

EMPOWERED

INTERNATIONAL
GENERAL COUNCIL
AGENDA
2026



JULY 27–31, 2026
ORLANDO, FLORIDA



EMPOWERED AGENDA

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As we gather for the 80th General Assembly, the world continues to be marked by profound and fast-flowing change. Culture, technology, geopolitics, population shifts, and other global conditions are creating complex times for life and ministry. In the face of these headwinds, the Church of God remains steadfast in our resolve to carry out the Great Commission. We are confident that, no matter the challenge, we are empowered for the mission.

This strength is not our own; we have been divinely equipped by the Holy Spirit for this moment and for the completion of our assigned mission. As a diverse body of believers spread throughout nearly 200 nations, we are mobilized as a united force for the Kingdom—empowered to go, marching into the harvest to reach the lost in every corner of the Earth.

Our calling brings us to multitudes who are hurting and broken, with spiritual and physical needs. We serve as the hands and feet of Christ, empowered to care as we display the love of God, bringing eternal and temporal help for the suffering. In a culture that rejects truth, we are equipped with biblical doctrine, affirmed teachings of the church, and anointed messengers who are empowered to preach the life-changing gospel with boldness, clarity, and love.

While we celebrate the history of our movement, thanking God for His faithfulness to us, we are taking intentional steps to ensure that the legacy we have been handed will not end with us. As the Holy Spirit empowers us, we will celebrate and equip the next generation, ensuring that the Church of God remains engaged in the completion of our Savior's Great Commission.

Let us prayerfully acknowledge the challenges, commit to our calling, and move forward in anticipation of the harvest, knowing that for such a time as this, the Church of God is *empowered*.



**INTERNATIONAL
GENERAL COUNCIL**

SCHEDULE

1. Official Opening
2. Review of Schedule

Monday, July 27th

LEAD CONFERENCE 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28th

Priority Prayer 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
General Council Business 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
General Council Business 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Worship 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, July 29th

Priority Prayer 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
General Council Business 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
General Council Business 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Worship 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 30th

Priority Prayer 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
General Council Business 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
General Council Business 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Worship 7:00 p.m.

Friday, July 31st

Priority Prayer 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
General Council Business 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
General Assembly Business 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Worship 6:00 p.m.

3. Instruction to Delegates
4. Appointment of Committees
 - Ushers Tellers
 - Motions Parliamentarians
 - Sergeants-at-Arms
5. Nominations and Elections

IMPORTANT

Where any item of the Agenda makes reference to the *International General Assembly Minutes*, the reference is listed on the **left** (even-numbered) pages in a shaded box. The International Executive Council's recommendations are on the **right** (odd-numbered) pages.

Supplemental Notes and Rationale Statements briefly explaining the proposed motions are included throughout the Agenda.

2026 GENERAL COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Global Harvest

Ordinances

2. Ordinances of the Church (*Minutes*, p. 33)

Governance

3. Elected Positions (*Minutes*, p. 69)

General Offices and Boards

4. Secretary General—Procedure for Filling Vacancy (*Minutes*, p. 82)
5. Youth & Discipleship Board (*Minutes*, p. 83)
6. Boards and Committees (*Minutes*, p. 95)

Rank and Procedure

7. Modifying Exhorters Licensure (*Minutes*, p. 114)
8. Ministerial Reporting (*Minutes*, p. 117)

Statements of Ethical Standards

9. Anti-Human Trafficking
10. Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence
11. Immigration 2026—International Perspective

Discipline and Restoration

12. Limited Ministry (*Minutes*, p. 122)
13. Restoration Process (*Minutes*, p. 122)
14. Offending Ministers [Ministerial Discipline] (*Minutes*, p. 129)
15. Rights of the Plaintiff in Ecclesiastical Trials (*Minutes*, p. 129)

State Governance

16. State Women's Ministries Board (*Minutes*, p. 152)
17. Financial Transparency in Pastoral Appointments (*Minutes*, p. 163)

Statements of Ecclesiology and Theology

18. The Church
19. Priesthood of All Believers
20. Biblical Worldview



1. GLOBAL HARVEST

(Referral from 79th General Council)

RATIONALE:

This item was referred to a special committee by the General Council at the 79th General Assembly, which returned the following.

We recommend:

That the following be inserted in the General Assembly Minutes:

GLOBAL HARVEST

We Believe:

- 1 • ***That all people are created in the image of God (Gen.***
- 2 ***1:27), that salvation through Christ is available for all***
- 3 ***people (John 3:16), and that God desires all people to be***
- 4 ***saved and to know Him (1 Tim. 2:4).***
- 5 • ***That we are called to carry the gospel to the entire world.***
- 6 ***Thus, we have established Church of God World Missions***
- 7 ***to preach the gospel of Christ, to lead people to salvation,***
- 8 ***to help new believers become committed disciples of***
- 9 ***Christ, to train national leaders to proclaim the gospel to***
- 10 ***their own people and to other nations, and to assist people***
- 11 ***who are suffering and in need.***

We Affirm:

- 12 • ***That the Church of God maintains a global missional***
- 13 ***presence in nations and regions of the world.***
- 14 • ***That many regions with unreached people are not home***
- 15 ***to large Christian populations; therefore, we will continue***
- 16 ***to expand our regional efforts and mission by sending***
- 17 ***missionaries to assist in these regions.***
- 18 • ***That we provide resources that will assist in evangelism***
- 19 ***and discipleship in unreached areas of the globe.***



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- 20 • *That we will continue to expand our missional footprint*
21 *until all have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

We Commit:

- 22 • *To hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, who grants to the*
23 *church a passion to win the lost and who leads the church*
24 *in its missional plans and ministries.*
- 25 • *To maximize global impact by partnering, sharing best*
26 *practices, resourcing, and otherwise collaborating with*
27 *Church of God national movements around the world and*
28 *other biblically faithful Christian organizations in good*
29 *works and carrying the Gospel.*
- 30 • *To engage in advocating for religious freedom around the*
31 *world.*
- 32 • *To develop and support relevant educational programs*
33 *and training for international ministers and believers.*
- 34 • *To foster a missional burden, a culture of prayer, and*
35 *Pentecostal revival that will empower our efforts to reach*
36 *the lost (Eph. 6:12).*
- 37 • *To participate in initiatives and fundraising to support*
38 *our global efforts, and to identify, encourage, and support*
39 *members who feel called to missions through discipleship*
40 *and mentoring, and care ministries for those under*
41 *appointment by Church of God World Missions.*
- 42 • *To support the well-being of missionaries by developing*
43 *care resources through coordination with Church of God*
44 *institutions and encouraging congregations to sponsor*
45 *missionary care ministry.*
- 46 • *To resource Church of God efforts to complete the Great*
47 *Commission by encouraging each local congregation*
48 *to designate at least one Sunday annually to celebrate,*
49 *highlight, give to, and promote Church of God missions*
50 *efforts; and to commit that all states, nations, and regions*
51 *celebrate, highlight, contribute to, and promote Church of*
52 *God missions efforts at an annual meeting.*



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- 53 • *Finally, to carry the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them*
54 *in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy*
55 *Spirit, and teaching them how to walk as disciples of*
56 *Christ (Matt. 28:19–20).*

EXPLANATORY NOTES

II. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

B. Lord's Supper (Communion) and Feet Washing

The subject of Communion and Feet Washing was considered and the Assembly decided that both are taught in the New Testament and may be engaged in at the same service or at different times at the option of the local churches. In order to preserve the unity of the body, and to obey the sacred Word, it was recommended that every member engage in these sacred services, which should be observed one or more times each year (1st A., 1906, Bk.M., p. 15; DF 12).

2. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

RATIONALE:

The Church of God has historically invited all believers who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ to participate in the Lord's Supper. This practice reflects our commitment to the biblical unity of the Body of Christ and recognizes that the sacraments are ordinances for the entire Church. Officially codifying this practice ensures consistency across our global fellowship, removes ambiguity regarding membership requirements, and reaffirms our identity as a people who welcome all "who are in Christ" to commemorate His sacrifice together.

We recommend:

That we amend page 33, EXPLANATORY NOTES, II. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH, B. Lord's Supper (Communion) and Feet Washing by inserting the following as paragraph 2:

- 1 ***2. All Christian believers who are present when the***
- 2 ***ordinances are being observed are allowed to participate***
- 3 ***(2026).***



3. ELECTED POSITIONS

RATIONALE:

This motion addresses full-time roles of elected officials (specifically the general overseer, assistant general overseers, secretary general, international director of youth and discipleship, assistant international director of youth and discipleship, director of evangelism, assistant director of evangelism, world missions director, and assistant world missions director) in the Church of God.

