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DOCTRINES  
AND  
DISCIPLINE  
*of the*  
FREE METHODIST CHURCH  
OF  
NORTH AMERICA

1947

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*“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all  
the flock.”—ACTS 20:28*

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THE FREE METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE  
WINONA LAKE, INDIANA

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#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This 1947 Edition of the DISCIPLINE appears in new format. The whole has been reset in larger type. The pages are wider and more usable, with running paragraph indications as well as pagination. Deleted paragraphs, described in previous editions as obsolete, have been silently omitted and made available for future legislation.

The Index is entirely new. Some parts of it, to the regret of the editors, are too complex, and others may be inaccurate. But these faults are almost inevitable in the first draft of so formidable an undertaking. The old Index has for years been difficult to use. The strict alphabetical order of the new, though sometimes artificially maintained, will be welcome.

**THE EDITORS**

June, 1948

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Printed in U. S. A.



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# The Free Methodist Church

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## ORIGIN AND CHARACTER

¶ 1. Dearly Beloved: We think it expedient to give you a brief account of the origin and character of Free Methodism.

Wesley says: "In 1729 two young men in England, reading the Bible, saw they could not be saved without holiness, followed after it, and incited others so to do. In 1737 they saw, likewise, that men are justified before they are sanctified; but still holiness was their object. God then thrust them out to raise a holy people."

¶ 2. Methodism spread through England and America, and in other countries. From time to time different bodies arose bearing the Methodist name. As they became popular there was more or less departure from the original principles and practice of Methodism.

¶ 3. In the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, about the year 1858, several preachers and many members were excluded from the church on various charges and allegations, but really for their adherence to the principles of Methodism; especially to the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification.

¶ 4. Appeals were made to the General Conference which were denied. Those excluded could not join any other Methodist body, for there was none that agreed with them on the issues on which they were thrust out. Therefore they felt compelled to form a new organization.

¶ 5. The Free Methodist Church was organized by a convention of lay members and ministers, which met at Pekin, Niagara County, New York, on the 23rd day of August, 1860. The first General Conference met on the second Wednesday of October, 1862, at St. Charles, Illinois.

¶ 6. The Free Methodists are a body of Christians who



profess to be in earnest to get to heaven, by conforming to all the will of God, as made known in His Word. They do not believe that either God or the Bible has changed to accommodate the fashionable tendencies of the age. They solemnly protest against the union of the church and the world. The conditions of salvation, as they teach, are the same now that they were in the days of the apostles. He who would be a Christian in reality, as well as in name, must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Jesus. He must come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.

¶ 7. In doctrine they are Methodists. They believe in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in a general atonement, in the necessity of the new birth, in the witness of the Spirit, and in future rewards and punishments. They insist that it is the duty and privilege of every believer to be sanctified wholly, and to be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every one who is received into full connection, either professes to enjoy that perfect love which casts out fear, or promises diligently to seek until he obtains it.

¶ 8. They look upon practical godliness as the never-failing result of a genuine religious experience. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Hence they insist that those who profess to be the disciples of Christ should come out from unbelievers and be separate, abstaining from connection with all secret societies, renouncing all vain pomp and glory, adorning themselves with modest apparel, and not with gold, or pearls, or costly array. We have no right to abolish any of the requirements made by Christ and the apostles; or to make obedience to them a matter of small consequence. The golden rule, they hold, applies equally to all mankind.

¶ 9. The government is not aristocratic, but the lay members have an equal voice with the ministers in all the councils of the church. Both the annual and the general conferences are composed of as many lay as ministerial delegates, who have an equal voice and vote in all the proceedings. The stationing committee, by which the appointments



are made, is composed of the district superintendents and an equal number of lay members chosen for that purpose. The official boards are selected by the members of circuits, and not appointed by the preachers. They have district superintendents, who may be appointed to circuits the same as the rest of the preachers. They have bishops elected once in four years, whose duty it is to preside at the annual conferences, and travel through the connection at large. The rights of the members are carefully guarded.

¶ 10. They endeavor to promote spirituality and simplicity in worship. Congregational singing is universal, and singing by choirs in public worship is prohibited. They believe in the Holy Ghost. If men are really converted and sanctified, it is through the Spirit of God. When He works there is a stir. As President Edwards said, "Eternal things are so great, and of such vast concern that there is great absurdity in men being but moderately moved and affected by them." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The Free Methodists, while they do not believe in any mere formal noise, yet, when the Spirit comes, like "a rushing mighty wind," as on the day of Pentecost, do not dare to oppose the manifestations of His presence. As Edwards says, "Whenever there is any considerable degree of the Spirit's influence upon a mixed multitude, it will produce, in some way, a great visible commotion." To resist His operations is to hinder the work of God.

¶ 11. They do not believe in resorting to worldly policy to sustain the gospel. Christ has said that whosoever giveth a cup of cold water in His name shall in no wise lose his reward. But it is the motive, and not the amount done, that secures the divine approbation. There is no more virtue in giving to the cause of God for carnal pleasure than there is in any other purely selfish action. Hence they give no countenance to modern expedients for promoting Christianity, such as renting pews, promoting lotteries, fairs, sales, or other like expedients for raising money. To say that the Church cannot be sustained without these contrivances to beguile the world into its support is to confess that professing Christians are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."



It is to pronounce Christianity a failure. The gospel possesses an inherent power that will not only sustain itself, but make its way through all opposition, wherever its advocates live up to its requirements and rely upon its promises.

¶ 12. They believe the Church of Christ is a soul-saving institution of divine origin for holy purposes, therefore they prohibit festivals and donation parties, such as include anything in the line of entertainments contrary to the spirit and letter of our DISCIPLINE, and all other forms of worldly amusements in their church buildings or by their church organizations.

¶ 13. All their churches are required to be as free as the grace they preach. They believe that their mission is twofold—to maintain the Bible standard of Christianity, and to preach the gospel to the poor. Hence they require that all seats in their houses of worship shall be free. No pews can be rented or sold among them. The world will never be converted to Christianity when the churches are conducted upon the exclusive system. It has always been contrary to the economy of the Christian Church to build houses of worship with pews to rent. Such renting of pews is a corruption of Christianity. Free churches are essential to reach the masses. The provisions of the gospel are for all. The “glad tidings” must be proclaimed to every individual of the human race. God sends the true light to illuminate and melt every heart. To savage and civilized, bond and free, black and white, the ignorant and the learned, is freely offered the great salvation.

But for whose benefit are special efforts to be put forth? Who must be particularly cared for? Jesus settles this question. “The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up,” and, as if all this would be insufficient to satisfy John of the validity of His claims, He adds, “and the poor have the gospel preached to them.” This was the crowning proof that He was the One that should come. In this respect the Church must follow in the footsteps of Jesus. She must see to it that the gospel is preached to the poor. Thus this duty



is enjoined by the plainest precepts and examples. If the gospel is to be preached to all, then it follows, as a necessary consequence, that all the arrangements for preaching the gospel should be so made as to secure this object. If it be said that seats would be freely given to those who are unable to pay for them, they answer that this does not meet the case. Few are willing, so long as they are able to appear at church, to be publicly treated as paupers.

¶ 14. You will find in this book the doctrines and form of government of the Free Methodist Church as adopted by the General Conference.

We do not wish any to subscribe to it unless they believe it will be for the glory of God and the good of their souls. We have no desire to build up simply a large church; but we do hope that our societies will be composed, exclusively, of those who are in earnest to gain heaven, and who are determined, by the grace of God, to live up to the requirements of the Bible.

It is of the greatest importance that those who come into this organization shall be of one heart and one mind.







**PART I**  
**THE CONSTITUTION**



## **DIVISIONS**

- I. ARTICLES OF RELIGION**
- II. GENERAL RULES**
- III. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION AND  
GOVERNMENT**



THE CONSTITUTION OF  
THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH  
OF NORTH AMERICA

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PREAMBLE

¶ 15. In order that we may wisely preserve the heritage transmitted to us, and also that we may prepare the way for more effective co-operation with other branches of the church of Christ in all that makes for the advancement of God's kingdom among men, we, the ministers and lay members of the Free Methodist Church of North America, in accordance with methods of constitutional legislation established among us, do hereby ordain, establish, and set forth as the fundamental law, or constitution, of the Free Methodist Church of North America, the articles of religion, the general rules, and the articles of organization and government, here following to wit:

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DIVISION I

ARTICLES OF RELIGION

I. *Of Faith in the Holy Trinity*

¶ 16. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. *Of the Word, or Son of God, Who Was Made Very Man*

¶ 17. The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead



and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for the original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

### III. *Of the Resurrection of Christ*

¶ 18. Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again His body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until He returns to judge all men at the last day.

### IV. *Of the Holy Ghost*

¶ 19. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

### V. *The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation*

¶ 20. The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. By the term Holy Scriptures we understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments of whose authority there was never any doubt in the Church.

The names of the canonical books are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the First Book of Samuel, the Second Book of Samuel, the First Book of Kings, the Second Book of Kings, the First Book of Chronicles, the Second Book of Chronicles, the Book of Ezra, the Book of Nehemiah, the Book of Esther, the Book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, Canticles, or the Song of Solomon, Four Prophets the greater, Twelve Prophets the less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.



VI. *Of the Old Testament*

¶ 21. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for in both the Old and New Testaments everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof, of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from obedience to the commandments which are called moral.

VII. *Of Original or Birth Sin*

¶ 22. Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but it is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil and that continually.

VIII. *Of Free Will*

¶ 23. The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ enabling us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

IX. *Of the Justification of Man*

¶ 24. We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

X. *Of Good Works*

¶ 25. Although good works, which are the fruits of faith



and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judgments, yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

### XI. *Of Works of Supererogation*

¶ 26. Voluntary works—besides, over and above God's commandments—which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for His sake than of bounden duty is required; whereas Christ saith plainly, "When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants."

### XII. *Of Sin After Justification*

¶ 27. Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God rise again and amend our lives. Therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or who deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

### XIII. *Entire Sanctification*

¶ 28. Justified persons, while they do not outwardly commit sin, are nevertheless conscious of sin still remaining in the heart. They feel a natural tendency to evil, a proneness to depart from God and cleave to the things of earth. Those who are sanctified wholly are saved from all inward sin—from evil thoughts and evil tempers. No wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul. All their thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

Entire sanctification takes place subsequently to justification, and is the work of God wrought instantaneously upon



the consecrated, believing soul. After a soul is cleansed from all sin, it is then fully prepared to grow in grace.

#### XIV. *Future Reward and Punishment*

¶ 29. God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, according to the gospel. The righteous shall have in heaven an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

#### XV. *Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People Understand*

¶ 30. It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God and the custom of the primitive Church to have public prayer in the Church or to minister the sacrament in a tongue not understood by the people.

#### XVI. *Of the Church*

¶ 31. The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of pure men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments are duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

#### XVII. *Of the Sacraments*

¶ 32. Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but also they are certain signs of grace, and of God's good will toward us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him.

#### XVIII. *Of Baptism*

¶ 33. Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others who are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.



XIX. *Of the Lord's Supper*

¶ 34. The Supper of the Lord is not merely a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death, insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but it is repugnant to the plain word of the Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner; and the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

XX. *Of the One Oblation of Christ, Finished upon the Cross*

¶ 35. The offering of Christ, once made, is a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of the masses, in the which it is said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous and dangerous deceit.

XXI. *Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches*

¶ 36. It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are or-



dained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren. Every particular church may ordain, change or abolish rites and ceremonies so that all things may be done to edification.

#### XXII. *Of Christian Men's Goods*

¶ 37. The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor according to his ability.

#### XXIII. *Of a Christian Man's Oath*

¶ 38. As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James the apostle; so we hold that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth in a case of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

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NOTE: This article shall not deprive of membership in our church those who have conscientious scruples against taking an oath.



## DIVISION II

### GENERAL RULES

#### Nature, Design and General Rules of Our United Societies\*

¶ 39. In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday in the evening. To these and as many more as desired to join with them, for their number increased daily, he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

¶ 40. This was the rise of the "United Society," first in Europe, and then in America. Such a society is no other than "a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

¶ 41. That it may be the more easily discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, ac-

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\*The United Societies, founded in the United States by the apostolic Asbury, were organized into the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784. The terms "society" and "societies" have always been retained in the Methodist Discipline, however, being used in the sense of church and churches. These terms have also always been used with the same signification in the Free Methodist Discipline.

The historical statement in Par. 39, as well as most of what follows, is in the words of John Wesley.—Editors of the Discipline of 1911 and 1947.



according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the leader. It is his duty,

I. To see each person in his class once a week, at least, in order,

1. To inquire how their souls prosper.

2. To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require.

3. To receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor.\*

II. To meet the minister of the circuit, in order to inform him of any who are sick, or of any who walk disorderly and will not be reproved.

¶ 42. There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies—"a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits.

¶ 43. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced; such as,

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning of the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors; or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

The buying, selling, or holding of a human being as a slave.

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking things on usury—that is, unlawful interest.

\*This part refers wholly to towns and cities, where the poor are generally numerous, and church expenses considerable. (This note, dating from 1789, was an attempt to adapt to the American frontier a rule designed originally for Methodists in England.)



Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God; as,

Belonging to secret societies.

The putting on of gold or costly apparel.\*

The taking of such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Singing those songs or reading those books which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness or needless self-indulgence, especially snuffing, chewing, smoking, growing, manufacturing or selling tobacco, or the habitual use of opiates.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

¶ 44. It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Second, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort and as far as possible to all men.

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping those who are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all with whom they have any intercourse, trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to do it."

By doing good, especially to those who are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying of one another, helping one another in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only.

By all possible diligence, and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily; sub-

\*This rule applies to the wearing of finger rings of any kind. See Paragraphs 406 and 532.



## DIVISION III

### ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

#### I. Pastoral Charges, Quarterly and Annual Conferences

##### ARTICLE I. *Pastoral Charges*

¶ 47. The lay membership of the church shall be divided into local societies, one or more of which shall constitute a pastoral charge.

##### ARTICLE II. *Districts and Quarterly Conferences*

¶ 48. The pastoral charges embraced within each annual conference shall be grouped into districts, and a quarterly conference shall be organized in each district, composed of such official members of the several pastoral charges and invested with such powers as the General Conference shall direct.

##### ARTICLE III. *Annual Conferences*

¶ 49. The General Conference shall organize the work at large into annual conferences, of which the preachers (not being members of any local societies) shall be permanent members; and to which, at each session, one lay delegate shall be admitted from each pastoral charge, and in case there be more than one preacher in full membership appointed to a pastoral charge, such pastoral charge shall be entitled to one additional lay delegate for every such additional preacher.

#### II. The General Conference

##### ARTICLE I. *Of Whom Composed*

¶ 50. The General Conference shall be composed of the bishops and ministerial and lay delegates, to be chosen as hereinafter provided.

##### ARTICLE II. *Ministerial Delegates*

¶ 51. 1. Each annual conference shall be entitled to one ministerial delegate in the General Conference, and when-



ever an annual conference shall reach an aggregate of eight hundred full members, it shall be entitled to two ministerial delegates, and to an additional ministerial delegate for every subsequent six hundred full members, provided, however, that in no case shall a preacher be counted more than once in the election of delegates.

2. The ministerial delegates shall be elected by the ministers of the annual conference by ballot. Such delegates shall be elders, and at the time of their election, as also at the time of the General Conference, shall be members of the annual conference which elected them.\*

### ARTICLE III. *Lay Delegates*

¶ 52. 1. Each annual conference shall be entitled to the same number of lay as of ministerial delegates in the General Conference.

2. Lay delegates to the General Conference shall be elected by the lay delegates of the annual conferences they are respectively to represent. They shall be elected by ballot, from the members of the church in full relation within the bounds of the annual conferences to which they respectively belong, and must be members of the church within the conference which elected them at the time of the General Conference.\*

### ARTICLE IV. *Credentials*

¶ 53. The secretaries of the several annual conferences shall furnish certificates of election to the delegates severally, signed by the president and secretary of each annual conference, as the credentials upon which they are to be admitted to the General Conference.

### ARTICLE V. *Sessions*

¶ 54. 1. The General Conference shall meet on the second Wednesday in June, in every fourth year from the year 1903 (which was the forty-first year of its existence as a delegated General Conference, it having previously met every fourth year from 1862, in October, and the change having been made

\*See Paragraphs 87-90.



by the General Conference of 1898), and at such time and place as shall have been determined by the preceding General Conference, or by the Board of Administration, which shall also have the power, in case of emergency, to change the time and place for the meeting of the General Conference.

