by the District Presbytery and identified in a District Operations Manual approved by the District Presbytery. This manual shall set forth the policies, procedures, guidelines, and parameters relating to the operation and structure of all departments and ministries of the South Texas District Council. The District Ministries directors shall submit annually to the Presbytery all proposed additions, deletions, and modifications to the District Operations Manual for approval or amendment by the Presbytery.

Section 2. Qualifications and Duties of Departmental Directors

The qualifications and duties of departmental directors shall be provided for in the District Operations Manual approved by the District Presbytery. The selection of departmental directors and staff shall be guided by processes defined in the Operations Manual.

Article XIII. Pleasant Hills Children's Home

Section 1. Authorization

The South Texas District Council shall participate in the regional operation of the Pleasant Hills Children's Home; Fairfield, Texas in cooperation with other districts of the region.

Section 2. Delegation of Authority

The South Texas District Council delegates its Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Secretary-Treasurer to serve as trustees or members of the Board of Directors of Pleasant Hills Children's Home.

Article XIV. Southwestern Assemblies of God University

Section 1. Authorization

The South Texas District Council shall participate in the regional operation of Southwestern Assemblies of God University; Waxahachie, Texas in cooperation with other districts of the region.

Section 2. Delegation of Authority

The South Texas District Council delegates its General Council Presbyters and one lay representative appointed by the District Presbytery to serve as trustees or members of the Board of Regents of Southwestern Assemblies of God University. The lay representative shall be appointed for a two-year term.

The lay representative who serves on the Board of Regents shall also serve on the S.A.G.U. Executive Committee of the Board of Regents, along with one of the General Presbyters who has been appointed by the District Presbytery. Their term on the S.A.G.U. Executive Committee shall be for two years.

Article XV. Sectional Boundaries

Section 1. San Antonio Section

Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Wilson, Karnes, Atascosa, Medina, Frio, LaSalle, Uvalde, Zavala, Dimmit, Kinney, Maverick, Kendall, Kerr, Bandera, Real, and Edwards Counties

Section 2. Corpus Christi Section

McMullen, Live Oak, Bee, Refugio, Aransas, San Patricio, Nueces, Webb, Duval, Jim Wells, Kleberg, Jim Hogg, Brooks, and Kenedy Counties

Section 3. Rio Grande Valley Section

Zapata, Starr, Hidalgo, Willacy, and Cameron Counties

Section 4. Victoria Section

Fayette, Gonzales, Lavaca, DeWitt, Colorado, Goliad, Victoria, Jackson, Wharton, and Calhoun Counties

Section 5. Houston Section

Washington, Waller, Austin, and Fort Bend Counties, and all that portion of Harris County lying west of the Santa Fe Railroad (along Mykawa Road) H.B. & T. Railroad, and Rock Island Railroad

Section 6. Gulf Coast Section

Brazoria, Galveston, and Matagorda Counties

Section 7. North Houston Section

Walker, Grimes, San Jacinto, and Montgomery Counties, and all that portion of Harris and Liberty Counties north of Rock Island Railroad, H.B. & T. Railroad, and Missouri Pacific Railroad

Section 8. San Jacinto Section

That portion of Harris County lying east of Santa Fe Railroad (along Mykawa Road), H.B. & T. Railroad, and the Missouri Pacific Railroad and west of the Trinity River, and the portion of Chambers County lying west of the Trinity River

Section 9. Beaumont Section

Orange and Jefferson Counties and that portion of Liberty and Chambers Counties lying east of the Trinity River

Section 10. Neches Valley Section

Tyler, Jasper, Newton, and Hardin Counties

Article XVI. Amendments

Section 1. Authorization

Amendments to the bylaws may be made at any regular meeting of the South Texas District Council of the Assemblies of God. Amendments to be adopted shall require two-thirds of all votes cast.