We recommend:

That we amend page 69, S3. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, by inserting the following as item III. and renumbering the remaining items:

III. ELECTED OFFICIALS

1 ***1. Full-Time Service***

2 ***All general elected officials shall, upon election by the***
3 ***General Assembly, resign from all other appointments***
4 ***within the Church of God and devote themselves fully to***
5 ***the office to which they have been elected.***

6 ***2. Honorary Positions***

7 ***An elected official may be recognized in an honorary***
8 ***capacity by a local church or ministry (for example, pas-***
9 ***tor emeritus).***

10 ***3. Transition Period***

11 ***An elected official may be granted a reasonable transi-***
12 ***tion period to resign from prior appointments or ministry***
13 ***responsibilities, provided that such transition is completed***
14 ***within one hundred eighty (180) days following election***
15 ***by the General Assembly.***



16 **4. Personal Incorporated Ministries**
17 ***Elected officials who maintain personal incorporated***
18 ***ministries may continue to receive revenue or profits from***
19 ***those ministries; however, their time and primary voca-***
20 ***tional efforts must be devoted fully to the office to which***
21 ***they have been elected. Furthermore, the resources, staff,***
22 ***or authority of the elected office shall not be used to bene-***
23 ***fit any such incorporated ministry and businesses.***

24 ***If ratified, this item would go into effect beginning at the 81st***
25 ***International General Assembly (2028).***

S9. SECRETARY GENERAL **(Executive Bishop)**(68th A., 2000, pp. 86, 87)

III. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY

In the event the office of the secretary general be vacated because of death, disability, advancement, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the general overseer shall submit by the most efficient and effective methods the names of the next two men receiving the highest vote, who were not elected to any general office, to the ordained bishops. The ordained bishops shall select the one who will fill the vacancy in the secretary general's office. Ballots must be returned to the general overseer within forty-five (45) days to be valid votes. The one receiving the majority vote shall be declared elected to fill the unexpired term of the secretary general (39th A., 1944, p. 38; 41st A., 1946, p. 22; [1960]; 50th A., 1964, p. 51, Item 6; 78th A., 2022).

4. SECRETARY GENERAL—PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY

RATIONALE:

This recommendation is made to facilitate a flow of leadership advancement that is both efficient and equitable. Current nomenclature does not permit the “next two men receiving the highest vote” to be considered if either of them was elected to any other general office.

We recommend:

- That we amend page 82, S9. SECRETARY GENERAL, III.**
1 **PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACANCY, by striking the words “*who***
2 ***were not elected to any general office.*”**

So as to read:

In the event the office of the Secretary General be vacated because of death, disability, advancement, or the incumbent in any wise being disqualified, the general overseer shall submit by the most efficient and effective methods the names of the next two men receiving the highest vote to the ordained bishops. The ordained bishops shall select the one who will fill the vacancy in the secretary general’s office. Ballots must be returned to the general overseer within forty-five (45) days to be valid votes. The one receiving the majority vote shall be declared elected to fill the unexpired term of the secretary general.



5. YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP BOARD

RATIONALE:

The Youth and Discipleship Board was deleted from the *Minutes* following the transition to divisional boards in 2010. In recognition of its present and ongoing function, this recommendation proposes that the board be restored in the *Minutes*.

We recommend:

That we amend page 83, S10. MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP by inserting the following as, I. YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP BOARD, and renumbering the remaining items.

I. YOUTH AND DISCIPLESHIP BOARD

1 **A. Selection**

2 ***The Youth and Discipleship Board shall consist of not less***
3 ***than seven members who shall be appointed biennially***
4 ***by the International Executive Committee. The members***
5 ***shall be appointed to a two-year term with a member***
6 ***being able to serve one additional consecutive term. After***
7 ***serving for two consecutive terms, a member is ineligible***
8 ***to be reappointed until two years have lapsed.***

9 **B. Duties and Authorities**

10 ***The Youth and Discipleship Board shall:***

- 11 ***1. Support the vision and leadership of the director and***
12 ***assistant director of Youth and Discipleship.***
13 ***2. Serve in an advisory role to enhance the ministries of***
14 ***the Youth and Discipleship department by participating***
15 ***in annual and specially called meetings.***
16 ***3. Engage with the ministries of the youth and disciple-***
17 ***ship department by promoting and attending those***
18 ***ministries within the local church, state/region, and***
19 ***country where they serve.***



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- 20 ***4. Strengthen the partnership with state/regional youth***
21 ***and discipleship directors and their respective adminis-***
22 ***trative bishops and provide appropriate resources and***
23 ***promotional materials.***
24 ***5. Adopt the annual YWEA Missions Project and assist in***
25 ***raising financial support.***
26 ***6. Review and approve the annual budget of the youth***
27 ***and discipleship department for presentation to the***
28 ***International Executive Council.***
29 ***7. Promote creative and relevant ministries to reach the***
30 ***youth of our church.***

S17. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, GENERAL

I. STANDING BOARDS AND COMMITTEES (73rd A., 2010; see S7., II., 6)

1. We recommend that all standing [boards and] committees receive remuneration sufficient to cover their expenses when called together by the chairman or *ex officio* chairman (25th A., 1930, p. 21).
2. The chairman of each board shall be recognized as the proper authority to call all board meetings.
3. In the event the chairman should fail to do so, when necessity demands, any two members of the board shall have the authority to call a board meeting.
4. The general overseer, by virtue of his office, has the right to ask any board to meet, should he deem it necessary.

6. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

RATIONALE:

In order to codify what is already common practice for most boards and committees and to ensure leadership alignment, we recommend that the following be inserted.

We recommend:

That page 95, S17. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, GENERAL, I. STANDING BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, be amended by adding the following as item 5:

- 1 *5. All officers appointed or elected to a general board or*
- 2 *committee must be a member of the Church of God in good*
- 3 *standing.*

S24. EXHORTER.

(20th A., 1925, p. 37; 45th A., 1954, p. 29; 65th A., 1994, Item 14, p. 91; 75th A., 2014; 77th A., 2018)

The church shall have an order of the ministry known as exhorter, whose license is signed by the district overseer where his membership is and endorsed by the state overseer.

7. MODIFYING EXHORTER LICENSURE

RATIONALE:

The exhorter rank was originally established as a localized “apprenticeship” for lay ministry. Current use has become a formalized entry-level credential that fails to align with administrative realities and the diverse giftings of the church. Systemic issues have resulted from this growing disparity and our current licensing procedures and practical reality, including stalled ministerial mobility and a disproportionate number of revocations due to reporting failures, as opposed to disciplinary processes. By updating this rank of ministry to relevant nomenclature and expanding its scope to include specialized non-pulpit callings, the church can better equip ministers across the full spectrum of giftings, while also ensuring long-term integrity, accountability, and growth through a licensure renewal process. (For additional clarification, see Appendix 1.)

We recommend:

- 1) That we amend page 114, S24. EXHORTER, by striking
1 **“EXHORTER”** and inserting **“*LICENSED MINISTER.*”**
Further, that all appropriate references of the change be adapted to comply with this modification throughout the *Minutes*.

So as to read:

S24. ***LICENSED MINISTER***

- 2) That we amend the introductory paragraph, page 114,
S24. EXHORTER, by striking the current wording and
inserting the following:
 - 1 ***The church shall have an initial order of the ministry***
 - 2 ***known as licensed minister, whose credential is signed***
 - 3 ***by the state/regional administrative bishop where his/her***
 - 4 ***membership is and endorsed by the general overseer.***

S24. EXHORTER.

(20th A., 1925, p. 37; 45th A., 1954, p. 29; 65th A., 1994, Item 14, p. 91; 75th A., 2014; 77th A., 2018)

II. RIGHTS AND AUTHORITIES

The exhorter shall have full right and authority to

1. Preach and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Serve as evangelist.
3. Serve as pastor of a church.
4. The exhorter may be authorized by the state overseer to baptize converts and receive believers into fellowship of church membership (47th A., 1958, pp. 28, 29; 77th A., 2018).
5. When an exhorter is serving as pastor, and where state laws recognize the credential of an exhorter as those of a duly authorized minister of the gospel, the exhorter may solemnize the rites of matrimony (54th A., 1972, p. 46).
6. The exhorter must be active in the ministry, and shall be required to pay tithes [into the local church where his or her membership is located] and to make monthly reports to the state overseer and to the secretary general. The exhorter may be promoted to the rank of ordained minister when deemed qualified by the state overseer and others concerned (42nd A., 1948, p. 27).