2. The bishop or bishops, or if there be none, the secretary of the General Conference, shall, whenever two thirds of the annual conferences shall demand it, call an extra session of the General Conference, fixing the date thereof and the time of assembling later than the next ensuing session of each of the annual conferences.

#### ARTICLE VI. *Presiding Officers*

¶ 55. The General Conference shall elect, by ballot one or more traveling elders to the office of bishop; and the bishops shall preside at various sittings of the General Conference in such order as they may determine; but in case no bishop be present, the General Conference shall elect, by ballot, an elder as president pro tem. In case of the election of a new bishop or bishops the term of office of such bishop or bishops shall begin at the close of the General Conference session at which they were elected.

#### ARTICLE VII. *Missionary Bishop*

¶ 56. The General Conference may elect a missionary bishop or bishops, whose duties and official relation shall be confined to the field to which they are respectively elected.

#### ARTICLE VIII. *Other Officers*

¶ 57. 1. The General Conference shall elect, by ballot, a secretary, an editor of the *Free Methodist*, an editor of our Sunday-school literature, a missionary secretary, and such other officers as it shall decide upon. The secretary of the General Conference shall continue in office until his successor is elected, and shall be the custodian of the General Conference records, journal and seal.

2. The General Conference may elect, by ballot, one or more General Conference evangelists.



ARTICLE IX. *Board of Administration*

¶ 58. 1. The General Conference shall elect one traveling elder and one lay member from each of the General Conference administrative districts, a majority of whom shall be members of the General Conference which elects them and who with the bishops and the secretary of the General Conference shall constitute the Board of Administration.

2. The Board of Administration shall constitute the Board of Conference Claimants, the General Missionary Board, the Board of Education, the Sunday School Board, the Board of Evangelism, the Board of Charities and Benevolences, the Church Extension Society, and the Church and Parsonage Aid Society, and shall have general supervision of all of the activities of the Church during the intervals of the General Conference.

ARTICLE X. *Quorum*

¶ 59. At all times when the General Conference is in session, it shall require two thirds of all the delegates elected by the annual conferences to form a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time, until a quorum is obtained.

ARTICLE XI. *Voting*

¶ 60. The members of the General Conference shall deliberate and vote as one body; nevertheless, upon the call of one third of the members present and voting, the house shall divide; and it shall require a majority of the ministerial and of the lay delegates to pass any vote or transact any business, provided, nevertheless, that for changes of the constitution, a vote of two thirds of the General Conference shall be sufficient.\*

ARTICLE XII. *Powers and Restrictions*

¶ 61. The General Conference shall have full power to make rules and regulations for the Free Methodist Church, under the following limitations and restrictions:

\*The last part of Par. 60, providing that "for changes of the constitution a vote of two thirds of the General Conference shall be sufficient," applies to all of the constitution except the restrictive rules in Par. 61.



## Par. 62 ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

1. The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our articles of religion, or the general rules of the united societies, or establish any standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

2. It shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away with lay representation, or an itinerant ministry, or the general superintendency, or the free-seat system in our churches.

3. It shall not have the power to deprive our preachers or members of the right of trial by an impartial committee, or of the right of an appeal.

### ARTICLE XIII. *Amendments*

¶ 62. The concurrent recommendation of three fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences, who shall be present and vote on such recommendation, shall suffice to authorize the next ensuing General Conference, by a two-thirds vote, to alter any of the foregoing restrictive rules, except the last; and also whenever such alteration, or alterations, shall have been recommended first by a two-thirds vote of the General Conference, then so soon as three fourths of the members of the several annual conferences, who were present and voted on such recommendation, or recommendations, shall have concurred therein, such alteration, or alterations, shall take effect.\*

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\*Par. 62 refers solely to the amendment of the three restrictive rules in Par. 61.



**PART II**  
**THE CHURCH**



## **CHAPTERS**

- I. SPECIAL ADVICES**
- II. MEMBERSHIP**
- III. WORSHIP**



## CHAPTER I

### SPECIAL ADVICES

#### I. Temperance

¶ 63. A spirit of self-denial is indispensable to Christian character. A large proportion of the crime and pauperism of the country is caused by strong drink. The Spirit of Christ never leads one to countenance the use or sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage.

¶ 64. The stewards on all our circuits shall make provision to use the unfermented juice of the grape in celebrating the Lord's Supper. In no case shall intoxicating wine be used for this purpose.

¶ 65. Every man of God should break away from party trammels, and never knowingly give his vote or influence to elect any man to office who will use his official or personal influence to legalize the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a beverage. As Christians we are bound to do all we can to prohibit by law this nefarious traffic.

#### II. Marriage and Divorce

¶ 66. We do not prohibit our people from marrying persons who are not members of our church, provided such persons give evidence of being converted to God; but we are determined to discourage their marrying those who do not come up to this standard.

¶ 67. Some of our members have married with unsaved persons. This has produced bad effects. They have either been hindered for life or have turned back to perdition. To discourage such marriages: 1. Every preacher shall publicly enforce the apostle's command, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6: 14). 2. All should be exhorted never to marry without advising with some of the more serious of their brethren.

¶ 68. In general a woman ought not to marry without the consent of her parents. Yet there may be exceptions. For if, (1) A woman believes it to be her duty to marry,



and if, (2) Her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any Christian, then she may, nay, ought to marry without their consent.

¶ 69. We recognize no other ground for divorce than that permitted in the word of God (Matt. 5:32; Mark 10: 11, 12). Any person guilty of a violation of this law shall have no place among us.

¶ 70. Our preachers shall not officiate at the marriage of any person who is under eighteen years of age, unless the parents or guardians be present or have given written consent, and unless at least two witnesses, knowing the contracting persons, be present. They shall refuse to officiate at the marriage of divorced persons, unless furnished with satisfactory evidence that they are not violating the law of divorce recognized in the preceding paragraph.

### III. Dress

¶ 71. We insist on the rules concerning dress. This is no time to give encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore, receive none into the church till they have left off superfluous ornaments. In order to this: 1. Every one who has charge of a circuit shall read Mr. Wesley's sermon on dress at least once a year in every society. 2. In visiting the classes be very mild but very strict. 3. Allow no exempt case; better one suffer than many.

### IV. Secret Societies

¶ 72. 1. Voluntary associations are not necessarily sinful because they are secret. But secrecy is always a ground of suspicion. Evil works instinctively incline to darkness. Good works grow up in light. God commands us to let our light shine. Even a good cause under the shadow of secrecy invalidates its claim to the confidence of open and honest men. Grace and guile can have no affinity. All secrets necessary to be kept can be kept without an oath. A bad institution should not, and a good one need not, be secret. Philanthropic associations claiming our co-operation on Christian grounds, must do so with open face. They must lift the veil while demanding our salutation, or we cannot



salute them by the way. Therefore, all secret societies are to be eschewed.

2. Any society requiring an oath, affirmation, or promise of secrecy, as a condition of membership, is held to be a secret society; and any member joining or continuing in one violates his covenant obligations, and shall in due form be excluded from the church; and the preacher shall report that he is excluded for infraction of our rules and regulations.

¶ 73. 1. We would not oppose the open and honest organization of the laboring classes seeking in a proper way their betterment without injuring others or violating the inherent rights of any. But we are opposed to pledged or oath-bound secrecy, coercion, lawlessness, or any other evil in their organization; and we prohibit our members from joining labor unions or other societies demanding an oath-bound pledge of secrecy as a condition of membership. Yet, otherwise, we recognize their inherent right to hold membership in labor organizations. And wherever they cannot on account of required oath-bound pledges of secrecy be members of the labor union, if merely upon the payment of regular dues they are allowed to work free from the use of coercion, we grant them the privilege of doing so.

2. The Executive Commission of the Board of Administration shall constitute a Board of Industrial Relations the duty of which is to furnish information and render decisions upon all matters of industrial relations. To this Board should be committed all questions, communications, and papers relating to labor unions or membership in them. This Board shall, wherever practicable, constitute a collective bargaining agency on behalf of the members of our church.

#### V. Militarism and War

¶ 73a. 1. Militarism is contrary to the spirit of the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Even from humanitarian principles alone it is utterly indefensible. It is our profound conviction that none of our people should be required to enter military training or to bear arms except in time of national peril, and that the consciences



of our individual members should be respected. Therefore we claim exemption from the bearing of arms for all members of our church who are conscientious objectors.

2. The secretary of each annual conference shall keep a proper register containing names, addresses, and dates of declaration of all members of the church within his conference who declare themselves to be conscientious objectors; and he shall make a prompt report of these declarations to the secretary of the General Conference, who shall keep a complete record of them. (See Par. 96.)



## CHAPTER II

### MEMBERSHIP

#### I. Reception on Probation

¶ 74. None shall be admitted on probation until they give evidence of a desire to flee from the wrath to come, by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, and give affirmative answers to the following questions: 1. Have you the assurance of sins forgiven? 2. Do you consent to be governed by our general rules?

#### II. Admission into Full Membership

¶ 75. None shall be received into full membership unless they give evidence of a renewed heart by living up to the requirements of the general rules; have met in class six months on probation; have been baptized, and, if baptized in infancy, have publicly assented to the baptismal covenant; have, wherever practicable, been recommended by the official members of the society; and give satisfactory answers to the following questions, which shall be proposed to them before the society or public meeting of the church:

1. Have you the witness of the Spirit that you are a child of God?

2. Have you that perfect love which casteth out fear?

(If the candidate shall answer no, then this question shall be asked, Will you diligently seek until you obtain it?)

3. Is it your purpose to devote yourself the remainder of your life wholly to the service of God, doing good to your fellow men, and working out your own salvation with fear and trembling?

4. Will you forever lay aside all superfluous ornaments, and adorn yourself in modest apparel, not with gold, nor pearls, nor costly array, but which becometh those professing godliness, with good works?

5. Will you abstain from connection with all secret societies, keeping yourself free to follow the will of the Lord in all things?



6. Do you subscribe to our articles of religion, our general rules, and our DISCIPLINE, and are you willing to be governed by the same?

7. Have you Christian fellowship and love for the members of this society, and will you assist them, as God shall give you ability, in carrying on the work of the Lord?

¶76. 1. The person giving affirmative answers to the questions above shall, with the consent of three fourths of the members present, be admitted to all the privileges of membership. Any person in good standing in any evangelical church may be received into full membership upon his meeting the other requirements of this chapter, without his having been on probation in our church.

2. All members in full connection under sixteen years of age shall be known as Junior members. They shall be exempt from all claims and apportionments made by the General Conference. Their number shall be kept in a separate column in the statistical report, and no society shall be apportioned claims for them. They are not eligible to vote in business meetings.

¶77. A society already organized, or several persons designing to unite with the Free Methodist Church and form a new society, should adopt the DISCIPLINE as a whole, and then admit each person in his individual capacity upon his answering the questions in Par. 75 and by the consent of three fourths of the persons forming the society.

¶78. Any member who withdraws from the church with no complaints pending against him at the time, may, by a recommendation of the official board and a three-fourths vote of the society from which he withdrew, be reinstated in full membership without being required to serve on probation, provided that he make request to the pastor of the society within one year of the date of withdrawal.

### III. Transfer of Membership by Certificate

¶79. 1. No person who wishes to leave our church without uniting with another society or church is entitled to a certificate of membership.

2. Every member in good standing desirous of moving to another circuit or uniting with another evangelical church



is entitled to a certificate of good standing and, upon requesting it, shall have it issued to him.

3. None is to move from one circuit to another without a certificate from the preacher in charge, in these words:

"A. B., the bearer, wishing to remove from this society, we hereby certify that ..... is an acceptable member of the Free Methodist Church in ..... and cordially commend ..... to the Free Methodist Church in ....., or in any other place. When admitted to another society ..... membership in this society shall cease. This certificate is good for one year only, unless renewed." Without this certificate, no one is to be received into the church in another place.

When a pastor gives such a certificate of membership, he shall at once give notice of the fact to the pastor of the society to which the certificate is addressed. If the member so transferring be an exhorter, an evangelist, a local preacher, a local ordained deacon, or a local elder, it shall be so stated on the certificate.

A member holding a certificate shall remain a member of and be amenable to the society from which the certificate was taken, until the certificate is received in another place. After that he shall be responsible to his new society for his conduct during the time he held the certificate.

It shall be the duty of the preacher receiving the certificate to notify the preacher who gave it in these words: "You are hereby notified that A. B. has been duly enrolled as a member of this society upon a certificate issued by the society of which you are the pastor. Signed ....."

4. A certificate given to a member of our church who wishes to unite with another evangelical denomination shall read as follows: "A. B., the bearer, wishing to become a member of another evangelical church, we hereby certify that ..... has been an acceptable member of the Free Methodist Church, and cordially commend ..... to the fellowship of any such church with which ..... may desire to unite. H..... membership in the Free Methodist Church ceases when this certificate is given."

5. A probationer may be transferred to another society



by the preacher giving a certificate of transfer in the following words:

“A. B., the bearer, a probationer, having been received on probation on the ..... day of ..... in the year ....., and wishing to remove from this society, we hereby certify that ..... is an acceptable probationer of the Free Methodist Church in ..... and cordially commend ..... to the Free Methodist Church in ..... or in any other place. When admitted to another society ..... membership in this society shall cease. This certificate is good for one year only.”

6. No supply in charge of a circuit shall issue a certificate of transfer of his own membership without the consent of his district superintendent.



## CHAPTER III

### WORSHIP

#### I. Order of Public Worship

¶ 80. For the establishment of uniformity in public worship among us on the Lord's day: 1. The morning and afternoon service shall consist of singing, prayer, reading of the Scriptures and preaching. 2. The evening service shall consist of singing, prayer and preaching. 3. On the days of administering the Lord's Supper, the reading of the Scriptures in the morning service may be omitted. 4. In administering the ordinances and in the burial of the dead, we recommend that the form of the DISCIPLINE be used. We advise that the Lord's prayer also be used on occasions of public worship in concluding the first prayer, and the apostolic benediction in dismissing the congregation; also that the official members of each society appoint some qualified person to lead the singing at the morning and evening services. 5. The preachers should join as one man and enlarge on the impropriety of irreverent and secular conversation before and after service, and strongly exhort those who are concerned to do it no more. If the people assemble before the hour of service, or remain after it, let the time be improved in singing, prayer and testimony.

#### II. Music

¶ 81. We should guard against formality in singing. Therefore,

1. Choose such hymns as are proper for the occasion, and do not sing too much at once—seldom more than four or five stanzas.

2. Have the tune suited to the sentiment, and do not suffer the people to sing too slow.

3. In every society it shall be the duty of the preacher in charge to see that due attention be given to the cultivation of vocal and sacred music.



4. If he, himself, can not sing, let one or two be chosen in each society to lead the singing.

5. As singing is a part of divine worship, in which all ought to unite, therefore exhort every person in the congregation to sing.

6. Let the preacher in charge see that the *Free Methodist Hymnal* is used in the Sunday morning services. If found impracticable, however, this rule may be waived where shaped notes are in use.

7. When a two-thirds majority of the local society has so voted, a musical instrument may be used in our public worship, subject to the following conditions and restrictions. Let there be no choir singing or more than one musical instrument used in public worship. It is expressly understood that this one instrument shall be either a piano or an organ. Let no person other than a Christian whose character, appearance, and deportment conform to our DISCIPLINE, play the instrument.

The question of the use of instrumental music may be voted upon but once during a conference year, and then only at a society meeting duly called for that purpose and announced at least ten days in advance.

### III. Love Feasts

¶ 82. A love feast shall be held on each circuit at least once in three months.

### IV. Classes and Class Meetings

¶ 83. The chapter on general rules says of those who compose our societies: That it may be the more easily discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the leader. It is his duty,

1. To see each person in his class once a week at least; in order, (1) To inquire how their souls prosper. (2) To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require.

2. To meet the minister of the circuit in order to inform



him of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reprov'd.

3. The class meeting shall be separate and distinct from the usual testimony meeting, and shall be held whenever practicable on the Sabbath day.

¶ 84. Where there is more than one class in a society there shall be a general class once a month.

¶ 85. 1. When any member of our church willfully and repeatedly neglects to meet his class, the preacher in charge, his assistant, or the leader should visit him, whenever it is practicable, and explain to him the consequences if he continues to neglect, namely, censure, suspension, and, finally, expulsion. If he does not amend he should be brought to trial for neglect of duty.