S24. EXHORTER.

(20th A., 1925, p. 37; 45th A., 1954, p. 29; 65th A., 1994, Item 14, p. 91; 75th A., 2014; 77th A., 2018)

I. QUALIFICATIONS OF EXHORTERS

1. The church recognizes the exhorter as a regular rank of the ministry. It is, however, the primary rank, and all applicants for the ministry must serve as exhorter before being promoted in rank, except ordained ministers coming from other reputable organizations.
2. Must have the baptism in the Holy Ghost (DF 8, 9).
3. The candidate for exhorter shall be actively engaged in ministerial activity before being recommended for licensing.
4. Must be thoroughly acquainted with, and adhere to, the Teachings and Doctrines of the Church of God as set forth by the International General Assembly.
5. Must successfully pass the examination given by a duly constituted board of examiners.

5 *Licensed minister applicants can apply to receive a des-*
6 *ignated ministry specialization, if approved by the state/*
7 *regional administrative bishop, such as youth, children,*
8 *music, evangelist, church planter, missionary, Christian*
9 *education, pastor, institutional chaplain, general ministry,*
10 *or other approved ministry specializations as designated*
11 *by the International Executive Council.*

12 *The licensed minister must report online monthly to the*
13 *state/regional office and the International Offices unless*
14 *approved by the state administrative bishop to report by*
15 *mail.*

- 3) That we amend page 114, S24. EXHORTER, II. RIGHTS AND AUTHORITIES, by adding the following to item 3:
1 *“or in a designated area of ministry specialization.”*

So as to read:

3. Serve as pastor of a church or in a designated area of ministry specialization.

- 4) That we amend page 114, S24. EXHORTER, II. RIGHTS AND AUTHORITIES, by adding the following as item 7:

1 *The licensed minister credential is granted for a two-year*
2 *period. To maintain the credential, renewal is required,*
3 *and relevant continuing education training in the*
4 *licensed minister’s area of ministry specialization must be*
5 *completed.*

- 5) That we amend page 114, S24. EXHORTER, I. QUALIFICATIONS OF EXHORTERS, by adding the following as item 6:

1 *Beginning January 1, 2027, all licensed ministers will be*
2 *required to renew their credentials every two (2) years, at*
3 *every level of licensure advancement.*

Note: This does not apply to current ordained ministers or ordained bishops.

S26. MINISTER OF MUSIC AND MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

I. QUALIFICATIONS OF MINISTERS OF MUSIC AND MINISTERS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1. Must have the baptism in the Holy Ghost (DF 8, 9).
2. Must be thoroughly acquainted with, and adhere to, the Teachings and Doctrines of the Church of God as set forth by the International General Assembly.
3. Must possess the necessary training, either formal or an adequate substitute thereof, to enable him [or her] to serve the church effectively in either of these highly specialized areas of the ministry.
4. Must successfully pass the examination given by a duly constituted board of examiners.

II. RIGHTS AND AUTHORITIES

The minister of music and/or minister of Christian education shall have full right and authority to:

1. Serve as music director, Christian education director, teacher, or assistant pastor of local churches.
2. Publish, defend, and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. The minister of music and/or minister of Christian education shall not be eligible for ordination as long as he [or she] remains solely in the field of music or Christian education.
4. In the event the minister of Christian education or minister of music enters into a pulpit ministry, we recommend that he/she be given credit for his/her period of licensure [as minister of Christian education or minister of music] and that this period serve in lieu of the exhorter's licensure (50th A., 1964. p. 55).

6) That we amend page 115, S26. MINISTER OF MUSIC AND MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION by substituting the following for the current content:

1 **S26. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES**

2 **I. APPLICATION AND TRAINING**

3 *Those persons seeking to be licensed ministers with a*
4 *specialization in an approved ministry area, must include*
5 *their request in their application.*

6 *Further, they must possess the necessary training, either*
7 *formal or an approved substitute thereof, to enable him/*
8 *her to serve the church effectively in any of the approved*
9 *specialized areas of the ministry.*

10 *After receiving their licensed certification in a special-*
11 *ized area, they must maintain proficiency in that area as*
12 *required by the Executive Council.*

13 **II. ADVANCEMENT IN MINISTERIAL RANK**

14 *Those persons who have been licensed with a ministry*
15 *specialization can advance in rank to ordination with the*
16 *approval of their state/regional administrative bishop.*

S28. MINISTERIAL REPORTING

I. FORMS FOR MONTHLY REPORTING

In keeping with the financial system of the Church of God, it has been decided by the International General Assembly to furnish Report Forms upon request, in triplicate, to all ministers, for reporting to international and state headquarters on the first of each month.

S28. MINISTERIAL REPORTING

II. RECORDING OF MONTHLY REPORTS

The secretary general [his office] shall maintain the following record system for all ministers' reports.

1. Each report shall be recorded monthly on an individual record and summarized annually. A copy of said annual summary shall be placed in each minister's file and a duplicate copy mailed to the minister.
2. A permanent record shall also be maintained and filed in the vault [at International Offices].
3. All reports shall be electronically filed for permanent record before being destroyed.

8. MINISTERIAL REPORTING

RATIONALE:

Changes to monthly ministerial reporting procedures have necessitated updates to the verbiage in the General Assembly *Minutes*. Currently there is no reference to online reporting or to exemption from reporting.

We recommend:

- 1) That we amend page 117, S28. MINISTERIAL REPORTING, by striking item I. FORMS FOR MONTHLY REPORTING.

1 ~~I.—FORMS FOR MONTHLY REPORTING~~

2 ~~*In keeping with the financial system of the Church of*~~
3 ~~*God, it has been decided by the International General*~~
4 ~~*Assembly to furnish Report Forms upon request, in trip-*~~
5 ~~*licate, to all ministers, for reporting to international and*~~
6 ~~*state headquarters on the first of each month.*~~

- 2) That we amend page 117, S28. MINISTERIAL REPORTING, II. RECORDING OF MONTHLY REPORTS by striking items 1–3 and inserting the following:

- 1 1. *All ministers are encouraged to report online, if possible.*
2 *Reports received digitally by the International Offices*
3 *shall be forwarded to the minister's state/regional office.*
- 4 2. *Where online reporting creates a hardship, ministers*
5 *must request paper reporting forms. If reporting by paper*
6 *form, a copy of the monthly report shall be sent to both*
7 *the International Offices and the minister's state/regional*
8 *office by the minister.*
- 9 3. *Ministers may become exempt from reporting due to*
10 *retirement from active ministry or due to disability.*
11 *a. Requests for exemption from reporting may be*
12 *submitted by the administrative bishop or by the*

S28. MINISTERIAL REPORTING

II. RECORDING OF MONTHLY REPORTS

The secretary general [his office] shall maintain the following record system for all ministers' reports.

1. Each report shall be recorded monthly on an individual record and summarized annually. A copy of said annual summary shall be placed in each minister's file and a duplicate copy mailed to the minister.
2. A permanent record shall also be maintained and filed in the vault [at International Offices].
3. All reports shall be electronically filed for permanent record before being destroyed.

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- 13 *minister personally to the department of business and*
14 *records.*
15 *b. Exemption from reporting does not affect a minister’s*
16 *standing or ability to perform ministerial functions.*
17 *c. Ministers who return to active ministry after being*
18 *exempt from reporting shall be required to resume*
19 *monthly reporting.*
20 *d. Ministers who have been exempted from reporting*
21 *shall notify the International Offices of any change in*
22 *contact information (mailing address, email address,*
23 *telephone number, etc.).*

So as to read:

II. RECORDING OF MONTHLY REPORTS

The secretary general [his office] shall maintain the following record system for all ministers’ reports.

1. *All ministers are encouraged to report online, if possible. Reports received digitally by the International Offices shall be forwarded to the minister’s state/regional office.*
2. *Where online reporting creates a hardship, ministers must request paper reporting forms. If reporting by paper form, a copy of the monthly report shall be sent to both the International Offices and the minister’s state/regional office by the minister.*
3. *Ministers may become exempt from reporting due to retirement from active ministry or due to disability.*
 - a. *Requests for exemption from reporting may be submitted by the administrative bishop or by the minister personally to the department of business and records.*
 - b. *Exemption from reporting does not affect a minister’s standing or ability to perform ministerial functions.*
 - c. *Ministers who return to active ministry after being exempt from reporting shall be required to resume*



-
- monthly reporting.*
- d. Ministers who have been exempted from reporting shall notify the International Offices of any change in contact information (mailing address, email address, telephone number, etc.).*



9. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING

RATIONALE:

As human trafficking continues to be a global concern, this statement—developed through collaboration with Church of God ministers engaged in anti-trafficking ministry—provides a theological and practical foundation regarding the church’s mission and beliefs in this area.

We recommend:

That we adopt the following to be inserted in the General Assembly *Minutes*.

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING

We Believe:

- 1 • *That every human being is created in the image of God*
- 2 *and possesses inherent value, dignity, and purpose*
- 3 *(Gen. 1:27; Ps. 139:13–16).*
- 4 • *That any form of human trafficking, exploitation, or*
- 5 *enslavement violates both the character of God and the*
- 6 *Gospel of Jesus Christ (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18–19;*
- 7 *Mic. 6:8).*
- 8 • *That the Church of God is called to stand against every*
- 9 *manifestation of evil that destroys life and distorts God’s*
- 10 *design for human freedom and flourishing (John 10:10;*
- 11 *Gal. 5:1).*
- 12 • *That human trafficking includes, but is not limited to:*
 - 13 *1. Child soldiering*
 - 14 *2. Criminal exploitation*
 - 15 *3. Cyber exploitation and online sexual abuse*
 - 16 *4. Debt bondage and coercive labor conditions*
 - 17 *5. Domestic servitude*
 - 18 *6. Forced begging*
 - 19 *7. Forced labor and bonded labor*
 - 20 *8. Forced marriage*



-
- 21 **9. Organ trafficking**
22 **10. Sexual exploitation and child sexual trafficking**
23 • ***That the Gospel compels the Church to proclaim freedom***
24 ***to the captives, defend the oppressed, and work for justice***
25 ***on behalf of the vulnerable (Isa. 1:17; Ps. 82:3–4; Prov.***
26 ***31:8–9).***

We Affirm:

- 27 • ***That the Church of God must actively oppose all forms***
28 ***of trafficking and exploitation through prayer, education,***
29 ***prevention, intervention, and restoration (Eph. 5:11).***
30 • ***That the sin of exploitation must be addressed through***
31 ***the power of the gospel and not through silence,***
32 ***complacency, or indifference (James 4:17).***
33 • ***That our global fellowship provides both opportunity***
34 ***and responsibility to act collaboratively across nations,***
35 ***languages, and cultures (Rev. 7:9, Eph. 2:13–14, 1 Cor.***
36 ***12:12–13, John 17:20–23).***
37 • ***That every church, ministry, and believer has a biblical***
38 ***mandate to protect the vulnerable and resist the powers of***
39 ***darkness that prey upon human life (Eph. 6:12).***
40 • ***That our response must especially address sexual***
41 ***exploitation and the exploitation of children, reflecting***
42 ***the heart of Christ for the least of these (Matt. 25:40;***
43 ***Mark 9:36–37).***
44 • ***That in standing against human trafficking, the Church***
45 ***of God bears witness to the redeeming power of the***
46 ***Gospel and the sanctity of all human life (John 8:36).***

We Commit:

- 47 • ***To champion awareness campaigns that include***
48 ***education on sexual exploitation, labor abuses, and every***
49 ***form of human trafficking.***
50 • ***To confront the social, economic, and moral conditions***
51 ***that allow trafficking to thrive (Amos 5:24).***



-
- 52 • *To partner with faith-based and humanitarian*
53 *organizations that provide care for survivors and seek*
54 *systemic justice (Isa. 58:6–7).*
- 55 • *To pray diligently for those who are enslaved, exploited,*
56 *or endangered, asking God to bring deliverance, healing,*
57 *and restoration (Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1–2).*
- 58 • *To proclaim and live the message of Jesus Christ who*
59 *came to proclaim liberty to the captives and to set the*
60 *oppressed free (Luke 4:18).*
- 61 • *To resource ministries that restore survivors and*
62 *reintegrate them into communities of faith and safety (Ps.*
63 *147:3).*
- 64 • *To teach a biblical theology of human worth and freedom*
65 *in our churches, schools, and homes (Gal. 3:28; Rom.*
66 *12:10).*
- 67 • *To train pastors, missionaries, and congregations to*
68 *recognize and respond to the signs of trafficking in their*
69 *communities (Prov. 24:11–12).*



10. ETHICAL USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

RATIONALE:

This statement, created with input from ministers and laity with relevant expertise, clarifies the church's beliefs regarding artificial intelligence and offers guidance for how we can best utilize emerging technologies with integrity.

We recommend:

That we adopt the following to be inserted in the General Assembly *Minutes*.

ETHICAL USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

We Believe:

- 1 • ***That Christian ministry is a sacred calling that demands***
- 2 ***responsibility, faithfulness, and dependence on the Holy***
- 3 ***Spirit. Thus, it cannot be reduced to technical function,***
- 4 ***but must be practiced in a way that fully realizes divine***
- 5 ***vocation sustained by the holiness of Christ and in***
- 6 ***theological training that equips the minister to serve with***
- 7 ***excellence.***
- 8 • ***That artificial intelligence (AI), as a widely used***
- 9 ***tool, is enhancing administration, communication,***
- 10 ***and preparation for teaching and preaching, thereby***
- 11 ***strengthening the Church's ability to complete its mission.***
- 12 • ***That human value is intrinsic, rooted in our being***
- 13 ***image-bearers, and not merely our capacity for***
- 14 ***production or efficiency. AI is not a replacement for***
- 15 ***genuine communion with God or the guidance of the***
- 16 ***Holy Spirit (Prov. 4:7, John 14:26).***



-
- 17 • *That technology is a valuable support, but the*
18 *indiscriminate, excessive, or substitutive use of AI*
19 *undermines the essence of ministerial calling, fostering*
20 *a dependence on human instruments, and weakening the*
21 *personal relationship with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:12).*

We Affirm:

- 22 • *That the Church of God encourages the use of AI*
23 *for ecclesiastical and missional purposes. Ministers,*
24 *leaders, and educators should use these tools as support,*
25 *without delegating to them the spiritual and ministerial*
26 *responsibility of the individual.*
27 • *That we recognize the need to establish clear principles*
28 *guiding the use of AI so that it may be fully utilized in its*
29 *proper place.*
30 • *That theological reflection, sermon preparation,*
31 *and pastoral care require spiritual discernment and*
32 *formation.*

We Commit:

- 33 • *To ensure that AI is to be used in ethical, transparent,*
34 *and responsible manners, as a support tool and never as a*
35 *substitute for spiritual gifting, anointing, or the necessary*
36 *labor of ministry.*
37 • *To condemn the use of technological tools for unlawful*
38 *or immoral acts, including identity theft, the generation*
39 *of content violating human dignity, the dissemination*
40 *of misinformation, digital fraud, intellectual property*
41 *infringement, and harassment.*
42 • *To teach our ministers how to use emerging technologies*
43 *wisely, ensuring that tools remain servants of the calling*
44 *and never substitutes for spiritual depth or theological*
45 *labor.*



-
- 46 • *That the Church of God will not fear the future of*
47 *technological development but will endeavor to lead the*
48 *conversation related to AI and its possibilities, developing*
49 *strategic and ethical guidelines ensuring technology*
50 *serves the church and its mission and vision.*



11. IMMIGRATION 2026—INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Reaffirmation of the Resolution on Immigration passed by 2012 General Assembly (See Appendix 2).

RATIONALE:

Understanding the global significance of immigration variables, the Church of God recognizes the importance of declaring a relevant, definitive Statement on Immigration. The proposed “Statement” is a reaffirmation of a “Resolution” adopted by the 74th International General Assembly in 2012. The proposed Statement addresses three perspectives: “We Believe” articulating Scriptural principles of prayer, compassion, mercy, and ministry for all immigrants; “We Affirm” acknowledgment of just policies and processes for immigration; and “We Commit” to ensure all immigrants are treated with dignity, and encourage functional, legal framework of fair immigration, labor, and civil laws of protection.

We recommend:

That we adapt the 2012 Immigration resolution into statement form and that it be included in the General Assembly Minutes.

STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION

We Believe:

- 1 • *That every human being is created in the image and*
- 2 *likeness of God (Gen. 1:26–27).*
- 3 • *That Abraham, Sarah, and the patriarchs were strangers*
- 4 *in the land of promise (Heb. 11:9) and were protected by*
- 5 *God in their sojourning (Ps. 105:13–15). And further,*
- 6 *God instructed Israel to never forget their time as*
- 7 *strangers and that He loves the stranger*
- 8 *(Deut. 10:18–19).*



-
- 9 • *That Jesus taught that our treatment of others is, in*
10 *essence, how we treat Him. (Matt. 25:40).*
11 • *That the Church must be a place of prayer, compassion,*
12 *mercy and ministry to all, regardless of their immigration*
13 *status.*

We Affirm:

- 14 • *That our dialogue regarding the laws and policies of*
15 *nations must be founded on the Word of God.*
16 • *That we support just policies for immigration that*
17 *safeguard and monitor national borders in an efficient*
18 *manner, while also respecting the dignity of all humans.*
19 • *That governments establish and maintain functional legal*
20 *mechanisms for the entry of immigrants and recognize*
21 *the central importance of families when considering*
22 *the number and categories of visas available for family*
23 *unification.*
24 • *That governments provide a sound process toward legal*
25 *status for currently undocumented immigrants, legislate*
26 *fair labor and civil laws for all, and enforce immigration*
27 *in a manner that respects due process.*

We Commit:

- 28 • *To ensure that all immigrants encounter love and are*
29 *treated with dignity in our churches and institutions.*
30 • *To encourage policies that maintain secure borders while*
31 *respecting human dignity.*
32 • *To support the establishment of more functional legal*
33 *mechanisms that allow for the entry of immigrants,*
34 *migrant workers, refugees, and asylum seekers while*
35 *prioritizing family unification.*
36 • *To encourage the establishment of a sound process*
37 *toward earned legal status for currently undocumented*
38 *immigrants.*
39 • *To support the legislation of fair immigration, labor, and*
40 *civil laws that protect all people.*

S30. DISORDERLY MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE] (68th A., 2000, pp. 72–77; 71st A., 2006, pp. 47, 48; [IE Council: January 2006])

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. Suspension

As used in this section, the term *suspension* means the cessation of all ministerial activity, including ministerial voting privileges. During suspension, the minister may, under certain circumstances, maintain his/her membership in a group insurance program and/or the Minister's Retirement Plan as provided by the policies of the Benefits Board. The cost of any personal insurance for which he/she may be eligible during the period of suspension shall be the responsibility of the minister.

B. Revocation

As used in this section, the term *revocation* means the termination of ministerial credentials with the Church of God, including all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto.

12. LIMITED MINISTRY

RATIONALE:

Spiritual restoration is a costly procedure including, but not limited to, integrity, humility, and the restoration of confidence. The *Minutes*, (III. DISORDERLY CONDUCT, A. Explicit Heterosexual Misconduct, 2, pp. 124–125) state that an offending minister may be allowed to engage in limited, supervised ministerial activity during the second half of the disciplinary period. However, the term “limited ministry” is ambiguous and not clearly defined. Such ambiguity in language lends itself to such broad interpretation that candidates in one state/region may be subjected to more/less stringent restrictions than those in other states/regions.

Furthermore, while forgiveness as a brother or sister is immediate and not based on merit, the restoration to ministry is a conditional process over time by which the offender regains the renewed trust of his/her family, the church, and outsiders. Our system’s integrity is our most essential resource. If the culture cannot trust us, it is less likely to trust our Lord.

We recommend:

That page 122, S30. DISORDERLY MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], II. DEFINITION OF TERMS, be amended by inserting the following:

C. Limited Ministry

- 1 ***A candidate in the restoration process may enter a period***
- 2 ***of “Limited Ministry” only after one-half of the required***
- 3 ***restoration period has been completed. Within the scope***
- 4 ***of Limited Ministry, the candidate may preach or teach***
- 5 ***only with the prior approval of the supervising pastor in***
- 6 ***consultation with the administrative bishop. The can-***
- 7 ***didate shall not engage in any other ministerial duties***



8 *until the restoration process has been fully completed*
9 *and restoration has been formally recognized. During the*
10 *entirety of the restoration period, the candidate's local*
11 *church membership shall be maintained at the church*
12 *pastored by the supervising pastor. These provisions shall*
13 *constitute the governing policy for limited ministry during*
14 *restoration and shall be administered and applied consis-*
15 *tently in all cases of ministerial restoration.*

S30. DISORDERLY MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE] (68th A., 2000, pp. 72–77; 71st A., 2006, pp. 47, 48; [IE Council: January 2006])

III. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

A. Explicit Heterosexual Misconduct

3. At the conclusion of the two-year period, upon successful completion of the restoration program, and with the recommendation of the state/regional overseer, the International Executive Council shall make a decision concerning the reinstatement of credentials and at what level. (See **S5. International Executive Council, III. Duties and Authorities**, Item 11.)

13. RESTORATION PROCESS

RATIONALE:

This requirement would provide both a safeguard and greater consistency in the process. While the current restoration process requires a letter of recommendation from the administrative bishop for all candidates, having the state/regional council approval would add another level of assurance.

Additionally, the *Minutes* state that the state/regional council must approve restoration for those guilty of “Unbecoming Conduct.” However, the state/regional council is not mentioned as needing to approve candidates guilty of “Explicit Heterosexual Misconduct” or “Other Heterosexual Misconduct.” This inconsistency should be addressed.

We recommend:

1) **That we amend page 122, S30. DISORDERLY MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], III. DISORDERLY CONDUCT, A. Explicit Heterosexual Misconduct, item 3 by inserting:**

- 1 **“*and the state/regional council*” following “recommendation of the state/regional overseer”**

So as to read:

3. At the conclusion of the two-year period, upon successful completion of the restoration program, and with the recommendation of the state/regional overseer ***and the state/regional council***, the International Executive Council shall make a decision concerning the reinstatement of credentials and at what level.

S30. DISORDERLY MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

(68th A., 2000, pp. 72–77; 71st A., 2006, pp. 47, 48; [IE Council: January 2006])

III. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

B. Other Heterosexual Misconduct

1. Any minister found guilty of any other heterosexual misconduct shall have his/her ministerial credentials suspended for a minimum period of one year. Should said minister desire reinstatement of credentials, he/she shall submit to the prescribed program of restoration (79th A., 2024).
2. At the discretion of the state/regional overseer and state/regional council, the minister may be allowed to engage in limited, supervised ministerial activity after the first six months of the disciplinary period.

At the conclusion of the one-year period, upon successful completion of the restoration program, and with the recommendation of the state/regional overseer and the approval of the International Executive Council, the minister shall be reinstated to his/her former rank of ministry. (See **S5. International Executive Council, III. Duties and Authorities**, Item 11.)

2) That we amend page 122, S30. DISORDERLY MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], III. DISORDERLY CONDUCT, B. Other Heterosexual Misconduct, item 2 by inserting:

1 “*and the state/regional council,*” following “recommendation of the state/regional overseer”

So as to read:

At the conclusion of the one-year period, upon successful completion of the restoration program, and with the recommendation of the state/regional overseer *and the state/regional council,* and the approval of the International Executive Council, the minister shall be reinstated to his/her former rank of ministry.

S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE (63rd A., 1990, pp. 70–75)

TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS

B. Trial Procedures

1. *Filing of Charges*

Any charge brought against a minister must be in writing and signed by the individual bringing the said charge. Prior to any formal trial or hearing, the state overseer shall, where possible, arrange a face-to-face meeting between the accused and the accuser, in keeping with the commands of Jesus in Matt. 18:15–17. Said meeting to be moderated by the state overseer, or one whom he shall appoint.

S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE (63rd A., 1990, pp. 70–75)

TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS

B. Trial Procedures

3. *Notification of Defendant*

The state overseer shall set the date of trial and notify defendant of charges, time and place of trial, at least seven (7) days prior to trial. Notification shall be given by certified mail with a return receipt, where possible. If defendant waives the time limit in favor of an earlier trial, he/she should sign a statement to that effect which will become a part of the trial record. The defendant may, with the consent of the state overseer, waive trial by the state board to a board appointed by the general overseer and his assistants, in which case there shall be no appeal.

14. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

RATIONALE:

A fundamental right in a quest for fairness should be any accused minister's right to appeal for the appointment of a General Trial Board appointed by the general overseer and other members of the International Executive Committee. An accused minister's reasons for doing so may be multifaceted, ranging from perceived conflicts of interests, regional personal conflicts or past disagreements with state/regional leadership. The very knowledge that there is no appeal process that can be granted after the decision of a general trial board, is reason enough to remove any impairments that would prevent the accused minister being granted such a request. Every accused minister, no matter how egregious the accusations, deserves every consideration for an opportunity for a fair and impartial trial that affects his life, his family or his ministry.