2. If a member lives at a great distance from the class to which he belongs and is unable to attend, he shall, once a quarter, send to the leader or preacher testimony of his religious state. If he fails to do this or to contribute to the financial obligations of his society, he may at the end of one year, by order of the official board, be recorded on the register as "Removed without a letter." If he afterward claims membership, the official board shall restore it.







**PART III**  
**OFFICIAL BODIES**



## CHAPTERS

- I. THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
- II. THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION
- III. THE EXECUTIVE COMMISSION
- IV. THE COMMISSION ON MISSIONS
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## CHAPTER I

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

(For parallel legislation see Paragraphs 50-62.)

¶ 86. "It is desired that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God; that every person speak freely whatever is in his heart. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on our labor." John Wesley, *Large Minutes*.

¶ 87. The General Conference shall be composed of the bishops and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates, to be elected by the annual conferences, at their last sessions prior to the session of the General Conference, except that conferences held within three months of the General Conference may elect their delegates the year before.

¶ 88. Each annual conference shall be entitled to one ministerial and one lay delegate in the General Conference; and whenever an annual conference shall reach an aggregate membership of eight hundred in full relation it shall be entitled to two ministerial and two lay delegates, and one additional delegate of each kind for every subsequent six hundred members in full relation within the conference, provided, that preachers shall not be counted more than once in the election of delegates.

¶ 89. Mission conferences may elect delegates to the General Conference as provided in Paragraphs 138, Sec. 2; 148, Sec. 1; 150a, VII, 1.

¶ 90. In electing delegates to the General Conference, preachers and lay members shall elect separately, by ballot; the preachers from the elders in full membership in the conference and the lay delegates from persons in full membership in the church within the bounds of the conference. Ministerial delegates must, at the time of the



General Conference session, be members of the conference and lay delegates members of the church within the bounds of the conference which elected them.

¶ 91. Whenever two thirds of the annual conferences demand it, the bishop or bishops, or, if there be none, the secretary of the General Conference, shall call an extra session of the General Conference, fixing the date thereof and the time of assembling, later than the next ensuing session of each of the annual conferences.

¶ 92. The next quadrennial session of the General Conference shall be held in June, 1951, or as near that time as may be determined by the Board of Administration. (For more specific directions, see Par. 54.)

¶ 93. Quorum. It shall take two thirds of all the delegates elected by the annual conferences to form a quorum of the General Conference to transact business, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

¶ 94. One of the bishops shall preside in the General Conference; but should no bishop be present, the General Conference shall elect by ballot an elder as president pro tem.

¶ 95. 1. Each General Conference shall elect by ballot one or more traveling elders as bishops, a secretary, an editor of the *Free Methodist*, an editor of Sunday-school literature, a missionary secretary, a general Sunday-school secretary, a superintendent of the Young People's Missionary Society, and a general evangelistic secretary. It may elect one or more general evangelists and one or more missionary bishops. The duties and official relations of missionary bishops shall be confined to the fields to which they are elected.

A general officer may retire when he reaches the age of seventy years. Otherwise he shall retire after the election of his successor at the end of the General Conference nearest his seventy-fifth birthday. (See Par. 207, Sec. 12, for further particulars upon the retirement of bishops.)

2. The General Conference shall elect one traveling elder and one layman from each of the General Conference



administrative districts, who, with the bishops and the secretary of the General Conference, shall constitute the Board of Administration. The elective members of the Board, a majority of whom must be members of the General Conference electing them, shall first have been nominated by the delegates from their General Conference administrative districts. In making the nominations the delegates of a district shall vote for the minister and the layman upon the same ballot.

¶ 96. The General Conference may, if it so desires, elect as its secretary one who is not a member of that body. The secretary shall continue in office until his successor is elected and shall be custodian of the General Conference records and journals. He shall also keep a record of conscientious objectors reported to him by the annual conference secretaries as ordered in Par. 73a, Sec. 2.

¶ 97. The members of the General Conference shall deliberate and vote as one body; nevertheless, upon a call of one third of the members present and voting, the house shall divide; and it shall require a majority of the ministerial and a majority of the lay delegates present to pass any motion or transact any business.

¶ 98. The General Conference shall have full power to make rules and regulations for our church, under the following limitations and restrictions:

1. The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our articles of religion or the general rules of the united societies, or establish any new standard or rules of doctrine contrary to our present, existing, and established standards of doctrine.

2. It shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away with lay representation or an itinerant ministry or general superintendency or the free-seat system in our churches.

3. It shall not have power to deprive our preachers or laymen of the right of trial by an impartial committee, and of an appeal.

¶ 99. Provided, nevertheless, that upon the concurrent recommendation of three fourths of all the members of the



several annual conferences present and voting on the recommendation, then a majority of two thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter either of the first two sections of Par. 98; and also whenever such alteration has been first recommended by two thirds of the General Conference, as soon as three fourths of the members of all the annual conferences have concurred as aforesaid, the alteration shall take effect.

¶ 100. 1. It shall be the duty of every preacher in charge of a circuit to raise annually for General Conference expenses, such as entertainment of delegates, traveling expenses of delegates to and from General Conference, and miscellaneous expenses incident to the General Conference, such an amount for each member in full connection, sixteen years of age or over, as shall be determined by the Executive Commission. Should any conference be deficient in its assessment during the quadrennium, the deficiency shall be deducted from the expenses payable to its delegates to the General Conference.

2. We recommend that our people observe the Friday preceding each General Conference as a day of fasting and prayer.

¶ 101. It is the inalienable right of any annual conference, district quarterly conference, society, or individual member of the Free Methodist Church, to submit protests, petitions, or memorials to the General Conference and to have them fully heard. Such papers must be introduced by a member of the General Conference and be subject to the rules of that body.



## CHAPTER II

### BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

¶ 102. The Board of Administration shall consist of the bishops, the secretary of the General Conference, twelve traveling elders and twelve lay members elected in the manner prescribed in Paragraphs 58 and 95. No General Conference officer other than the bishops and the secretary shall be a member of the Board of Administration. The senior bishop shall be president, and the secretary of the General Conference secretary of the Board; but should there be no bishop to serve, then the Board of Administration shall elect an elder from its members to preside.

¶ 103. 1. The Board of Administration shall have general supervision of all the activities of the church during the intervals of the General Conference. It shall meet annually and whenever else the bishops or one third of the members shall deem it necessary. A majority of the members elected shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

2. The Board of Administration shall have power to accept resignations, to remove for cause any of its members or any of the General Conference officers during the interim of the General Conference, and to fill vacancies occurring either in its own body or in any of the General Conference elective offices, subject to the provisions of the DISCIPLINE. The Board of Administration shall fill any vacancy which may occur in the Board of Bishops during the first two years of the quadrennium.

3. The Board of Administration shall meet immediately at the close of the General Conference and organize itself into four commissions to be called the Executive Commission, the Commission on Missions, the Commission on Christian Education, and the Commission on Evangelism, Charities, Charitable Institutions, and Church Extension. Members elected from the same administrative district shall not serve on the same commission.

4. The Executive Commission shall consist of one bishop



and six other persons. The Commission on Missions shall consist of one bishop and eight other persons, two of whom shall be women elected by the Woman's Missionary Society. The Commission on Christian Education shall consist of one bishop and six other persons. The Commission on Evangelism, Charities, Charitable Institutions, and Church Extension shall consist of one bishop and six other persons.

5. It shall be the duty of the secretary of the Board of Administration to make a full report of its proceedings during the quadrennium to the General Conference.

6. The Board of Administration shall elect a finance committee of five business men, who shall have charge of the investment of the church funds, including the funds to be invested by the several commissions. No treasurer of these church funds shall be a member of this committee. No member of the committee shall be eligible to borrow directly or indirectly or to participate in the benefits of any money borrowed from the funds of the church. The finance committee shall not invest the trust funds of the church in any investments except such as are lawful for the investment of trust funds in the state in which the Free Methodist Church may be incorporated.

7. The Board of Administration shall employ a general church treasurer; a publishing agent, who shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church; and, when they deem it necessary, an assistant publishing agent and such other officers or employees as the General Conference orders.

8. All of the commissions and the Woman's Missionary Society shall make and file annually their financial statements with the secretary of the Board of Administration.

9. The secretaries of the departments of the church shall meet with the commissions to which their work is assigned.

10. The Board shall provide rules and regulations for the conduct of its business.

11. If for any cause a member of the Board of Administration ceases to be a member of the Free Methodist Church his membership on the board shall thereupon cease.

¶ 104. The annual conferences shall be grouped in twelve



General Conference administrative districts as follows: No. 1—Genesee, East Ontario. No. 2—Oil City, West Ontario. No. 3—Susquehanna, Ohio, Maryland-Virginia. No. 4—Pittsburgh, New York. No. 5—Michigan, North Michigan. No. 6—North Indiana, East Michigan. No. 7—Wabash, Illinois. No. 8—Kentucky and Tennessee, Oklahoma, Missouri, Ozark, Texas, Louisiana, Georgia and Florida. No. 9—Colorado, Kansas, West Kansas, Dakota, West Iowa, Nebraska. No. 10—North Minnesota, Minnesota and Northern Iowa, Iowa, Central Illinois, Wisconsin. No. 11—Oregon, California, Southern California. No. 12—Saskatchewan, Alberta, Columbia River, Washington.



## CHAPTER III

### THE EXECUTIVE COMMISSION

#### I. Its Powers

¶ 105. 1. The Executive Commission shall be the Executive Committee of the Board of Administration.

2. This commission shall make all apportionments and administer funds for the bishops' salaries and for the Church and Parsonage Aid Society.

3. It shall be the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Publishing House and shall have advisory supervision of all church property.

4. The Executive Commission shall constitute the Court of Appeals, whose decision shall be final. Should any member of this court be absent or disqualified to sit, his place shall be filled pro tem by the Board of Administration from its members, or, if they are disqualified, from a list of members of the church at large approved by counsel for both sides; so that no appeal shall be heard except before a full court. The Court of Appeals shall, if necessary, hold a session once a year, for the purpose of trying all appeals that may be taken thereto by any traveling preacher from the decisions of an annual conference. The bishop who is a member of the Executive Commission shall ordinarily preside over the court; but should he be absent or disqualified, the Board of Administration shall elect one of the other bishops to preside.

5. The Executive Commission shall have the power to decide all questions of law referred to it in the interim of the General Conference. In case of any alleged legal irregularities in a trial court, wherein the court has delivered a verdict against the church, the prosecution may, upon a written recital of the irregularities, apply to the Executive Commission or to the General Conference for a writ of review, and it shall be the province of that body receiving the application to review the proceedings of the lower court as recited, and if the reviewing body finds the alleged



irregularities to exist, the case may be remanded, but only once, for a new trial.

6. The Executive Commission shall have power to make such preliminary arrangements for the public services of the General Conference as it may deem necessary.

7. The Executive Commission shall fix the salaries of the General Conference officers.

8. Deficiencies of any conference in the payment of its generally assessed claims shall be prorated to the various general funds according to the ratio of the amounts of the assessments. These deficiencies shall be deducted from benefits receivable by that conference as follows:

Deficiencies in Bishops' salaries, General Missions and Evangelistic Fund shall be deducted from the General Missions appropriations.

Deficiencies in the Conference Claimants' assessment shall be deducted pro rata from the amounts due claimants.

Deficiencies in General Conference entertainment and delegates' expenses shall be deducted from the expense allowances to delegates at the next General Conference.

Deficiencies in Church Extension and Church and Parsonage Aid shall be deducted from appropriations from either of those funds.

Such deficiencies as are not deducted or paid shall be held as a lien against subsequent appropriations. The general treasurer shall keep a record of these deficiencies and report them to the conferences which are deficient and publish them in his annual report to the Board of Administration.

9. The acts of the Executive Commission shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Administration except when it sits as an appellate court.

## II. Plan for Conference Claimants

### ¶ 106. 1. *The Conference Claimants' Fund*

The funds to be collected, administered and used for the benefit of superannuated preachers or their widows and orphans, the widows and orphans of ordained traveling preachers, and retired missionaries who have labored



under the appointment of the Commission on Missions of the Free Methodist Church, shall be known as the Conference Claimants' Fund and shall be divided into the Permanent Endowment Fund, the Administrative Fund, and the Reserve Fund.

A. The Permanent Endowment Fund shall consist of funds and investments now held and known as the Permanent Endowment Fund, and gifts, bequests, legacies and annuities which may be received for this fund.

B. The Administrative Fund shall consist of the income accruing from the Permanent Endowment Fund: gifts, bequests and legacies specifically designated for the use of the Administrative Fund; collections received from the several conferences for generally assessed claims levied by the Board of Administration for the Conference Claimants' Fund; sixty per cent annually of the net profits of the business of the Publishing House; income from the investment of Publishing House funds; and contributions received from preachers and missionaries who may become beneficiaries of the Conference Claimants' Fund, according to the provisions of Section 2.

Any annual surplus in this fund shall be transferred to the Reserve Fund; but should there be a deficit in the Administrative Fund in any year, an amount sufficient to eliminate such deficit shall be transferred from the Reserve Fund.

C. The Reserve Fund shall consist of such surpluses as may occur in the Administrative Fund from year to year, Sunday-school offerings received on Superannuate Day and gifts, bequests, legacies and annuities that may be received. The purpose of this fund is to provide a reserve to insure the payment of claims to those who become beneficiaries under the Contributive Plan. This fund shall be invested only in obligations of the United States government, the income from which shall be added to the Reserve Fund.

## 2. *The Contributive Plan*

It shall be the duty of every pastor, evangelist, district superintendent, general officer, bishop, educator, missionary, and in fact every one who will be eligible for superannuation,



to file, at the time of his annual conference, a certificate with the executive secretary of the Annual Conference Board of Claimants, hereinafter called Certificate of Income, stating the amount of his total income for that conference year, namely: all funds received for ministerial support, such as salary, special offerings, receipts for evangelistic services and any other income accruing from conference appointment and from secular employment while in active service under conference appointment. He shall also give such other information on this certificate as shall be requested by the General Board of Conference Claimants. Those under appointment as evangelists shall give such information relative to time, place of labors, income and expense as the General Board of Conference Claimants may request. Evangelists and district superintendents may deduct actual traveling expenses in excess of \$150, subject to regulations adopted by the General Board of Conference Claimants.

Contributions to the Conference Claimants' Fund shall be 2 per cent of the amount of income as shown in the Certificate of Income.

Contributions shall be paid in at the time of filing the Certificate of Income and receipt therefor shall be issued by the executive secretary of the Annual Conference Board of Claimants.

Should a preacher fail to make contribution at the time of filing his certificate and then subsequently desire to do so, interest at the rate of 4 per cent per annum shall be charged from the time the payment was due, provided the contribution is paid not later than the next ensuing session of his annual conference.

### 3. *Administrative Organization*

A. The General Board of Conference Claimants. The Board of Administration shall constitute the General Board of Conference Claimants. It shall be the duty of this board:

(1) To pass upon all claims and make final disposition of them.

(2) To draw up such regulations and prepare such blanks as are necessary to the proper and efficient admin-



istration of the work of the board and the operation of the Conference Claimants' Fund.

(3) To estimate the amount necessary to be raised in addition to endowment and other income, to pay the claimants and apportion the amount pro rata upon the entire membership of the church. To the apportionment shall be added an amount of not less than ten cents per member to aid in building up the Endowment Fund.

B. The General Executive Secretary. The executive secretary of the General Board shall be employed by the Board of Administration. It shall be his duty:

(1) To keep a record of all the proceedings of the General Board and make a report of them to the General Conference.

(2) To receive, audit, classify, file, and be custodian of all Claimants' Applications, Annual Claimants' Certificates and Certificates of Income.

(3) In the interim of the meetings of the General Board to receive and pass upon emergency claims, subject to action by the board.

(4) To adjust amounts due on claims of deceased claimants.

(5) To keep a record of all claims allowed and payments made on them.

(6) To direct the activities of the annual conference executive secretaries, and supply them with such forms and other record materials as are necessary.

(7) To receive and credit to the individual preachers' accounts the contributions forwarded to him and, having made a complete record of them, forward them to the general church treasurer.

(8) To travel through the church and assist in promoting the Conference Claimants' Fund under the direction of the General Board of Conference Claimants.

(9) To perform such other duties as shall devolve upon him as executive secretary.