We recommend:

1) That we amend page 129, S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE, TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS, B. Trial Procedures by adding the following as the opening paragraph:

1 *The deadlines established in this disciplinary process*
2 *shall be understood as business days (Monday–Friday).*

2) That we amend page 129, S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE, TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS, B. Trial Procedures, 3. Notification of Defendant, by striking the following:

1 ~~*The state overseer shall set the date of trial and notify*~~

S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE (63rd A., 1990, pp. 70–75)

TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS

B. Trial Procedures

3. *Notification of Defendant*

The state overseer shall set the date of trial and notify defendant of charges, time and place of trial, at least seven (7) days prior to trial. Notification shall be given by certified mail with a return receipt, where possible. If defendant waives the time limit in favor of an earlier trial, he/she should sign a statement to that effect which will become a part of the trial record. The defendant may, with the consent of the state overseer, waive trial by the state board to a board appointed by the general overseer and his assistants, in which case there shall be no appeal.

S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE (63rd A., 1990, pp. 70–75)

TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS

B. Trial Procedures

7. *Notification of Decision*

d. Both the one charging and the one being charged should be notified of the decision of the trial board, and (a) recommendations for conforming to said decision and/or (b) a record of this follow-up should be kept in the individual's file.

2 ~~defendant of charges, time and place of trial, at least~~
3 ~~seven (7) days prior to trial.~~

and inserting the following:

1 *Once ecclesiastical charges have been substantiated, and*
2 *there are no criminal charges pending, the state/regional*
3 *overseer shall have a maximum of 30 days to set the date*
4 *of the trial and notify the defendant of the charges, as*
5 *well as the time and place of trial, with said notice being*
6 *at least fourteen (14) business days prior to trial.*

- 3) That we amend page 129, S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE, TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS, B. Trial Procedures, 3. Notification of Defendant by adding the following as the second paragraph:

1 *The defendant has the right to request a change of the*
2 *trial date. Refusal to attend shall be considered contempt*
3 *of the process, and the charges shall be deemed valid by*
4 *the trial board.*

- 4) That we amend page 129, S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE, TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS, B. Trial Procedures, 7. Notification of Decision, paragraph d., by inserting the following after “trial board”:

1 *“within a maximum of 10 (ten) business days”*

So as to read:

Both the one charging and the one being charged should be notified of the decision of the trial board *within a maximum of 10 (ten) business days*, and (a) recommendations for conforming to said decision and/or (b) a record of this follow-up should be kept in the individual’s file.

S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE]

I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE (63rd A., 1990, pp. 70–75)

TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS

B. Trial Procedures

6. Trial Procedures

e. After all prosecution witnesses have testified, the defendant shall be given an opportunity to face each witness individually and to defend himself/herself. After the defendant has had opportunity to face his/her accusers, defense witnesses will then be called and heard individually. Character witnesses may be heard individually or collectively at the discretion of the board.

15. RIGHTS OF THE PLAINTIFF IN ECCLESIASTICAL TRIALS

RATIONALE:

Currently, in the procedures for ecclesiastical trials, it is not specified if the one pressing charges has the right to question or rebut the defense's witnesses. However, the defendant is given an opportunity to face each of the prosecution witnesses individually and to defend himself/herself.

We recommend:

That we amend page 129, S31. OFFENDING MINISTERS [MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE], I. MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINE, TRIAL PROCEDURES AND APPEALS FOR CHURCH OF GOD MINISTERS, B. Trial Procedures, 6. Trial Procedures, paragraph e. by inserting the following after the words "heard individually."

- 1 *After a defense witness has testified, the plaintiff shall be given*
- 2 *an opportunity to question the witness before that witness*
- 3 *is dismissed.*

So as to read:

e. After all prosecution witnesses have testified, the defendant shall be given an opportunity to face each witness individually and to defend himself/herself. After the defendant has had opportunity to face his/her accusers, defense witnesses will then be called and heard individually. *After a defense witness has testified, the plaintiff shall be given an opportunity to question the witness before that witness is dismissed.* Character witnesses may be heard individually or collectively at the discretion of the board.

**S45. WOMEN'S [DISCIPLESHIP]
MINISTRIES (STATE)**

II. PRESIDENT

1. The office of Church of God Women's Discipleship president [at the state level] shall be created.
2. The wife of the state overseer shall fill this office.
3. The purpose of this office shall be to provide leadership for Women's Discipleship [at the state level] in cooperation with the general church program [1982].

16. STATE WOMEN'S MINISTRIES BOARD

RATIONALE:

Women have long played a vital role in ministry within the Church of God. This motion affirms the growing call for women to serve, both those seeking credentials and those who are not, by providing both groups the honor of holding a position on the state/regional level.

We recommend:

That we amend page 152, S45. WOMEN'S [DISCIPLESHIP] MINISTRIES (STATE), by adding item III as follows:

III. STATE WOMEN'S MINISTRIES BOARD

- 1 ***1. Each state/region shall have a Women's Ministries Board***
- 2 ***appointed by the administrative bishop consisting of***
- 3 ***credentialed and non-credentialed women from the state/***
- 4 ***region.***
- 5 ***2. The purpose of the board is to promote and implement***
- 6 ***Women's Ministries in the state/region as outlined by the***
- 7 ***State Women's Ministries president.***

S51. PASTOR

I. APPOINTMENT OF PASTORS

1. The authority for the appointment of pastors is vested in the state overseer (45th A., 1954, p. 34; 51st A., 1966, p. 59).
2. Local churches are to refrain from taking action on the selection of pastors until authorized to do so by the state overseer (28th A., 1933, p. 38).
3. The state overseer shall appoint the pastor subsequent to consultation with the district overseer, and after having given members of the local church an opportunity to express themselves regarding their desire for pastor of their choice (61st A., 1986, p. 53).
4. The state overseer may call for an expression from the membership (at least sixteen years of age) when there is an apparent decline in the spiritual health and well-being of the local church (61st A., 1986, p. 53).
5. The signature [of the individual expressing a pastoral preference] is required on the local church uniform pastoral preference ballot (49th A., 1962, p. 53).

17. FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY IN PASTORAL APPOINTMENTS

RATIONALE:

This amendment ensures informed stewardship by enabling pastors to have an understanding of a church's financial health before committing to an appointment. The requirement for a written report empowers ministers to make prayerful decisions that are not rooted in assumption. This will foster an environment of trust between pastors and the state office and prevent challenges associated with difficulties arising from undisclosed financial issues.

We recommend:

That we amend page 163, S51. PASTOR, I. APPOINTMENT OF PASTORS, by inserting the following as Item 6:

- 1 ***6. Prior to the appointment of a pastor, the state/regional***
- 2 ***overseer shall obtain a current report of the church's***
- 3 ***financial condition including all bank account balances,***
- 4 ***all outstanding debts/liabilities, monthly financial***
- 5 ***obligations, church state/regional and international***
- 6 ***reporting status, and recurring expenses. This***
- 7 ***information shall be provided in writing to the prospective***
- 8 ***pastor prior to his acceptance of the appointment.***



18. THE CHURCH

RATIONALE:

This statement was created from a proposal that came out of the 2025 International Council calling for a doctrinal position on the nature, identity and mission of the Church.

We recommend:

That we adopt the following to be inserted in the General Assembly Minutes.

THE CHURCH

We Believe:

- 1 • *That the Church is the body of Christ, of which He is*
2 *the head, empowered by the Holy Spirit on the Day of*
3 *Pentecost (Acts 2). The Church consists of all believers*
4 *in Jesus Christ for the purpose of worship, discipleship,*
5 *fellowship, and evangelism fulfilling the Great*
6 *Commission.*
- 7 • *That the biblical understanding of “church” is a*
8 *translation of the Greek term “ekklesia,” interpreted in*
9 *the New Testament as “the called-out ones”, comprised of*
10 *all humanity united by the common confession that Jesus*
11 *Christ is Lord.*
- 12 • *That the Church is not just a place, building, location, or*
13 *denomination, it is the people of God, who are in Christ*
14 *Jesus reaching into all areas of the world.*
- 15 • *That the Church of God is a New Testament church,*
16 *which recognizes the local church, delineated by its*
17 *geographical setting, as the foundation of all ministry*
18 *activities where the pastor nurtures and leads all members*
19 *to exercise spiritual gifts.*



-
- 20 • *That the Church of God is a movement directed by the*
21 *Holy Spirit, fully understanding the baptism in the Holy*
22 *Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking with other*
23 *tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance, which is both a*
24 *personal blessing and an enduement of power for witness*
25 *and ministry.*
26 • *That Church of God doctrine, ministry, ordinances,*
27 *mission, vision, and organization are concrete*
28 *expressions of its nature and life, vital to the inner life of*
29 *the church—the Body of Christ.*