C. The Annual Conference Board of Claimants. Each annual conference shall elect an Annual Conference Board of Claimants of not less than three or more than seven members. The presiding bishop or his appointee shall be



ex officio chairman of this board during the session of the annual conference. It shall be the duty of this Annual Conference Board of Claimants:

(1) To elect from its number an executive secretary who shall be the executive officer of the board in the interim of the annual conferences. The annual conference, however, may elect the executive secretary if it so desires.

(2) To study all claims and recommend to the annual conference the amount of each claim. In no case, however, shall income from insurance or life savings be considered a reason for reducing any claim in which contributive service constitutes all or part of the service record.

(3) To study all Certificates of Income, rate them on the basis of activity or service unhampered by secular employment, and report the ratings to the annual conference, which shall have final jurisdiction.

(4) To receive emergency claims in the interim of annual conferences and recommend them directly to the General Board of Conference Claimants. These emergency claims shall be only temporary and must be submitted to the next session of the annual conference for recommendation to the General Board.

(5) It shall be the duty of the executive secretary of the annual conference board to assist the general executive secretary in promoting the interests of the Claimants' Plan in his conference. He shall see that the Certificates of Income are properly filled out and submitted by the preachers of his conference, issue receipts for contributions paid on them, and remit such funds to the general executive secretary as soon as possible. He shall also receive all Claimants' Applications and Annual Claimants' Certificates; see that they are properly filled out with all necessary information; and transmit them, together with the Certificates of Income, to the general executive secretary after they have been properly acted upon and certified.

#### 4. *Classification of Claimants*

Claimants against the Conference Claimants' Fund shall be classified as follows:



A. Superannuated preachers of the traveling connection whose wives are living.

B. Superannuated preachers of the traveling connection who are bachelors, spinsters, unmarried widowers or unmarried widows.

C. Unmarried widows of superannuates or preachers of the traveling connection.

D. Orphans of preachers or superannuates of the traveling connection.

E. Missionaries, or their widows and orphans, who have served under the appointment of the Commission on Missions in foreign fields and who are not full members of an annual conference in the United States or Canada.

#### 5. *Schedule of Benefits to Claimants*

Benefits to claimants shall be paid according to the following schedule, and no claim shall be allowed in excess of or contrary to the regular disciplinary allowance. For those who began effective service at the time of their annual conferences in 1935 or subsequently, the allowance shall be based upon the number of years of effective and contributive service only.

A. The allowance to claimants who come under Classification A in Section 4 shall be at the rate of \$10 per year of effective and contributive service up to a maximum of 36 years, making a full claim of \$360 per year.

B. The allowance to claimants who come under Classifications B and C in Section 4 shall be at the rate of \$7 per year of effective and contributive service up to a maximum of 36 years, making a full claim of \$252 per year.

C. For those coming under Classification D of Section 4, the Annual Conference Board of Claimants shall estimate an amount, not to exceed \$36 per annum, for each child under the age of sixteen years.

D. For those coming under Classification E of Section 4, the amount allowed shall be recommended by the Commission on Missions in accordance with the schedules in this Section.

E. For those who already had effective service records at the time of their annual conferences in 1935 and who



superannuate thereafter, the allowance shall be based upon the number of years of effective service prior to the end of the conference year in 1935, provided that not more than 25 such years may be counted for those in Class A, nor more than 28 years for those in Classes B and C, and upon the number of years of effective and contributive service thereafter, up to the maximum number of years allowed altogether as stated in schedules A and B.

F. The allowance for those who come under Classification C of Section 4, and who were married before the General Conference of 1931, shall be computed upon the basis of the husband's effective and/or contributive service as provided in the schedule in this section.

G. For those who were eligible as claimants under any classification in Section 4 at the close of the conference year in 1935, the allowance shall be figured at \$10 per year of effective service for Classification A and \$7 per year for Classifications B and C; provided, however, that the amount of the claim shall not be less than the amount received during the conference year 1934-35 nor more than the maximum allowance under the law in effect prior to the General Conference of 1935; and provided further, that no Class B or C claimant shall be eligible to receive more than \$200.

#### 6. *General Regulations*

A. By "effective service" is meant the time actually employed by a preacher as directed by his conference subsequent to the time he was received into the full traveling connection. By "effective and contributive service" is meant the time actually employed in "effective service" during which he contributes his ratable portion of the amount shown on his Certificate of Income.

(1) Ministerial candidates while in college training shall not be rated effective unless duly appointed and in active service under conference supervision.

(2) If a preacher shall take a certificate of location and subsequently be restored to conference membership, the years of effective, or effective and contributive service, prior to location may be restored by the General Board



only upon the following conditions: that not more than ten years have elapsed since his location, that he has remained a member of the Free Methodist Church during the time of location, that the conference which granted the certificate of location recommends the restoration, and that the restoration is to enable him to return to effective service.

(3) If a preacher withdraws from the church or is expelled, all rights and claims are forfeited; and should he be readmitted to the church and conference, and afterward be superannuated, the years prior to his withdrawal or expulsion shall not be restored to his service record.

(4) If a preacher who has had effective service under the Commission on Missions joins an annual conference in full connection after serving on probation, his years of service on probation may be counted in his service record upon the recommendation of his annual conference, provided he has fulfilled the other requirements for effective and contributive service.

(5) If, subsequently to the General Conference of 1931, a minister marries while a member of an annual conference and before he is superannuated, the claim allowed his widow shall be based only upon the years she labored with him in effective and contributive service.

B. (1) Claimants shall receive benefits only so long as they remain members of the Free Methodist Church.

(2) No minister shall be eligible as a claimant until he has reached the age of sixty-five years except when, in the opinion of the General Board of Conference Claimants, mental or physical disability disqualifies him for service.

(3) Widows of preachers and superannuates shall receive benefits from the Conference Claimants' Fund only so long as they remain single.

C. (1) Each claimant must file an original Claimant's Application in duplicate on forms provided by the General Board of Conference Claimants, containing such information as the board deems necessary. Each subsequent year he shall file an Annual Claimant's Certificate provided by the general board, containing all pertinent information of the status of the claimant. Both of these forms shall be filed



with the executive secretary of the Annual Conference Board of Claimants in time for action at the annual conference.

(2) Each claimant shall have the right to appear in person or by counsel before the Annual Conference Board of Claimants to present his case, and to appeal an irreconcilable difference between himself and his Annual Conference Board to the General Board of Conference Claimants, where final disposition shall be made.

D. All claims shall be paid from the general treasury quarterly beginning January 2 of each year and according to the following schedule: 20% of the claim for each of the first two quarters and 30% each for the third and final quarters. The general treasurer is authorized to withhold payments for the third and fourth quarters to claimants of any conference which is in arrears in the payment of its generally assessed claims. Any amounts so withheld shall not be in excess of deficiencies as provided in Par. 105, Sec. 8.

E. The Board of Administration is empowered to amend such regulations as may be found necessary.

### III. Church and Parsonage Aid

¶ 107. 1. The Board of Administration shall constitute the General Church and Parsonage Aid Society of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

2. The object of this society shall be to aid in rebuilding partially or totally destroyed church buildings and parsonages (including barns and garages) belonging to societies and districts, and residences of superannuated preachers owned by the annual conferences.

3. This society shall publish in the *Annual Minutes* an annual report of its work and also submit a full report quadrennially to the General Conference.

4. The Annual Conference Church Extension Society shall constitute the Conference Church and Parsonage Aid Society.

5. The Conference Church and Parsonage Aid Society shall be auxiliary to the general society and shall pass upon all applications for aid arising from the loss of, or damage to, churches or parsonages within the conference.



6. The conference society shall make a full report of its work to the conference at its annual session.

7. In case of loss to a church or parsonage, it shall be the duty of the official board to appoint three persons who, with the district superintendent and the pastor of the society, shall constitute a board of appraisers. This board shall send the estimate of loss to the conference Church and Parsonage Aid Society.

8. The amount of aid given any society shall not be more than one half of the net loss, and in no case shall exceed \$1,500. However, in case both church and parsonage are destroyed wholly or in part at one time, and in case the two are in separate buildings, the allowance shall be paid for each building.

9. The Church and Parsonage Aid Fund shall protect the household goods of all ministers under appointment by, and in the active service of, the Free Methodist Church, and of all superannuated preachers, to the extent of one half of their net loss, but in no case to exceed \$350.

10. All applications for aid shall be in accordance with forms furnished by the Executive Commission.

11. The adjustment of the claim shall be upon the concurrent action of the Executive Commission and the annual conference society.

12. It shall be the duty of each preacher in charge of a circuit to raise for church and parsonage aid a sum not less than ten cents per annum for each member in full relation and forward it through the conference treasurer to the treasurer of the general society.

13. Should a conference be deficient in the payment of its assessment for this fund, the deficiency shall constitute a lien against any claim made upon the fund by a beneficiary in the conference and shall be deducted from the claim at the time payment is made by the general treasurer.

When it is impossible to deduct the lien in any one year, it shall be held over for future deduction unless the deficiency is paid by the conference.

14. In an emergency, the Executive Commission shall



have power to make a special call for funds to meet the special need.

¶ 107a. Any Free Methodist society, publishing house, minister, or recognized school or benevolent institution, desiring additional aid from this fund, other than that allowed under the preceding sections, may receive it on the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall contribute to the Church and Parsonage Aid Fund, for each one hundred dollars of special aid desired, an amount equal to 60% of the regular rates established for old line companies by the insurance board in the state and community in which the property is located.

2. Each building shall be aided under separate application to be made by the person, society, or institution desiring the aid.

3. This special aid shall be limited to

a. The actual loss, not exceeding the amount of aid applied for.

b. The net loss after allowances for insurance or protection (if any) have been paid from other sources.

4. A society which takes advantage of this "special provision," shall in addition have the benefits provided for under Paragraph 107.

5. In case of loss, the Church and Parsonage Aid Society shall have the option either to replace what is destroyed or pay in cash the aid to which the applicant is entitled.

6. No credit shall be extended to any church or institution under the provisions of this chapter. The aid hereby provided for shall automatically cease with the expiration date, unless the contributions herein provided for have been paid promptly upon the due date.

7. No application made under the provisions of this chapter shall become effective until approved by the Executive Commission.

8. The Executive Commission shall provide application blanks and agreements for special aid, and shall have power to do anything necessary to put into effect the special provisions of this chapter.



9. When a loss has been sustained by an applicant, then the Church and Parsonage Aid Society may send a special representative or employ an adjuster to adjust the claim, and the decision of the Church and Parsonage Aid Society shall be final.

10. It shall be expressly agreed and understood between the Church and Parsonage Aid Society and any applicant for special aid under the provisions of this chapter, that the agreement for special aid shall in no sense constitute a contract of insurance or indemnity, the laws of any state notwithstanding.

¶ 107b. Canadian Conferences. Any Canadian conference may, by voting to do so and by making the contributions provided for in Paragraphs 107 and 107a, receive all the benefits allowed the societies and conferences in the United States. All contributions and benefits shall be paid in Canadian currency.

#### IV. The Publishing House

¶ 108. 1. The Free Methodist Publishing House is an institution established by the Free Methodist General Conference of North America for the purpose of producing and circulating wholesome literature. It is duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois, with its business plant and official headquarters at Winona Lake, Indiana.

2. The Executive Commission shall be the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Publishing House and have general supervision of the publishing interests of the church during the interim of the General Conference sessions, and shall carefully examine into their condition. It shall not, however, have power to change the site of the Publishing House, except with the consent of three fourths of all the members of the Board of Administration who shall be present at a regularly called meeting.

3. The publishing agent shall have authority, under the supervision of the Executive Commission, to regulate the business of the Publishing House in such a manner as in his judgment the interests of the church require.

4. The publishing agent and editors shall make annual



reports to the Executive Commission and quadrennial reports to the General Conference.

5. It shall be the duty of the assistant publishing agent to co-operate with the publishing agent in planning and carrying forward the business of the Publishing House, and, in the absence of the publishing agent, to assume the ordinary duties of the publishing agent.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE COMMISSION ON MISSIONS

#### I. Objects, Membership, Officers, Duties

¶ 109. 1. The Board of Administration shall constitute the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America, an incorporated body. The objects for which this incorporation is formed are:

(1) To receive, hold, pay out, or dispose of any property, of whatever nature and wherever situate as allowed by law, that may be obtained in aid of the general missionary work of the Free Methodist Church.

(2) To acquire real estate or personal property in the United States of North America or in foreign lands, and to hold or sell or convey the same as in its judgment may be necessary in the prosecution of its missionary work.

2. The Commission on Missions shall consist of a bishop, who shall be president of the commission, and eight other members as prescribed in Par. 103, Sections 3 and 4.

3. The general church treasurer shall be the treasurer of the Commission on Missions.

4. The members of the commission shall continue in office until the close of the next session of the General Conference after their election and until others have been elected in their places. It shall have an annual meeting, a personal notice of which shall be sent to each member, and a notice, signed by the president and the secretary, shall appear in two issues of the *Free Methodist*.

5. The president of the commission shall, with the consent of a majority of its members, make general calls from time to time for funds to meet contingencies on the mission fields.

6. The commission shall have the following powers and duties:

(1) To take charge of all money collected for foreign and home missions and appropriate it to the purposes for which it has been contributed.



(2) To appropriate \$10,000 each year to meet emergencies in the administration of foreign and home missionary work. Including this appropriation, the total of all appropriations made, or indirect obligations assumed in behalf of foreign and home missionary work, shall not exceed the receipts for the same purposes during the preceding year.

(3) To publish in the *Free Methodist* and the *Annual Conference Minutes* annual reports of all its receipts and disbursements. It shall make a full report to the General Conference at its regular session of all money received and disbursed by it, and of the results of such appropriations so far as they can be ascertained.

(4) To accept and appoint missionaries to their fields.

(5) To inquire annually into the usefulness of every missionary, active and on furlough. No missionary shall remain on furlough longer than one and one-half years. If, however, conditions beyond the control of the commission or the missionary arise, furlough or service abroad may be extended until the emergency passes.

(6) To leave a missionary without an appointment whenever four fifths of the committee on candidates and furloughs recommend it and the commission thinks best. Any missionary left without an appointment two years in succession shall be discontinued as a missionary and his relation to the Commission on Missions shall cease.

(7) To authorize the ordination of missionary candidates whenever it is expedient.

(8) To perform such other acts as are contemplated under the duties of the General Missionary Board.

7. The acts of the Commission on Missions are subject to the approval of the Board of Administration.

## II. The Directors of the Commission

¶ 110. 1. The Board of Administration, at its first meeting after the session of the General Conference, shall elect by ballot, from the membership of the Commission on Missions, seven persons who shall constitute a Board of Directors. At least one of these directors shall be a member of the Woman's Missionary Society.



2. The Board of Directors may be constituted the executive committee of the commission and shall be subject to the direction of the commission.

### III. The General Missionary Secretary

¶ 111. 1. The general missionary secretary shall be elected by the General Conference as prescribed in Par. 95.

2. He shall keep the records of the commission, receive and answer all correspondence relating to the missionary work of the church, and pay over to the treasurer of the commission all money received and take a receipt for it.

3. He shall have charge of the missionary interests of the church, subject to the orders and under direction of the commission, excepting in a sudden emergency, when he may be at liberty to act without waiting for orders from the commission, provided that such action shall be subject to the approval of the commission.

4. He may, with the consent of the president of the commission and a majority of the members, make general calls for special collections or for donations to provide for particular contingencies on the mission fields.

5. He shall travel at large throughout the church in the interest of missions and shall visit the foreign fields whenever in the judgment of the Commission on Missions it is necessary.

6. He shall be empowered to ordain all eligible candidates for the office of deacon or elder when visiting the foreign fields.

7. He shall make yearly, and whenever else the commission requests him to do so, a full and detailed report to the commission of all business pertaining to both the missionaries and the mission stations.

### IV. The Treasurer

¶ 112. The treasurer shall receive all money collected for foreign and home missions, giving receipts for the same, and shall pay over, upon order of the secretary, whatever sums have been appropriated by the commission. He shall deposit all funds in a national bank or trust company, selected by the commission, in the name of the General Mis-



sionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America, to be drawn only upon the order of the secretary and the treasurer.

#### V. Home Missions

¶ 113. 1. All work on the North American continent carried on by the commission among foreign speaking people and others not cared for by our regular pastors shall be denominated home mission work.

2. Societies organized among these peoples shall be termed "home mission societies." Members shall be received into these societies on probation and in full membership on the same conditions as in our regular societies.

3. The home mission societies, circuits, and districts shall have the same general organization and power as in the regular church organization. The manner of electing officers shall be subject to the approval of the general missionary secretary.