We Affirm:

- 30 • *That the Church of God will intentionally proclaim the*
31 *full gospel of Jesus Christ in the Spirit and power of*
32 *Pentecost.*
33 • *That the Church of God is committed to the authority of*
34 *Holy Scripture for faith and direction.*
35 • *That the Church of God is Christ-centered,*
36 *people-oriented, and need-sensitive in all its programs,*
37 *initiatives, and ministries.*
38 • *That we must engage, encourage, enlist, empower,*
39 *nurture, equip, and support every generation of the*
40 *church for effective ministry.*
41 • *That the local church is a primary force in the*
42 *evangelization of the world and discipling of believers in*
43 *the fulfillment of the Great Commission.*

We Commit:

- 44 • *To perpetuate uncompromising doctrinal identity as a*
45 *Pentecostal church committed to the manifestation of*
46 *the fruits of the Spirit in the lives of believers and the*
47 *operation of spiritual gifts in the life of the church.*
48 • *To recognize within the church those with particular*
49 *callings, gifts, and abilities to work together with unity in*
50 *all matters of ministry.*



-
- 51 • *To be an international church, that loves all people*
52 *transcending ethnicity, cultural distinction, politics, and*
53 *economics.*
- 54 • *To the principle of interdependence, acknowledging our*
55 *interconnectedness and dependence on all members of*
56 *the Body of Christ, embracing collegial connections*
57 *within the Pentecostal movement.*
- 58 • *To our core beliefs and values of prayer, Pentecostal*
59 *worship, world evangelization and missions, church*
60 *planting, leadership development, care, interdependence,*
61 *communication, discipleship, and education.*



19. PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

RATIONALE:

This statement appeared on the 79th General Council Agenda and acts to clarify the Church of God's view regarding the priesthood of each believer, which is of special concern in certain regions where prevalent belief systems involve intermediaries as a theological necessity.

We recommend:

That we adopt the following to be inserted in the General Assembly *Minutes*.

PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

We Believe:

- 1 • *In the priesthood of all believers, which means that all*
- 2 *Christians, through Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit,*
- 3 *have equal privilege and responsibility to approach God*
- 4 *and to serve God without the need for another human*
- 5 *mediator (Heb. 4:16; 1 Tim. 2:5).*
- 6 • *God's desire and promise that His people should be*
- 7 *"a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6) is*
- 8 *fulfilled in His creation of the Church.*
- 9 • *That in the New Testament, the word "priest" never refers*
- 10 *to clergy office; instead, it applies to every believer in*
- 11 *Jesus Christ.*
- 12 • *That the Church is "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9),*
- 13 *"kings and priests to His God and Father" (Rev. 1:6).*
- 14 • *That all believers are "priests of God and of Christ" (Rev.*
- 15 *20:6).*



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- 16 • *The fact that every believer has access to God does*
17 *not negate the value of the Church or of the church’s*
18 *leaders, because the Church is the Body of Christ, which*
19 *manifests His presence (Matt. 18:20), and because Christ*
20 *Himself “gave” leaders to the Church, who would equip*
21 *all believers “for the work of ministry” (i.e., “service,”*
22 *Eph. 4:11–12).*

We Affirm:

- 23 • *That the priesthood of all believers is an essential*
24 *doctrine and practice of the Pentecostal movement.*
25 *Pentecostalism has grown rapidly because the laity and*
26 *the clergy have ministered together to share the gospel of*
27 *Christ and to make disciples of all nations.*
28 • *That the priesthood of all believers includes both privilege*
29 *and responsibility.*
30 • *That the priesthood of all believers implies the right and*
31 *duty of every Christian to read the Bible, study the Bible,*
32 *and teach the Bible to others.*
33 • *That the priesthood of all believers is the doctrinal basis*
34 *for the Church of God General Assembly, in which*
35 *every member in good standing can participate in the*
36 *government of the Church.*
37 • *That the priesthood of all believers is the basis for*
38 *preaching, prayer, intercession, the sacraments, Christian*
39 *discipleship, and for praise and thanksgiving.*
40 • *That the function of priesthood implies threefold service:*
41 *to minister to the Lord (Joel 2:17; Ex. 28:1), to minister*
42 *to the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12–16), and to minister to*
43 *the world (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19).*
44 • *That God has arranged the members in the body as He*
45 *chose (1 Cor. 12:18), and that various offices, roles, and*
46 *functions within the church are established by God (Eph.*
47 *4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1–8; Titus 1:5–9).*
48 • *That God directs the ministry of all members of His*
49 *church according to their spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:4–31).*
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We Commit:

- 50 • ***To teaching this doctrine and the benefits and***
- 51 ***responsibilities of equal access to God for all believers***
- 52 ***while affirming biblical offices, roles, and functions, and***
- 53 ***demonstrating the mutual service of believers to one***
- 54 ***another.***
- 55 • ***To model our service after the example of Jesus Christ***
- 56 ***(John 14:12).***
- 57 • ***To seek empowerment for service that comes through the***
- 58 ***anointing of the Holy Spirit.***
- 59 • ***To fulfill the church's priestly ministries of worship,***
- 60 ***witness, and discipleship.***
- 61 • ***To provide resources and training for clergy and to help***
- 62 ***them equip the laity for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11–***
- 63 ***12).***
- 64 • ***To demonstrate unity of the body and equality among all***
- 65 ***believers, regardless of race, gender, age, or nationality.***



20. BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

RATIONALE:

This statement appeared on the 79th General Council Agenda and was formed from work completed by the Church of God Doctrine and Polity Committee. It is intended to serve as a guide of how our ministers and laity ought to form biblically faithful positions in the midst of cultural change.

We recommend:

That we adopt the following to be inserted in the General Assembly *Minutes*.

BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

1 *Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) upholds a worldview*
2 *centered on the present, Spirit-led work of the Holy Spirit in*
3 *the lives of believers and the Church. We affirm the inspira-*
4 *tion and authority of the Scripture, the triune God—Father,*
5 *Son, and Holy Spirit—and the gospel of Jesus Christ as*
6 *God’s power for salvation. Guided by the Spirit, we pursue*
7 *vibrant worship, Spirit-given gifts, personal conversion and*
8 *sanctification, and bold evangelism to advance God’s king-*
9 *dom in the world with hopeful expectation of Christ’s return.*

10 *A biblical worldview is a way of understanding and engag-*
11 *ing the world that is shaped by the authority of Scripture*
12 *and centered on the redemptive work of God through Jesus*
13 *Christ. It affirms the Bible is God’s inspired and trustworthy*
14 *revelation and provides a framework for the function and*
15 *purpose of the Church.*

We Believe:

- 16 • *That the Bible is the God-breathed, proper foundation for*
17 *the worldview of any Christian (2 Tim. 3:16).*



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- 18 • *That all areas of life including physical, emotional,*
19 *mental, and spiritual, as well as the way we interact*
20 *with others in our homes as family members (Matt.*
21 *19:19; 1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Pet. 3), in our communities as*
22 *neighbors (Mark 12:31; Rom. 13:10; Gal. 6:10), and with*
23 *government as citizens (Rom. 13:1–7; 1 Pet. 2:13–17),*
24 *ought to be led by the direct instructions and principles*
25 *found in Holy Scripture.*
26 • *That throughout time and across cultures, many false*
27 *ideologies, being humanistic, pagan, or otherwise*
28 *opposed to biblical instruction and principles, have arisen*
29 *and will continue to arise (2 Tim. 4:3–4; Jude 1:4).*
30 • *That our ministers and our members are prepared to*
31 *withstand this onslaught of faulty worldviews and are*
32 *equipped to proclaim, defend, believe, and follow biblical*
33 *truth (Col. 2:8).*

We Affirm:

- 34 • *That the church cannot ignore cultural, ideological, or*
35 *social shifts and trends.*
36 • *That we must be aware of the social issues, cultural*
37 *pressures, or moral quandaries in this temporal world*
38 *without being consumed by or conformed to them.*
39 • *That we must declare truth in all areas addressed by*
40 *Scripture.*
41 • *That it is our responsibility as a church to proactively*
42 *prepare our ministers and members to navigate life from*
43 *a Christian perspective through the lens of a biblical*
44 *worldview.*
45 • *That in all matters we will live first as biblical Christians,*
46 *weighing all other ideologies, alliances, and opinions*
47 *against the truth found in Scripture and the doctrine of*
48 *the Church of God.*



We Commit:

- 49 • ***To learn how “to contend earnestly for the faith which***
50 ***was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 1: NKJV)***
51 ***so Christians can respond to and engage the culture with***
52 ***the Gospel.***
- 53 • ***To teach our congregations how to think biblically and***
54 ***to discern the difference between a secular and biblical***
55 ***worldview.***
- 56 • ***To resource and equip our ministers and our***
57 ***congregations to be prepared to make an apologetic***
58 ***defense against objections and provide answers for***
59 ***questions regarding a biblical worldview (1 Pet. 3:15).***
- 60 • ***To increase our understanding of secular world views and***
61 ***respond courageously and respectfully to culture.***
- 62 • ***To promote that all Christians remain steadfast in biblical***
63 ***truth and cultural awareness and live like the sons of***
64 ***Issachar in ancient Israel “who had understanding of the***
65 ***times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chron. 12:32***
66 ***NKJV).***



APPENDIX 1

MODIFYING EXHORTER LICENSURE

In the January 2025 meeting of the International Executive Council, a motion was passed requesting the committee that studied *CAMS for Students* expand their review to include the exhorter licensure credential and make recommendations on how this rank of ministry can better serve the needs of the Church of God today.

Historical Review

In 1925, the 20th General Assembly of the Church of God discussed the need for an order of ministry whereby lay persons sensing a call to locally evangelize and preach the gospel co-vocationally could be officially sanctioned by their local church to do so without the reporting responsibilities and authorities assigned to other ranks. The vision was for a primary, novitiate, localized order whereby people who did not qualify or aspire to other licensure ranks could gain an apprenticeship in ministry. In the words of F.J. Lee:

There are many in the church [who] do not feel they should be recognized as an Evangelist, Bishop, or Elder, but feel impelled to tell the good news of salvation to a lost and dying world, so we believe the Bible locates this class as Exhorter. (The Church of God Evangel, Volume 16, No.48, Page 2, November 28, 1925)

Borrowing language from the United Methodist Church, which had a similar order for class meetings and societies, the Assembly passed “that local churches have such an order of the ministry known as exhorters whose license are signed by the local church where their membership is and endorsed by the State Overseer.”



Over time, ministerial credentialing was modified, and the exhorter credential became less a localized lay ministry licensure and more a formalized entry-level, primary rank of general ministry—a first step toward ordination. In 1964, the minister of music license and minister of Christian education license were added to serve as equivalencies for this rank for those with specialized interests, gifts, and calls.

Historically, the exhorter credential provided a necessary and effective pathway for those called to the urgent work of evangelism, successfully laying a foundation for the ministry of the Word. However, to more fully embrace the diverse range of giftings within the Body of Christ today, there is a need to update this designation. While preaching the gospel remains our non-negotiable priority, we must now expand our recognition to include the specialized graces that are vital for a healthy church. By refining this credential, we can better empower the full spectrum of spiritual gifts without de-emphasizing the primary focus of proclaiming Christ to the world.

Present Realities

Statistically, according to Business and Records, as of March 2026, there were 24,712 ministers holding the rank of exhorter, 8,244 of whom live in the United States and Canada. Within the USA and Canada, 62% have held the rank five years or more, 42% for ten years or more.

Over the last five years 4,076 exhorters in the United States and Canada advanced to the next rank of ministry, 1,380 were revoked. Of those revoked, 39% were for failure to report.

Globally, across all licensures, 59% of those revoked between 2020–2026 were from the exhorter rank. Of those revoked, 74% were for failure to report or voluntary surrender.

With stalled mobility, higher rates of nondisciplinary-related revocations, and a nomenclature more suited to another era,



it seems that the mission of the church could be better served by a licensure more suited to meet the complex needs of the 21st century.

On the other hand, there are those whose gifts and callings are more specialized, localized, and less centered on pulpit proclamation. Their present need is for a licensure that affirms their calling, sanctions their ministry, offers accountability, and provides opportunity to develop their ministry gifts.

In a current landscape that demands ongoing accountability and professional development, a periodic formal licensure renewal requirement will help to ensure that every leader remains biblically sound, ethically grounded, and fully aligned with the Church's mission. While our current system honors the initial call to ministry, an entry-level renewal process will prioritize continuous growth and safeguard the integrity of our high calling for generations to come.

Operational Considerations

1. Those currently holding an exhorter's certificate or a minister of Christian education or minister of music certificate will receive a new licensed minister's certificate and given the option to apply for a ministry specialization.
2. Biennial renewal will be aligned with the ministers' credentialing anniversary and processed through the ministerial reporting portal. The fee for renewal will be set by the Executive Council, and globally, by the Executive Council in consultation with the International Council.
3. Notification for the need for renewal will begin three months prior to renewal date. This notification will be shown at the time of filing the minister's monthly report and repeated until renewal is complete. Email notifications will be sent to those inconsistent with reporting.



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4. Ministers exempt from reporting would not be required to renew their credentials.
 5. Options to meet renewal training requirements will include
 - a. State/Region enrichment conferences
 - b. Camp Meeting seminars
 - c. Youth and children’s training programs and conferences
 - d. Free front-page courses on the DOE1 platform
 - e. Additional options determined and approved by the International Executive Committee and Council of Eighteen.
 6. Completion of training requirements will be self-governed and self-reported on the renewal application.
 7. For any minister failing to renew their credentials by the renewal date, a “grace period” for up to 60 days will be allowed, during which time credentials may be renewed without additional requirements.
 8. Upon successful completion of the renewal process, the status of the minister will change from “Failure to Renew” to “Active.”
 9. After the grace period, licensed ministers wishing to renew their credentials will be required to apply for reinstatement, including the usual reinstatement fees.
 10. If a year or more has passed since the renewal date, the following will be required: (1) a new criminal background check and (2) affirmation of no change in marital status.
 11. The administrative bishop may request from the office of the ministerial advocate an exemption from retesting. Otherwise, retesting will be required.



Conclusion

In conclusion, updating the initial ministerial credential from “exhorter” to “licensed minister” represents a vital step toward aligning our ministerial development with contemporary ecclesiastical standards and enhancing professional recognition. By incorporating specific, ministry-focused specializations, we empower new leaders to serve with competence in diverse areas, while the implementation of biennial renewals ensures a high level of accountability, spiritual vigilance, and continued engagement in active ministry. Implementing these structural changes will not only strengthen the competency of our ministry team but will also foster a more dynamic, accountable, and mission-ready force, prepared to lead the Church of God effectively in an increasingly complex world.



APPENDIX 2

IMMIGRATION (2012)

WHEREAS, the church’s interaction and dialogue with the laws and policies of the nations of the world must be founded on the Word of the Lord, and the earliest Scriptures reveal that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1); and,

WHEREAS, Abraham, Sarah, and the patriarchs “sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country” (Heb. 11:9); “confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (v. 13); and “when they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people, God permitted no one to do them wrong; yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, saying, ‘Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm’” (Ps. 105:13–15, NKJV); and,

WHEREAS, when Joseph was sold into a foreign country as a slave, God himself providentially directed so that: “The king sent and released him, the ruler of the people let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions, to bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his elders wisdom” (Ps. 105:20–22, NKJV); and,

WHEREAS, when God led His people of Israel out of Egypt, He specifically instructed them: that they were never to forget that they had been strangers in Egypt (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33, 34); that God “loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing”; and said to His redeemed children, “Therefore love the stranger” (Deut. 10:18, 19); and,

WHEREAS, the Word of truth reveals that the deliverance of the Israelites out of the bondage of Egypt was a foreshadowing of the redemption of believers today out of the bondage of sin (1 Cor. 10:1–11); and,



WHEREAS, the family of Jesus sought sanctuary in the foreign nation of Egypt when Herod determined to kill the child who was born to be the Christ (Matt. 2), and Jesus revealed that He will judge His brothers and sisters by his words, “I was a stranger, and you took me in,” and, “inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:35, 40);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Church of God reaffirms its commitment to the following principles of a just process for immigration: “that immigrants be treated with respect and mercy by churches; that governments develop structures that safeguard and monitor national borders with efficiency and respect for human dignity; that governments establish more functional legal mechanisms for the annual entry of a reasonable number of immigrant workers and families; that governments recognize the central importance of the family in society by reconsidering the number and categories of visas available for family reunification; that governments establish a sound, equitable process toward earned legal status for currently undocumented immigrants; that governments legislate fair labor and civil laws for all; and that immigration enforcement be conducted in ways that recognize the importance of due process of law” (from Memo on “Immigration Concerns,” April 30, 2010).