4. The Commission on Missions shall have complete administrative authority over these societies; they shall in no way be subject to the appointment of or control by an annual conference.

5. The title to any church property acquired within the bounds of the United States shall be vested in the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

6. Where two or more societies exist, and where practicable in the judgment of the general missionary secretary, they may be formed into "home mission districts."

7. All home mission societies which pay their own operating expenses, except the salary of the pastors and other workers, shall be entitled to non-voting lay representation in the annual conferences within the bounds of which the societies are located.

8. These societies shall be reported in the annual conferences as "home mission societies." A footnote on the statistical report shall indicate that conference claims are not apportioned to them.

9. Preachers engaged in home mission work shall be amenable to their annual conferences for their Christian char-



acter and to the Commission on Missions for their official conduct.

#### VI. Title to Land in Foreign Countries

¶ 114. Titles to land purchased for missions in foreign lands shall be in the name of the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America, and deeded to trustees elected by the board, the tenure of whose office shall be subject to that board, and in all cases to the laws and regulations of the country where the land is located.

#### VII. Duties of Preachers in Charge

¶ 115. It shall be the duty of every preacher in charge of a circuit to hold at least one missionary meeting on his circuit during the year, and take a collection and receive subscriptions for the support of foreign and home missions.

#### VIII. Annual Conference Missionary Funds

¶ 116. An annual conference may, by whatever means it chooses, raise funds for missions within its bounds, and appropriate to the commission such of its mission funds as it deems best.



## CHAPTER V

### THE COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

#### General Organization and Personnel

¶ 117. 1. The Board of Administration shall constitute the Board of Education, which has authority over the Commission on Christian Education and its departments. The Commission on Christian Education shall consist of one bishop and six other persons chosen in accordance with directions in Par. 103, 3-4.

2. The members of this commission shall continue in office until the close of the session of the General Conference next after their election and until others are elected in their places.

3. The commission shall meet annually. Notices of meetings shall be sent to members at least one month in advance. The president shall have authority to call a special meeting of the commission in an emergency or upon the written request of three other members of the commission.

4. The acts of the commission shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Administration.

5. The officers of the commission shall be president, treasurer, and secretary. The bishop appointed to this commission shall be ex officio president, the general church treasurer shall be ex officio treasurer, and the secretary shall be elected by the commission from its own membership.

6. The commission shall be responsible for the general direction of the program of the church dealing with (a) the Christian education and training of childhood and youth, (b) the guidance and control of organized youth activities, (c) the education and training of young people in church-related high schools and colleges, (d) the education and training of ministers for the church through church-related Bible schools and theological seminaries, (e) provision in local churches and elsewhere for the training of lay leaders in Christian education and evangelism, (f) bringing under the influence



of these activities children, young people, and adults from outside the church membership.

7. The commission shall operate through four departments as follows:

a. Sunday Schools—Including Sunday schools and all the other activities sponsored by the local Sunday school, such as weekday and vacation Bible schools, camp meeting Bible schools, and the publication of literature for workers and students in all such schools, and the C. Y. C.

b. Educational Institutions—Including elementary, secondary, and collegiate institutions.

c. Young People—Including the Y. P. M. S. and any other group activity of a church-wide nature for young people.

d. Service Training—Including the Service Training program and all forms of leadership training for lay leaders and lay teachers in the local church.

8. The responsibility for carrying out the policy of the commission in each of these departments is vested in a departmental executive secretary. Two of these executive secretaries are elected by the General Conference. These are the general Sunday-school secretary and the general Y. P. M. S. superintendent. The other two executive secretaries shall be elected by the Commission on Christian Education. These are the educational secretary and the director of Service Training.

#### I. Department of Sunday Schools

##### ¶ 118. General Organization.

1. The Commission on Christian Education shall have charge of the general Sunday-school interests of the church.

2. The general Sunday-school secretary shall be the executive officer of the Department of Sunday Schools and shall promote the Sunday-school interests of the church under the direction of the commission.

3. The expenses incurred by the meetings of the commission and the salary of the general Sunday-school secretary and his office help shall be paid by the Sunday-school department of the Publishing House. The commission shall be responsible for all other expenses it incurs.



## ¶ 119. Conference Organization.

## 1. Personnel.

a. Each annual conference shall elect annually a Sunday-school board composed of not less than five members.

b. This board shall organize by electing a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, and a treasurer, and, by ballot, shall nominate a conference Sunday-school secretary. The conference Sunday-school secretary shall be elected by the annual conference and shall be a member of the conference Sunday-school board.

2. Functions of the Board. It shall be the duty of this board to:

a. Supervise the Sunday-school work of the conference in harmony with the direction and advice of the Commission on Christian Education.

b. Encourage the organization and maintenance of a Sunday school in every society in the conference and to establish mission Sunday schools wherever practicable.

c. Plan for a Sunday-school institute at some time during the year in every society in which it is possible to hold one. The planning shall be in co-operation with the society.

d. Plan for a convention annually on each district in co-operation with the district superintendent and, where one exists, the district board.

e. Arrange, in co-operation with those in charge, for special Sunday-school services or conferences in such general gatherings as quarterly meetings, camp meetings, and annual conferences.

f. Make annual reports to the commission and to the annual conference.

3. The conference Sunday-school secretary shall administer the work outlined by the conference board.

4. The treasurer of the conference board shall receive the tithe of the regular offerings of the local Sunday schools, retain three fourths for conference Sunday-school work, and forward one fourth to the treasurer of the commission to be used to promote the general Sunday-school work of the church.

## ¶ 120. District Organization. District Sunday-school



boards may be organized wherever desirable. The district board shall be modeled after the conference board and shall co-operate with it.

¶ 121. Local Organization. 1. Method of election.

a. The superintendent of the Sunday school shall be elected by ballot at a society meeting. The preacher in charge may nominate.

b. A committee consisting of not less than three persons nor more than nine may be elected by ballot at a society meeting to serve with the pastor and the Sunday-school superintendent as a Sunday-school nominating committee.

c. The committee shall, as soon as practicable after the annual conference, nominate officers and teachers for the current year.

d. The nominations shall be submitted to the society for a vote at a regularly called meeting of the society.

e. Alternate Method.—Whenever the society deems it inadvisable to appoint a nominating committee and to elect the officers and teachers as directed in the preceding articles, the Sunday-school board shall elect them. The superintendent may nominate.

f. Officers and teachers shall hold office until their successors are elected. Vacancies occurring during the year shall be filled by the Sunday-school board.

g. In organizing new schools, the preacher or preachers in charge and the Sunday-school superintendent shall appoint the officers and teachers.

2. Sunday School Board.

a. The Sunday-school board shall be composed of the pastors and all the regularly elected (and, in new schools, appointed) officers and teachers of the Sunday school.

b. The officers of the Sunday-school board shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, elected at the beginning of each conference year.

c. A board meeting shall, wherever practicable, be held once a month.



d. The regular meeting of the board shall observe the following order of business:

- (1) Devotional exercises.
- (2) Calling of the roll.
- (3) Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- (4) Quarterly report of the secretary of the Sunday school.
- (5) Report of treasurer. Reference of treasurer's account to church auditor.
- (6) Report of superintendent.
- (7) Report of department superintendents.
- (8) Report of teachers upon the condition of their classes.
- (9) Is the school properly graded?
- (10) Consideration of the Sunday-school literature.
- (11) Reports of committees.
- (12) Unfinished business.
- (13) New business and appointment of committees.
- (14) Has the tithe been sent to the treasurer of the conference Sunday-school board? (See Paragraph 121, Sec. 4, a.)
- (15) Are the teachers and officers supplied with the *Sunday School Worker*?
- (16) Report of directors of the Christian Youth Crusaders.
- (17) Reading of the minutes.
- (18) Adjournment.

e. The duties of the board shall be to

(1) Choose the Sunday-school literature and to attend to all other business of the Sunday school not otherwise provided for in the DISCIPLINE.

(2) Provide proper services for Easter, Mother's Day, Christmas, and other special days. Christmas trees are not allowed.

(3) Provide proper outings for the Sunday school, with the provision that nothing shall be permitted out of harmony with the spirit and principles of the DISCIPLINE.

(4) Arrange, in conjunction with the pastor, special evangelistic services for the purpose of bringing the children of the Sunday school into a definite experience of salvation.

3. Duties of Pastors. For the moral and religious instruction of the children, it shall be the special duty of preachers having charge of circuits:



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a. To form Sunday schools in all our congregations where ten children can be gathered for that purpose, and to engage the co-operation of as many of our members as they can; to visit the school as often as practicable; to preach on the subject of Sunday schools and religious instruction in each congregation at least once during the year; to form Bible classes wherever they can for the instruction of the larger children and youth, and where they cannot superintend them personally, to see that suitable teachers are provided for that purpose; to establish and maintain mission Sunday schools wherever there is an opening, and in such schools employ members of the church as officers and teachers so far as practicable.

b. To enforce faithfully upon the parents and Sunday-school teachers the great importance of instructing children in the doctrines and duties of our holy religion; to preach to the children, and to see that the Church Catechism is taught them either in Sunday school or in special meetings appointed for that purpose.

c. To pay special attention to the children, speaking kindly to each of them upon the subject of experiential and practical godliness, according to their capacity; praying earnestly for them; and diligently instructing and exhorting all parents to dedicate their children to the Lord, in baptism, as early as convenient.

d. To lay before each session of the quarterly conference, to be entered upon its journal, the number and state of the Sunday schools and Bible classes, and the extent to which they have preached to the children and catechized them, and make the required reports on Sunday schools to their annual conferences. In reporting to the quarterly and annual conferences the total membership of the Sunday schools, they shall include, under separate heads, the home and cradle roll departments.

e. To arrange for the Sunday schools under their charge to observe Children's Day on the first Sunday, or, if that date is impracticable, the most convenient Sunday in the month of June, in which one of the regular services shall be a religious service for the children. As a part of the service a



collection shall be taken for the Student Loan Fund, and the amount collected shall be forwarded directly to the treasurer of the conference. This fund shall be used by the commission as directed in Par. 122, Sec. 1, (8).

#### 4. Finances.

a. It shall be the duty of each Sunday school to forward each quarter one tithe of the regular offerings to the treasurer of the conference Sunday-school board, who will retain three fourths of this amount for the annual conference Sunday-school work, and forward one fourth to the general church treasurer to be used in general Sunday-school promotion throughout the church.

b. A Sunday, determined by the Board of Administration, shall be known as Superannuate Day. It shall be the duty of the Sunday-school board to arrange a proper service and to turn over the offering of the day to the funds of the Board of Conference Claimants.

## II. Department of Educational Institutions

### ¶ 122. The General Organization.

1. Functions of the Department of Educational Institutions. The Commission on Christian Education, through the Department of Educational Institutions, shall be responsible for promoting and maintaining adequate opportunity for the elementary, secondary, and collegiate training of children and young people, and for the training of Christian ministers, missionaries, and teachers through the collegiate level. John Wesley Seminary functions directly under the Board of Administration and therefore, except when specifically named, is exempt from the provisions of this chapter. (See Par. 124, Sec. 4.) The department shall:

(1) Adopt standards by which to approve all schools seeking recognition as Free Methodist institutions.

(2) Require annual financial reports of all approved educational institutions and provide for their inspections from time to time.

(3) Approve courses of study in the curricula being offered in approved institutions.

(4) Investigate from time to time the educational stand-



ards, accreditation, and fiscal policies of approved schools. The problems of each school shall be studied in relation to local needs with a view to improving its total program. Through suggestions and helpful guidance the department shall foster and encourage institutional growth in harmony with our denominational standard of Christian education.

(5) Formulate the "Standard Theological Course of Study for Free Methodist Ministers" and administer the course with the co-operation of the Bible schools and colleges.

(6) Promote and supervise the observance of a Christian Education Day each year throughout the church to provide funds to aid the department in carrying out its program in behalf of approved educational institutions, and especially to provide student ministerial scholarships at the college level.

(7) Provide for and administer a program of guidance for prospective ministers during their years of college preparation.

(8) Promote and administer the Student Loan Fund to aid those young people of the Free Methodist Church who feel called of God to some form of Christian work in the Free Methodist Church and who need financial help to continue their education in approved educational institutions. Aid from the fund shall be granted only in the form of loans under conditions prescribed by the commission. However, the commission may by a two-thirds vote cancel loans for sufficient reasons.

(9) Provide and administer a program of scholarships for students in approved Bible schools and colleges who are pursuing theological studies and are looking toward full-time ministry in the Free Methodist Church.

(10) Solicit bequests, money, property, and other securities to be used in building up an endowment fund and a scholarship fund to be held in trust for approved educational institutions and students therein.

(11) Establish a placement bureau for preachers, teachers, and others who are consecrated and prepared for Christian service.



(12) Require educational institutions to submit for approval all plans for financial campaigns and for new buildings when such projects exceed \$10,000.

(13) Exercise such supervision of the patronizing territory of approved educational institutions as to give to each proper territory for its prosperity in harmony with the other schools of its class. The department, however, shall not change the relation of any previously assigned territory without the consent of the annual conference holding jurisdiction over that territory.

(14) Sustain a veto power in relation to the inauguration of new institutions, the change of location or classification of an established institution, the erection of buildings, and financial campaigns for them, provided, however, that before such power is used a full and complete hearing will be given to the school requesting approval and to any schools or persons making objection.

(15) Provide a code of procedure to be followed by approved educational institutions of the church to prevent unfair competition among them.

(16) Co-operate with the trustees and faculties of approved educational institutions in providing an appropriate retirement plan for the faculty and staff members thereof.

(17) Determine the conditions under which funds for the several schools, except income from the permanent endowment fund, shall be distributed.

2. Duties of the executive secretary of the Department of Educational Institutions.

(1) He shall be the executive officer of the Department of Educational Institutions of the Commission on Christian Education.

(2) He shall promote the interests of approved educational institutions of the Free Methodist Church.

(3) He shall visit the educational institutions of the church from time to time with a view to improving the educational, financial, and spiritual phases of their work.

(4) He shall attempt to counsel Free Methodist young



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people enrolled as advanced students in graduate and professional schools in the United States and Canada.

(5) He shall maintain a record of all ministerial students under the guidance of the Department of Educational Institutions and in John Wesley Seminary, and shall interview them concerning their problems, programs, and progress.

(6) He shall prepare and distribute promotional leaflets and other literature throughout the church in an effort to interest both young people and adults in patronizing and supporting our church schools.

3. The department shall be financed from (a) unrestricted gifts, bequests, etc.; (b) receipts from the annual observance throughout the church of Christian Education Day; and (c) receipts from such other sources as may be approved by the Board of Education.

¶ 123. Annual Conference Board

1. Each annual conference shall organize within its bounds an annual conference board of education. This board shall consist of at least one and not more than three ministers and an equal number of laymen to be elected by the annual conference.

2. The board shall report to the annual conference, and shall transmit to the Commission on Christian Education the instructions and acts of the annual conference relative to education and educational institutions.

3. Each annual conference within the patronizing territory of an educational institution which maintains a Living Endowment program shall elect a conference director of the program.

4. It shall be the duty of the conference board of education

(1) To organize by the election of a president and a secretary-treasurer to serve one year or until their successors are elected, and to appoint such committees as are necessary to accomplish its work.

(2) To hold at least one meeting each year for the consideration and promotion within the annual conference of the general and local interests of education.



(3) To provide for a visitation each year of the educational institutions with which it is associated.

(4) To present the cause of education to the annual conference, and to assist as far as possible in raising money to carry out the instructions of the annual conference.

#### ¶ 124. Educational Institutions

1. The educational institutions hereby approved by the Free Methodist Church are:

*Seminary:* John Wesley Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky  
(Not under the Department of Educational Institutions, but directly controlled by the Board of Administration. See article 4 below.)

*Senior Colleges:* Greenville College, Greenville, Illinois  
Seattle Pacific College, Seattle, Washington

*Junior Colleges (with associated secondary schools):*

Roberts Junior College, North Chili, New York  
Spring Arbor Junior College, Spring Arbor, Michigan  
Wessington Springs College, Wessington Springs, South  
Dakota

Los Angeles Pacific College, Los Angeles, California  
Central College, McPherson, Kansas

Lorne Park College (one year of college), Port Credit,  
Ontario

*Bible School:* Moose Jaw Free Methodist Holiness Bible  
School, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

#### 2. Guiding Principles

(1) No educational institution shall be approved by the commission unless it is established and operated in accordance with the conditions mentioned above, and unless two thirds of the members of the board of trustees and of the members of the faculty are members of the Free Methodist Church. No school shall hereafter be established which does not contain in its articles of incorporation the following clause: "This corporation shall be subject to the rules, regulations, and DISCIPLINE of the Free Methodist Church of North America as from time to time adopted by the General Conference in so far as the same does not contravene the laws of the state of incorporation. And further, in the event of dissolution of this corporation, the property of the same,



after having discharged all obligations, shall become the property of the Free Methodist Church of North America."

(2) All organizations and activities shall be in harmony with the general rules, standards, and doctrines of the Free Methodist Church, relating to amusements, campus fraternities, hazing, immodest attire, the use of tobacco and intoxicants, and gambling.

(3) The Bible schools and colleges shall give attention to a wholesome and systematic program of physical education. Interscholastic games shall be confined to evangelically Christian schools of high moral standards and wholesome influence, approved by the president and faculty of the Free Methodist school scheduling the games. Membership in athletic conferences or leagues not under Christian auspices is forbidden. Football, except such modified forms as touch football and soccer, are forbidden.

(4) The rendering of class plays, dramas, and amateur theatricals in public and private are forbidden. This shall not be construed as forbidding the proper and necessary instruction in education.

(5) The president and the faculty shall be charged with the responsibility of insuring that all student publications and programs are in harmony with the rules and standards of the Free Methodist Church.

(6) All instruction in the several departments shall be in positive harmony with and conformity to the teachings of the Scriptures and the standards of the Free Methodist Church set forth in her statement of doctrine in the DISCIPLINE.

(7) No presidents, principals, professors, or regular full-time teachers shall be employed or retained in our colleges or secondary schools who are not in harmony with the provisions listed above, and any, upon evidence of conduct or teaching to the contrary, shall be subject to dismissal.

(8) All instructors engaged in teaching Bible, doctrine, and other subjects in the religious field shall be required to sign the following statement on forms provided by the Department of Educational Institutions:

I have read the following statement taken from the Free



Methodist DISCIPLINE (1947), Par. 28, of the position of the Free Methodist Church upon the doctrine and experience of holiness (entire sanctification) and am in complete agreement with it.

Date ..... Signature .....  
 Institution .....

Statement: "Justified persons, while they do not outwardly commit sin, are nevertheless conscious of sin still remaining in the heart. They feel a natural tendency to evil, a proneness to depart from God and cleave to the things of earth. Those who are sanctified wholly are saved from all inward sin—from evil thoughts and evil tempers. No wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul. All their thought, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

"Entire sanctification takes place subsequently to justification, and is the work of God wrought instantaneously upon the consecrated, believing soul. After a soul is cleansed from all sin, it is then fully prepared to grow in grace."

This statement is to be filed with The Department of Educational Institutions, Commission on Christian Education of the Free Methodist Church, Winona Lake, Indiana.

(9) A complaint of violation of any of these principles shall first be presented to the Commission on Christian Education, and should it be found valid, it shall be referred to the Board of Administration, which shall hear all the evidence and, until the violation has ceased, apply the penalty to any school found guilty.

3. Canadian Educational Institutions

Because of the international differences in educational standards and practices, Canadian educational institutions shall operate under the control of the Canadian Executive Board, subject to the "Guiding Principles" set forth under Sec. 2. Canadian schools shall be exempt from supervision by the Department of Educational Institutions except upon request of the Canadian Executive Board with reference to special problems.

4. John Wesley Seminary

(1) *Authorization:* The Free Methodist Church shall maintain a theological seminary for the post-college training



of candidates for the ministry and other types of Christian service. This institution shall be known as John Wesley Seminary, and shall be incorporated to secure the rights and privileges belonging to such educational institutions.

(2) *Control:* The Board of Administration shall constitute the Seminary Board of Control, with a Seminary Executive Board of thirteen members to plan and direct the institution subject to the approval of the Board of Control. The Seminary Executive Board shall be composed of the members of the Commission on Christian Education and the president and one additional member selected by the Board of Control from each of the other three commissions.

(3) *Support:* John Wesley Seminary shall be supported by such general assessments, special appropriations and solicitations as shall be approved by the Board of Control.

(4) *Affiliation:* The Board of Control may affiliate the institution with such other seminary organizations as it may deem desirable or necessary, provided such institutions are unqualifiedly evangelical and Wesleyan in doctrine as interpreted by the Free Methodist Church.

(5) *Guiding Principles:* All the "Guiding Principles" under Sec. 2 above shall apply to John Wesley Seminary except (1), but (9) shall be modified to allow complaints to be brought first to the Seminary Executive Board rather than to the Commission on Christian Education.

¶ 125. Endowment Funds

1. All endowment funds allotted by the general church to educational institutions (including John Wesley Seminary) shall be held for safe and proper investment by the Finance Committee of the Board of Administration, and the interest accruing therefrom shall be paid annually to the proper representatives of the schools.

2. The income from the permanent endowment fund now held by the commission, amounting to \$100,000, shall be distributed among the schools according to the following percentages:

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Greenville College      | 28.2% |
| Seattle Pacific College | 18.8% |
| Central College         | 10.6% |



|                             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Wessington Springs College  | 10.6% |
| Los Angeles Pacific College | 10.6% |
| Roberts Junior College      | 10.6% |
| Spring Arbor Junior College | 10.6% |

3. The East Ontario, the West Ontario, and the Saskatchewan conferences are allowed to retain for the Canadian schools money raised for education in their territories. See Par. 134, Sec. 4.

### III. Department of Young People

#### ¶ 126. General Organization

1. The Y. P. M. S. Council shall be amenable to the Board of Administration and report thereto through the Commission on Christian Education.

2. The Y. P. M. S. Council shall consist of the general superintendent, four regional directors, and four lay members.

3. The Y. P. M. S. general superintendent shall be elected by the General Conference of the church. The Y. P. M. S. through its Quadrennial Body may nominate by ballot. The general superintendent of the Y. P. M. S. shall serve under the direction of the Y. P. M. S. Council in its relationship to the Board of Administration through the Commission on Christian Education.

4. For further particulars see the constitution of the Y. P. M. S., which follows.

#### ¶ 127. Constitution of the Young People's Missionary Society.

### ARTICLE I

#### NAME

To promote the spiritual welfare of the young people connected with the Free Methodist Church, and to provide direction for their Christian activities, and to help them in their contribution to the church and the world, there shall be an organization known as the Young People's Missionary Society of the Free Methodist Church of North America.



ARTICLE II

Slogan: "United to Make Christ Known"

Motto: "Others"

ARTICLE III

OBJECT

The object of this society shall be:

1. To seek and maintain among its members, the highest type of Christian experience and life through regeneration and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to encourage growth in grace, and to prepare them for efficient membership in the Free Methodist Church;
2. To interest, train, and enlist the young people in the evangelization of the world;
3. To study the needs of the various fields and become intelligent supporters of the full missionary program;
4. To encourage Christian stewardship and raise money for projects sanctioned by the general authorities of the church in ways consistent with the DISCIPLINE of the Free Methodist Church.

ARTICLE IV

THE LOCAL Y. P. M. S.

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. Active members shall be young people of good moral character between the ages of fourteen and thirty inclusive, who desire to unite for worship, instruction, and service under the direction of the Free Methodist Church.
2. Persons over thirty years of age may be honorary members upon the annual payment of dues.

B. SUPERINTENDENT

1. It shall be the duty of each church society to elect a superintendent of the Young People's Missionary Society who, with the pastor, shall be responsible for the organization of a local society; and they, together with the president, shall be responsible for the promotion of the local society. The local Y. P. M. S. may nominate by ballot.
2. The superintendent shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church over thirty years of age. When elected



he shall become a member of the official board and report regularly to that body.

C. OFFICERS

1. The officers of the society shall be president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and four departmental directors as follows: Education, Evangelism, Missions and Service.

2. The president must be a member of the Free Methodist Church.

D. MEETINGS

1. A regular weekly meeting shall be held, if possible, on Sunday, preceding the evening service.

2. A business meeting of the society shall be held at least once in three months. Each society shall decide at its first business meeting how many shall constitute a quorum.

3. Nothing shall be allowed in the organization or activities of the Y. P. M. S. which is contrary to the DISCIPLINE of the Free Methodist Church, such as pageants, dramatics, socials, or bazaars, as commonly understood, or the engaging of unsaved members as leaders of religious services; but this does not prohibit such young people's gatherings as contribute to the goal of the organization.

E. FUNDS

1. Money shall be raised by tithes and offerings.

2. Each local shall be responsible for raising the dues and delegates' expenses as ordered by the Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body. Dues shall be used as operating expenses for the general Y. P. M. S.

3. All money, except that raised for local projects, shall be forwarded to the conference treasurer. Where there is a district treasurer, funds may be sent to him for forwarding.

4. Active membership shall be the basis for calculation of quadrennial delegates' expenses.

F. COMMITTEES

1. The executive committee of the local Y. P. M. S. shall be composed of the pastor, the superintendent of the Y. P. M. S., the president of the local W. M. S., and such regularly elected officers of the Y. P. M. S. as are members of the



Free Methodist Church. This committee shall direct the activities of the society and be responsible to the official board for them.

2. The program committee shall be composed of the vice-president as chairman, and such members as are elected from the executive committee.

3. A nominating committee may be elected to bring in nominations prior to the election of officers.

4. The president is an ex officio member of all committees.

#### G. VOTING

1. All active members shall have the power to vote.

2. All officers shall be elected by ballot.

3. When necessary honorary members may be elected to office, and when elected shall have the power to vote.

#### H. DELEGATED BODIES

The local Y. P. M. S. may, by ballot, elect active members as delegates to the annual Y. P. M. S. conference or convention. Delegates must be members of the Free Methodist Church.

### ARTICLE V

#### THE DISTRICT Y. P. M. S.

(Organization of a district Y. P. M. S. is optional, and the provisions of Article V apply only to districts which have it.)

#### A. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a local society shall constitute membership in the district Y. P. M. S.

#### B. SUPERINTENDENT

1. The district quarterly conference shall elect a district Y. P. M. S. superintendent, who with the executive advisor shall be responsible for the organization of a district Y. P. M. S.; and they, together with the president, shall be responsible for the promotion of the district Y. P. M. S. The district Y. P. M. S. may nominate by ballot.

2. The superintendent shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church over thirty years of age.



3. The superintendent shall report regularly to the quarterly conference.

C. EXECUTIVE ADVISOR

The District Superintendent of the church shall be the Y. P. M. S. Executive Advisor.

D. OFFICERS

1. From the designated list in Article IV, Section C, such officers may be elected as are necessary for the effective promotion of the district Y. P. M. S. The president when elected shall become a member of the conference Y. P. M. S. executive committee.

2. Where no district organization exists, a district promoter may be elected and shall become a member of the conference Y. P. M. S. executive committee.

3. All officers shall be members of the Free Methodist Church.

E. MEETINGS

Business meetings shall be held at the time and place of the district quarterly meeting. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

F. FUNDS

The treasurer shall keep a record of all money received from local treasurers and forward it to the conference treasurer.

G. COMMITTEES

1. The executive committee shall be composed of the regularly elected Y. P. M. S. officers, the Y. P. M. S. superintendent, and the executive advisor. This committee shall direct the activities of the district Y. P. M. S. and be responsible to the quarterly conference.

2. The program committee shall be appointed by the executive committee.

3. A nominating committee may be elected to bring in nominations prior to the election of officers.

H. VOTING

1. All active members shall have the power to vote.

2. All officers shall be elected by ballot.



ARTICLE VI

THE CONFERENCE Y. P. M. S.

A. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a local society shall constitute membership in the conference society.

B. SUPERINTENDENT

1. Each annual conference shall elect a conference Y. P. M. S. superintendent, who with the executive advisor shall be responsible for the organization of a conference Y. P. M. S.; and they, together with the president, shall be responsible for the promotion of the conference Y. P. M. S. The conference Y. P. M. S. may nominate by ballot.

2. The superintendent shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church over thirty years of age.

3. The superintendent shall report to the annual conference.

C. CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE ADVISOR

1. The annual conference shall elect from the district superintendents of the church one or more executive advisors. The Y. P. M. S. may nominate by ballot.

2. Where there is a conference superintendent of the church, he shall be the executive advisor.

D. OFFICERS

1. The officers of the conference Y. P. M. S. shall be president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and directors of the four departments, namely, Education, Evangelism, Missions, and Service.

2. All officers shall be members of the Free Methodist Church residing within the conference, and elected at the annual business meeting.

3. The executive committee shall fill all vacancies.

E. MEETINGS

The meetings of the conference society shall be held at the time and place of the annual conference or at the annual Y. P. M. S. convention.

F. FUNDS

1. Funds may be raised for conference projects.

2. All funds raised for general purposes shall be forwarded



to the general Y. P. M. S. treasurer, Winona Lake, Indiana.

#### G. COMMITTEES

1. The executive committee shall be composed of the regularly elected officers of the conference Y. P. M. S., the district presidents or promoters, the conference superintendent of the Y. P. M. S., and one or more executive advisors. This committee shall direct the activities and promote the interests of the Y. P. M. S. throughout the conference.

2. Each conference Y. P. M. S. shall nominate one or more of its members who is a member of the Free Methodist Church and submit the nomination to the Annual Conference to be considered for membership on the Conference Evangelistic Board.

3. A nominating committee shall be elected to bring in nominations prior to the election of officers.

#### H. VOTING

1. The delegates and, when the conference Y. P. M. S. executive committee so recommends, the conference officers shall compose the voting body of the Y. P. M. S. annual conference or convention.

2. All officers shall be elected by ballot.

3. The quorum shall be determined at the first business session of the annual Y. P. M. S. conference or convention.

#### I. DELEGATED BODIES

1. After the third year of the quadrennium each annual conference or convention shall elect one or more delegates to the Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body.

2. Representation to the Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body shall be based on the average active membership of the conference for the first three years of the quadrennium. The number of delegates shall be determined as follows: 1-500 members, one delegate; 501-1,000 members, two delegates, and so forth.

3. Delegates to the Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body shall be active members of the Y. P. M. S., members of the Free Methodist Church, and residing within the conference at the time of election.



ARTICLE VII

THE Y. P. M. S. QUADRENNIAL BODY

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. There shall be a Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body, composed of conference delegates, which shall convene at the seat of the General Conference.

2. The members of the Y. P. M. S. on the mission fields shall have the right to elect a fraternal delegate to the Quadrennial Body, or, when this is not possible, the General Missionary Secretary may appoint a representative, provided that this shall not obligate the general Y. P. M. S. treasurer to pay the traveling expenses.

B. SUPERINTENDENT

1. A general superintendent of the Y. P. M. S. shall be elected by the General Conference of the church. The Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body may nominate by ballot.

2. The general superintendent shall serve under the Commission on Christian Education and shall report annually to that body.

C. OFFICERS

1. The presiding officers of the quadrennial meetings shall be the four regional directors, each presiding in turn.

2. A secretary shall be elected by the Quadrennial Body at its opening sitting. The secretary shall have the privilege of appointing one or more assistants.

3. The general treasurer of the Y. P. M. S. shall be employed by the Board of Administration of the church.

D. COMMITTEES

A nominating committee shall be elected by the Quadrennial Body. The Y. P. M. S. Council may nominate.

E. ELECTIONS

1. Four active members of the Y. P. M. S., to be known as regional directors, shall be elected by the Quadrennial Body. A regional director shall have had at least two years of pastoral experience and shall be at least twenty-five years of age when first elected, and shall be eligible to serve two terms.

2. Four active lay members of the Y. P. M. S. shall be



elected, one from each region, by the Quadrennial Body to serve on the Y. P. M. S. Council. A lay council member shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church and shall have had at least two years of experience in district or conference offices. The expenses of the lay representatives on the Council shall be borne by the regions represented and not by the general Y. P. M. S. budget.

## ARTICLE VIII

### THE Y. P. M. S. COUNCIL

1. The Y. P. M. S. Council shall consist of the four regional directors, the four lay representatives, and the general Y. P. M. S. superintendent.

2. The Council shall plan the work of the regional directors, and direct the activities of the general Y. P. M. S. during the interim of the quadrennial meetings.

3. The Council shall report to and be directly amenable to the Board of Administration through the Commission on Christian Education.

4. Any vacancies occurring in the Council shall be filled by the Board of Administration through the Commission on Christian Education. The Y. P. M. S. Council may nominate.

5. The Council shall elect of its members one to serve as an associate member on the Commission on Christian Education, one on the Commission on Evangelism, and one on the Commission on Missions. The three commissions shall each appoint one member to serve as a counselor to the Y. P. M. S. superintendent on matters of mutual interest.

6. The necessary operating expenses of the general Y. P. M. S. Council and the salaries of the regional directors shall be appropriated from the Y. P. M. S. dues fund and any deficit shall be appropriated from the Y. P. M. S. general funds.

## ARTICLE IX

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Devotions.
2. Calling of the roll.
3. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.



4. Unfinished business.
5. Committee and officers' reports and discussions.
6. New business.
7. Programs, addresses, and other activities.
8. Reading and correcting minutes.
9. Adjournment.

## ARTICLE X

### RULES OF ORDER

A *Compendium of Parliamentary Law* by Lillian Cole Bethel, or *Roberts' Rules of Order* shall be the standard of parliamentary usage.

## ARTICLE XI

### TEEN-AGE DEPARTMENT

1. Where deemed advisable and recommended by the local Y. P. M. S. executive committee and approved by the official board, a teen-age department may be instituted which shall have the power of electing its own officers who shall serve as assistants to the officers composing the local executive committee.

2. When necessary the local Y. P. M. S. superintendent may appoint an assistant to sponsor the teen-age group.

3. All money shall pass through the hands of the treasurer of the regularly constituted Y. P. M. S.

## ARTICLE XII

### AMENDMENTS

The constitution may be changed by a two-thirds vote of the Y. P. M. S. Quadrennial Body, subject to the approval of the General Conference.

## IV. DEPARTMENT OF SERVICE TRAINING

### ¶ 128. General Organization

#### 1. Functions of the Department of Service Training

The leadership education work of the church shall be under the direction of the Commission on Christian Education. Through its Department of Service Training, the commission



shall provide a plan for the education of workers in all departments of the church which can be administered in each local society.

The commission may also establish and conduct, through the Department of Service Training, in collaboration with the Committee on Curriculum, more advanced correspondence study units including subjects in the course of study for deacons and elders.

The commission may from time to time initiate and administer through this department other educational projects to assist ministers and other workers in the church and to qualify them for more effective Christian service.

## 2. Duties of the Director

The Director of the Department of Service Training shall be chosen by the Commission on Christian Education and shall be the executive officer for the leadership education work of the commission.

The director shall promote the use of Service Training throughout the church and shall establish and maintain a system of permanent records for leadership education credits earned. He shall recommend to the Committee on Curriculum for approval suitable study material for Service Training courses. He may supervise the initiation and operation of correspondence study plans and such other educational projects as the commission may authorize or direct.

## 3. Finances of the Department

The Department of Service Training shall be financed by an annual appropriation from the funds of the Commission on Christian Education and by offerings taken in connection with Service Training activities.

## ¶ 129. Conference Organization

1. Each annual conference shall select a conference director of Service Training whose duty it shall be to promote the use of Service Training in every local church and at general gatherings throughout the conference.

2. The conference director of Service Training shall work under the direction of a conference Sunday-school board, which will appropriate annually from its funds a suitable



amount for the promotion of Service Training within the conference.

Or the educational work of the conference may be unified by the selection of a conference board of Christian education to direct Sunday-school work, the C. Y. C., the Y. P. M. S., and Service Training.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM, CHARITIES, CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, AND CHURCH EXTENSION

¶ 130. The Board of Administration shall constitute the Board of Evangelism, the Board of Charities and Charitable Institutions, and the Church Extension Society. It shall elect seven of its members, in accordance with Par. 103, Sections 3-4, to be the Commission on Evangelism, Charities and Charitable Institutions, and Church Extension. The acts of this commission shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Administration.

#### I. Evangelism

¶ 131. 1. The commission shall meet at least once each year to plan for the evangelistic work of the church and to do such other business as may be necessary to carry on the work successfully.

2. The commission shall work in conjunction with the annual conference evangelistic boards in holding evangelistic conventions, raising funds for evangelistic work, employing evangelists and organizing bands for evangelistic work.

3. The commission shall have authority to raise funds, employ evangelists, band workers, and helpers and to carry on aggressive evangelism throughout the church.

4. The first Wednesday in January shall be observed as a day of fasting and prayer for general evangelism.

5. The general church treasurer shall be the treasurer of the Commission on Evangelism.

6. Each annual conference is required to organize a Conference Evangelistic Board, which shall carry on aggressive evangelistic work within its bounds. This board shall have power to raise funds and to employ evangelists, band workers and helpers to labor within the conference bounds, who, with the concurrence of the district superintendents, shall be authorized to establish new societies, provided that it make provision and be responsible for the support of all the laborers which it employs.



7. The Conference Evangelistic Board, on annual conference Sunday, is to take an offering of cash and subscriptions, and retain 90% of the receipts in the conference for annual conference evangelism, and send 10% to the general church treasurer to be used by the commission for general evangelism in the weaker conferences.

8. It shall be the duty of pastors to raise for general missions by public collections or otherwise a sum of not less than eight cents per annum for each member in full relation, sixteen years of age and over, to be forwarded to the conference treasurer and by him to the treasurer of the Commission on Evangelism. (This section refers to money to be raised in conference claims and is not to be confused with Sec. 7.)

9. The general missions fund raised as prescribed in Sec. 8 shall be administered by the Commission on Evangelism and used only in those conferences having a membership of not over five hundred members paying conference claims.

10. The general evangelistic secretary elected by the General Conference according to Par. 95, Sec. 1, shall be an ex officio member of the commission. He shall keep the records of the commission, receive and answer all correspondence relative to evangelism in the church; and, together with the bishop who is president of the commission, shall have general supervision of the entire evangelistic work, subject to the direction and approval of the commission. He shall travel at large throughout the church and raise money for evangelism, inspire the spirit of aggressive evangelism, plan for and supervise the extension of work into new fields, and discover and use available evangelistic talent in our schools, conferences, Y. P. M. S., and elsewhere, to promote, in co-operation with conference evangelistic boards and district superintendents, an aggressive general program.

The general evangelistic secretary shall receive a salary to be fixed by the Executive Commission.

11. General evangelists may be elected by the General Conference in accordance with Par. 95, Sec. 1.



(1) General evangelists, except when assigned to special fields by the General Conference, shall travel at large under the direction of the Commission on Evangelism, open new fields, organize new societies and provide them with temporary pastors, preparatory to the organization of new conferences. A new society organized in an existing conference shall be under the care of the superintendent of the adjacent district.

(2) They shall have oversight of other evangelists laboring in immediate connection with them.

(3) No evangelist shall appoint or hold meetings where they will interfere with the regular work of any circuit or station, without the consent of the pastor and the district superintendent.

(4) General evangelists are amenable to the annual conferences to which they belong.

## II. Charities and Charitable Institutions

¶ 132. 1. It shall be the duty of the commission to inspect the charitable institutions operating in and receiving support from the Free Methodist Church.

2. The commission shall determine the financial standing of these institutions, their plan of operation, and the character and amount of work done, and shall determine whether or not they qualify for accreditation by the Free Methodist Church.

3. The commission shall have power to regulate the establishment of new charitable institutions so as to avoid the jeopardizing of those already operating as accredited institutions.

4. The commission shall receive and examine the annual reports of these accredited institutions upon their financial status, their work, and the general plan and scope of their activities.

5. The accredited institutions of the Free Methodist Church are:

The Gerry Homes, Gerry, New York. Founded in 1880.

Woodstock Home for Children, Woodstock, Illinois. Founded in 1888.



Old People's Rest Home, Woodstock, Illinois. Founded in 1903.

Deaconess Hospital and Wesley-Roberts Deaconess School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Founded in 1900.

Life Line Orphan Home, 4322 Mission Road, Kansas City, Kansas. Founded in 1917.

Home of Redeeming Love, for colored girls, St. Louis, Missouri. Founded in 1946.

And all others established by the commission.

6. We recommend that each pastor preach a sermon at least once a year on the subject of practical charity, and present an opportunity for charity offerings, to be used for the relief of the poor on the circuit where the offering is received or sent to an accredited charitable institution in whose patronizing territory the circuit lies.

7. The pastor shall co-operate with the Sunday school in the Easter offering for charitable institutions.

8. Each annual conference shall appoint among its regular committees a committee on charities and charitable institutions.

### III. Church Extension

¶133. 1. The object of the Church Extension Society shall be to aid needy societies by donations or loans for the erection of churches.

2. This society shall publish in the official paper of the church an annual report of its work, and also submit a full report quadrennially to the General Conference.

3. The general church treasurer shall be the treasurer of the Church Extension Society.

4. Each annual conference shall appoint a society of five members which shall constitute a Conference Church Extension and Aid Society, the officers of which shall be a president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

5. The Conference Church Extension and Aid Society shall be auxiliary to the commission, and shall, under its direction, have charge of all the work of the Church Extension and Aid Society within the conference.



6. The treasurer of the conference society shall, at least once in three months, remit all funds in his hands to the treasurer of the commission.

7. It shall be the duty of every preacher in charge of a circuit to raise annually an amount equal to at least nineteen cents per member for this fund. Should any conference be deficient in this assessment, the deficiency shall be deducted by the general treasurer from any appropriation made from this fund or from the Church and Parsonage Aid Fund to any circuit in that conference. Deficiencies not deducted in any one year shall be held for future deduction until paid by the conference. The Board of Administration should be careful not to make appropriations beyond available funds.

8. The conference society shall make a full report of its work to the conference at its annual session.

9. All applications for aid shall be first submitted to the conference society, which shall certify its action thereon to the commission; and aid shall be granted only by the concurrent action of the conference society and the commission.

10. All such applications for aid shall be in accordance with forms furnished by the general society, and shall set forth:

(1) The number of members in the society, and the size of the congregation.

(2) The fact that the board of trustees is legally incorporated.

(3) The size and valuation of the site, the validity of the title, and whether deeded to the Free Methodist Church of North America.

(4) A description of the building for which aid is asked.

(5) The estimated cost.

(6) The amount collected and reliably pledged.

(7) What accommodations are planned for the Sunday school.

(8) Any other information that the commission may require.



11. Should a church which has received aid from the funds of the Church Extension and Aid Society be sold, the sellers shall pay back to this society an amount equal to that received as aid, unless it be used on the same circuit and for the same purpose.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE CANADIAN EXECUTIVE BOARD

¶ 134. 1. The Alberta Conference having voted not to be subject to the provisions of Par. 134, the term "Canadian conferences" throughout shall be understood to mean the East Ontario, the West Ontario, and the Saskatchewan conferences.

2. There shall be a Canadian Executive Board to be elected by the Canadian conferences on the following basis. At the first session after each General Conference, each Canadian annual conference shall elect one elder and one lay member to represent it on the board, provided that when a conference shall reach a membership of one thousand in full relation, it shall be entitled to one additional ministerial and one additional lay representative. For method of election, see Dominion Act of Incorporation, schedule A, page 8.

3. The Canadian Executive Board shall co-operate with the General Conference in collecting in the Canadian conferences the annual assessment for bishops' salaries and General Conference delegates' expense and entertainment fund. All other assessed claims collected in the Canadian conferences shall be retained and administered by the Canadian Executive Board.

4. The Canadian conferences shall be permitted to retain all money raised within their bounds except those parts of the assessed claims otherwise assigned in Sec. 3. All general funds so held, except those which may be directly related to any of the co-operating conferences, those raised for the Commission on Missions and for the Sunday School Department as provided in Par. 119, Sec. 4, those the Canadian Executive Board may contribute to the Commission on Evangelism, and those which any Canadian conference wishes to use in taking advantage of the provisions of Par. 107b, shall be administered by the Canadian Executive Board.



5. The Canadian Executive Board shall receive annually according to the business furnished from within the bounds of these Canadian conferences an appropriate amount of the profits of the Free Methodist Publishing House.

6. The Canadian Executive Board relinquishes all claim to the funds raised in the United States for conference claimants, general missions, church extension, charities, education, general evangelism, and church and parsonage aid.

7. The Free Methodist Church in the United States shall make payment to all claimants who at the time of the General Conference of 1923 were receiving appropriations from the superannuate fund of the Canadian conferences and to the first two preachers who thereafter became claimants in these conferences; and the Canadian Executive Board assumes responsibility for all later claimants in the Canadian conferences.

8. Preachers who, after the General Conference of 1923, transfer from the Canadian conferences to any of the conferences in the United States or to the Alberta Conference, or vice versa, shall, when they become claimants, receive their apportionments from the claimants' fund of the respective treasuries according to the years of service in each territory.

9. The Canadian Executive Board shall constitute a board of general and home missions for the Dominion of Canada.



## CHAPTER VIII

### SOUTH AFRICA MISSION CONFERENCE

¶ 135. 1. The South Africa Conference shall be under the control of the Commission on Missions of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

2. With the exception of Sections 2 and 3 of Par. 138, these articles may be amended by the Commission on Missions after consultation with the South Africa Conference.

#### I. Membership

¶ 136. There shall be the following classes of members:

1. All missionaries who hold credentials from the Commission on Missions.

2. Native preachers who are ordained or who have been in the regular ministerial work for at least four consecutive years and have passed the course of study prescribed by the conference may be received by vote into the conference as members in full.

3. Each circuit or station shall be entitled to one lay delegate, and whenever a circuit is not supplied with a native preacher who is a member of the conference, his circuit meeting may also elect one evangelist or local preacher who is a resident on the charge to act as a member.

#### II. Native Self-Support

¶ 137. It is the desire of the church in America that the native church should rapidly become self-supporting in order that the church in America may do for other needy peoples what it has done for this country. It may, therefore, be expected that the home church will gradually withdraw its support and that the native church must prepare to carry forward the work begun. The church in America will provide for the missionaries, and the church in Africa must learn to provide for its preachers and also to pay all incidental expenses including the erection of its own church buildings. The conference shall have full authority to



raise money for the development of the work within its bounds.

### III. Prerogatives

¶ 138. 1. The district superintendents who have served during the year, an equal number of lay members to be elected by ballot on the first day of the session, together with the president of the conference, shall constitute the stationing committee. The president shall be chairman with vote.

2. This conference may elect one missionary who is in the homeland as a delegate to the General Conference. See Par. 89.

3. The three classes of members specified above shall sit and vote as one body on all matters coming before the conference, according to the DISCIPLINE, with the exception of the reserved subject which shall be considered in the missionary meeting according to Par. 139.

### IV. Missionaries and the Mission Meeting

¶ 139. 1. All missionaries within the bounds of the conference who hold credentials from the Commission on Missions and who have been on the field the two years required by the rules shall be members of the Mission Meeting.

Any missionary, however, who shall have been regularly appointed to the charge of a mission station or of a mission school, or who is a member of the annual conference in full relation before the expiration of the two years referred to above, shall be a member of the mission after having been one year on the field and after having passed the first-year examination in the study of the language. (See Par. 434.)

2. The mission shall perform the following functions:

(1) Appoint all missionaries laboring within the bounds of the conference, including those in school, farm, and medical work, to their fields.

(2) Pass upon the character of ministerial or acting missionary members of the conference, and investigate any questions or complaints affecting the character of ministerial



or acting missionary members of the conference, according to the rules.

- (3) Make all requests for appropriations from the Commission on Missions, according to the rules, and, with the approval of the missionary secretary, apply on the field money appropriated by the commission.

3. A missionary in charge of a mission station shall direct the work of pastors and evangelists on the circuit and shall preside at the official meetings of the circuit.

#### V. The Executive Committee

¶ 140. 1. The executive committee shall consist of the chairman and the secretary of the mission and one missionary elected by the mission. The chairman and the secretary of the mission shall be chairman and secretary, respectively, of the executive committee.

2. The executive committee shall have power during the interim of the annual meeting of the mission to transact any business that would ordinarily come before the mission. When a majority of the committee deems it advisable, a special meeting of the mission may be called. Timely notice of such special meeting shall be given and members should endeavor to be present.



## CHAPTER IX

### JAPAN CONFERENCE

#### I. Membership

¶ 141. There shall be three classes of membership as follows:

##### 1. Ministerial Members.

(1) Missionaries and Japanese preachers holding membership in good standing in conferences in America, and those holding credentials as elders and deacons in Japan, shall on presentation of their certificates of standing or parchments become charter members of the conference.

(2) Japanese ministerial members shall be received into conference membership in the manner prescribed in Paragraphs 198-200.

(3) Foreign missionaries eligible to membership in this conference shall have been on the field two years and shall have completed the course of language study prescribed by the mission.

##### 2. Lay Members.

Lay members shall be elected according to Par. 152.

##### 3. Special Honorary Members.

All missionaries in Japan who are members of the mission in full relation and who are not eligible to conference membership shall be known as special honorary members.

#### II. Churches

¶ 142. 1. Organization of Churches. When a church is to be organized it should receive the recognition of the annual conference through the recommendation of the quarterly conference in whose territory it is located.

##### 2. Classification of Churches.

(1) Self-supporting Church. A self-supporting church is one which pays all of its current expenses and the salary of its pastor and of any other worker.

(2) Aided Church. An aided church is an organized



church which has not yet reached the status of a self-supporting church.

(3) Mission Church. A mission church is a society which has been founded by the mission and may be either organized or unorganized.

(4) Evangelistic Hall. An evangelistic hall is a society which has not yet reached the status of organization.

### 3. Relation of Churches to the Conference.

(1) Self-supporting Churches. Self-supporting churches shall be under the control of the conference and shall enjoy all the privileges of full relationship therein. (See Par. 152.)

(2) Aided Churches. Aided churches shall be under the control of the conference and shall have equal privilege with the self-supporting churches. An aided church should endeavor to become self-supporting within a period of three years.

(3) Evangelistic Halls. These shall be under the control of the conference and shall have the right of non-voting lay representation in the annual conference.

(4) Mission Churches. Mission churches shall be under the control of the mission, and shall have non-voting lay representation in the annual conference. When such a church desires to become an organized society it must receive the recognition of the annual conference through the recommendation of both the mission and the quarterly conference in whose territory it is located, and it shall then have the same voting privilege as an aided church.

### III. Stationing Committee

¶ 143. 1. The district superintendents who have served during the year, an equal number of lay members to be elected by ballot the first day of the session, the president of the conference, and the executive committee of the mission, shall constitute a stationing committee, of which the president shall be chairman with vote. In case there is only one district superintendent in active service during the year, additional elders and lay members may be elected according to the number of districts.



2. This committee shall appoint pastors, workers, district superintendents (when elected by the conference), and missionaries in charge of circuits, each year to their fields of labor, who may be returned to the same circuits or districts whenever in the judgment of the stationing committee the needs of the work require it.

#### IV. Board of Administration

¶ 144. 1. There shall be a Board of Administration composed of three Japanese elders, elected by the annual conference, and the executive committee of the mission. When there is only one acting district superintendent he shall be a member of this board without a vote of the conference.

2. During the interim of the annual conference, this board shall manage all matters of business within the jurisdiction of the conference.

3. The board shall elect one of its members chairman, except that when there is only one district superintendent, he shall be chairman by virtue of his office.

4. This board shall choose its own secretary and treasurer.

5. In case of necessity this board shall have one or more advisers.

#### V. Finances

¶ 145. 1. Funds shall be classified under two heads as follows:

(1) Funds appropriated by the Commission on Missions for the missionaries and their work, which shall be controlled by the mission.

(2) Funds raised by the conference and by the churches for their work, which shall be under their control.

2. Salaries of pastors and workers:

(1) Salaries of pastors and workers serving self-supporting churches shall be determined by the local church.

(2) Pastors and workers shall, in case of special financial need, present their request to the Board of Administration after it has been approved by the official board of the circuit or society.

(3) All requests for funds from the Commission on Missions shall be made through the mission.



(4) Expenses of pastors, workers and delegates to the annual conference shall be defrayed by the societies which they represent, except that when necessary, the expenses of pastors and workers only may be met by a fund created by the conference.

#### VI. Church Property

¶ 146. 1. All church and parsonage property in which the Missionary Board has funds invested shall be held in the name of the Shadan (Association of Missionaries) of the Japan Free Methodist Mission, and may be transferred or disposed of only by the permission of that board and on such terms as it may require.

2. Church and parsonage property to which the Commission on Missions and the Japanese churches together or the Japanese churches only have contributed funds, though held in trust by the Shadan, shall not be disposed of without duly consulting those churches and securing their consent to the terms.

3. All expenses for repairs on church and parsonage property and all insurance on such property, whether purchased by mission funds wholly or in part, shall be paid by the local church having the use of the property; and it shall be the duty of the official board to notify the directors of the Shadan of all repairs made and their cost.

#### VII. Financial Educational Board

¶ 147. 1. This board shall consist of the executive committee of the mission and of two Japanese preachers and two laymen to be elected by the conference.

2. It shall be the duty of this board to raise and disburse funds for the education of the children of the workers. The payment of funds shall be according to the rules of this board.

3. The funds of this board shall consist of: (1) Funds contributed by the mission. (2) Funds contributed by the Japanese churches. (3) Funds contributed from other sources.

#### VIII. Prerogatives

¶ 148. 1. This conference may elect delegates to the



General Conference, provided it pays the expense of their transportation.

2. This conference shall not vote on constitutional changes. (See Par. 98.)

#### IX. The Mission

¶ 149. 1. The mission shall be composed of foreign missionaries who hold credentials from the Commission on Missions, the right of membership being subject to the conditions stated in the "Rules for Missionaries."

2. The work of the mission shall be administered by an executive committee composed of three of its members who may be nominated by the mission and who shall be elected by the Commission on Missions.

3. The theological school shall be under the control of the mission and shall be administered by the mission in co-operation with the conference.

4. The mission shall be under the control of the Commission on Missions, and all its doings shall be subject to the approval of the Commission on Missions.

#### X. Appeals and Amendments

¶ 150. 1. All appeals made from the decisions and rulings of the president of the conference shall be presented to the Commission on Missions for final action.

2. With the exception of Par. 149 these articles may be amended by the conference, subject to the sanction of the mission and the Commission on Missions.

3. Paragraph 149 may be amended by the mission, with the sanction of the Commission on Missions, provided that amendments which in any way conflict with the rights or privileges of the conference, must have the approval of the conference also.



## CHAPTER X

### PACIFIC COAST JAPANESE CONFERENCE

¶ 150a. The Pacific Coast Japanese Conference shall consist of all work carried on among the Japanese of North America by the Free Methodist Church.

#### I. Membership

There are two classes of membership as follows:

##### 1. Ministerial Members.

(1) Missionaries and Japanese preachers holding membership in good standing in conferences shall on presentation of their certificates of standing or parchments become members of the conference. Ministerial members shall be received into conference membership in the manner prescribed in Paragraphs 198-200.

(2) Unordained charter members.

##### 2. Lay Members.

(1) Lay members shall be elected according to Par. 152.

(2) Special Honorary Members: All missionaries who are members of the mission in full relation and who are not eligible to conference membership shall be known as special honorary members.

#### II. Churches

1. Organization of Churches. When a church is organized it shall receive the recognition of the annual conference through the recommendation of the mission and the quarterly conference in whose territory it is located.

##### 2. Classification of Churches.

(1) Self-supporting Church. A self-supporting church is one which pays all its current expenses and the salary of its pastor and of any other worker.

(2) Aided Church. An aided church is an organized church which has not yet reached the status of a self-supporting church.

(3) Mission Church. A mission church is a group which has been founded by the mission.



3. Relation of Churches to the Conference.

(1) Self-supporting Churches. Self-supporting churches shall be under the control of the conference and shall enjoy all the privileges of full relationship therein. (See Par. 152.)

(2) Aided Churches. Aided churches shall be under the control of the conference and shall have equal privilege with the self-supporting churches. An aided church shall endeavor to become self-supporting within a period of three years.

(3) Mission Churches. Mission churches shall be under the control of the mission and shall have non-voting lay representation in the annual conference. When such a church desires to become an organized society it shall receive the recognition of the annual conference through the recommendation of both the mission and the quarterly conference in whose territory it is located, and it shall then have the same voting privilege as an aided church.

### III. Stationing Committee

1. Those who have served as district superintendents during the year, an equal number of lay members to be elected by ballot the first day of the session, the president of the conference, and the superintendent of the mission, shall constitute a stationing committee, of which the president shall be chairman with vote. If there is only one district superintendent in active service during the year, additional elders and lay members may be elected according to the number of districts. Should the superintendent be serving as district superintendent, an additional elder shall be elected from the body of the conference to serve on the stationing committee.

2. This committee shall appoint pastors, workers, district superintendents (when elected by the conference) each year to their fields of labor, who may be returned to the same circuits or districts whenever in the judgment of the stationing committee the needs of the work so require.

### IV. Board of Administration

1. There shall be a Board of Administration composed of three Japanese elders and two laymen, elected by the



annual conference, and the superintendent of the mission. When there is only one acting district superintendent he shall be a member of the board without a vote of the conference. The conference treasurer shall be a member ex officio.

2. During the interim of the annual conference, the board shall manage all matters of business within the jurisdiction of the conference.

3. The board shall elect one of its members chairman, but in case of only one acting district superintendent, he shall be chairman by virtue of his office as district superintendent.

4. This board shall choose its own secretary and treasurer.

5. In case of necessity this board shall have one or more advisers.

#### V. Finances

1. Funds shall be classified under two heads as follows:

(1) Funds appropriated by the Commission on Missions for the missionaries and their work, which shall be controlled by the mission.

(2) Funds raised by the conference and by the churches for their work, which shall be under their control.

2. Salaries of pastors and workers:

(1) Salaries of pastors and workers serving self-supporting churches shall be determined by the local church.

(2) Workers and pastors shall, in case of special financial need, present their request to the Board of Administration after it has been approved by the official board of the circuit or society.

(3) All requests for funds from the Commission on Missions shall be made through the mission.

(4) Expenses of pastors, workers and delegates to the annual conference shall be defrayed by the societies which they represent, except that when necessary the expenses of pastors and workers only may be met by a fund created by the conference.



## VI. Church Property

1. All church and parsonage property in which the Missionary Board only has funds invested shall be held by the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America subject at all times to rules and regulations made or to be made by that board.

2. Church and parsonage property toward which the Missionary Board and the Japanese churches together or the Japanese churches only have contributed funds, shall be held by the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America subject at all times to rules and regulations made or to be made by that board and shall not be disposed of without consent of the conference.

3. All such expenses as taxes, insurance, and repairs on church and parsonage property whether purchased by mission funds wholly or in part, shall be paid by the local church having the use of the property.

## VII. Prerogatives

1. This conference may elect delegates to the General Conference, provided it pays the expense of their transportation.

2. This Constitution shall not be changed by the vote of the conference alone. (See Article IX, Sec. 2.)

## VIII. The Mission

1. The mission shall be composed of missionaries who hold credentials from the Commission on Missions, the right of membership being subject to the conditions stated in the "Rules for Missionaries."

2. The work of the mission shall be administered by an executive committee composed of a superintendent and two of its members who may be nominated by the mission and who shall be elected by the commission.

3. The mission shall be under the control of the Commission on Missions, and all its doings shall be subject to the approval of the Commission on Missions.



**IX. Appeals and Amendments**

1. All appeals made from the decisions and rulings of the president of the conference shall be presented to the Commission on Missions for final action.

2. With the exception of Article VIII, Sec. 1, and Article IX, Sec. 3, these articles may be amended by the conference, subject to the sanction of the mission, the Commission on Missions, and the General Conference.

3. Article VIII, Sec. 1, may be amended by the mission, with the sanction of the Commission on Missions and the General Conference, provided that amendments which conflict with the rights or privileges of the conference must have the approval of the conference also.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(See John Wesley's admonitions in Par. 86)

¶ 151. Each annual conference shall be composed of all the traveling, supernumerary, and superannuated preachers who have been duly received into full membership within its bounds, lay delegates elected by the several circuits, as provided in Paragraphs 49 and 178, Sec. 2, and women evangelists as provided in Par. 220, Sec. 4.

¶ 152. Each circuit is entitled to one delegate, and whenever there is more than one preacher in full conference relation traveling upon a circuit, the circuit shall be entitled to one additional delegate for every such additional preacher.

¶ 153. There shall be the following annual conferences, to wit: Genesee, Illinois, Susquehanna, Michigan, Kansas, Minnesota and Northern Iowa, New York, Iowa, Wisconsin, North Michigan, Ohio, Central Illinois, Texas, Missouri, West Kansas, Dakota, Pittsburgh, California, East Michigan, Louisiana, Oregon, West Iowa, Wabash, Colorado, North Minnesota, Nebraska, Southern California, Ozark, Columbia River, Washington, West Ontario, East Ontario, Kentucky and Tennessee, Oil City, Oklahoma, South Africa, Georgia and Florida, Maryland-Virginia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, North Indiana, Japan, and others organized as hereinafter provided.

¶ 154. A new society, organized near the boundary line between two conferences and in a conference which has no organized work within forty miles, shall be permitted to decide for itself to which of the two conferences it shall belong.

¶ 155. Each annual conference shall appoint the place and, with the concurrence of the bishops, the time of its own sessions. If for any reason a conference cannot be held at the place appointed, the determination of the place shall be left with the district superintendents and the secretary of the last conference.



¶ 156. 1. In the absence of the bishop and of the elder whom he may have appointed, the conference shall elect, by ballot, an elder from its own number to preside.

2. It shall elect, by ballot if it wishes, a secretary, who shall record in a suitable book the proceedings of the annual conference and send the record to the General Conference for examination. He shall continue in office until his successor is elected and shall be the custodian of the conference records and journal.

3. It shall elect a treasurer who shall be bonded. In case of a vacancy the district superintendents of the conference may appoint a treasurer to act until the next conference session. He shall remit quarterly all funds due the general church treasurer. The general church treasurer shall, immediately after the conference session, notify the conference secretary of any deficit.

4. It shall elect an auditor who shall carefully audit the accounts of the treasurer and report at the close of each annual session.

5. It shall elect a secretary of tithing who shall direct attention to tithing by:

a. Setting a date when each pastor shall preach on this subject and informing him of it.

b. Arranging for the distribution of literature by the pastors on their charges.

c. Providing cards to be used by each pastor to secure pledgers to the tithing system. The pastor shall tabulate results and forward them to the tithing secretary to be used as a part of his annual report.

d. Making such other provisions as he may judge best to create interest.

¶ 157. It shall be the duty of the secretary of the last session of the annual conference preceding the session of General Conference to transcribe from the annual conference records all the decisions of disciplinary law rendered by the bishops during the quadrennium, giving the number of the pages upon which those decisions are recorded, and forward the transcript with the conference records to the seat of the General Conference, and, if there are no such



decisions, to file a statement to that effect with the records.

¶ 158. The ministers and lay members composing the annual conference shall deliberate and vote as one body; but at the call of one third of all the members present and voting, the house shall divide and the ministers and lay members vote separately; and it shall require a majority of both branches to constitute a vote of the conference.

¶ 159. The territory embraced by each annual conference shall be divided into districts, and over each district one of the elders shall be appointed by the conference as district superintendent.

¶ 160. 1. The district superintendents and an equal number of lay members to be elected by ballot the first day of the session, shall, together with the president of the conference, constitute a stationing committee, of which the president shall be chairman and have a casting vote. When an annual conference has but one district superintendent, it may, if it so desires, increase the number of members on the stationing committee by electing one additional elder and an additional layman. If for any reason a district superintendent is not able to serve on the stationing committee, the conference shall elect one of its elders to take his place. No person who is recommended to the annual conference to be received on probation, nor a supply, though acting as a delegate, shall be eligible to serve on the stationing committee.

2. It shall be the duty of the stationing committee to appoint the preachers to their several fields of labor each year.

No minister who refuses to serve a charge or circuit when appointed by his conference, shall be appointed to any work by another conference or district superintendent without the consent of the district superintendent of the circuit which he refused to serve.

¶ 161. A preacher may be appointed to a circuit without having charge of it; the administration of it shall then devolve upon the district superintendent and the official board. (See Par. 447.)

¶ 162. An annual conference may, upon the unanimous



recommendation of the stationing committee, leave a preacher without an appointment. Any preacher so left without an appointment two years in succession may be located by vote of the annual conference.

¶ 163. When a preacher is located, or discontinued by an annual conference, the stationing committee shall fix the place of his membership. When an unordained preacher on probation and in good standing in the annual conference is discontinued from the traveling connection by his conference, he shall sustain the relation of local preacher until the ensuing session of his quarterly conference.

¶ 164. Each annual conference shall elect an annual conference Board of Claimants of not less than three nor more than seven members. The presiding bishop or his appointee shall be ex officio chairman of this board during the session of the annual conference. The duties of the board are outlined in the plan for conference claimants. (See Par. 106, Sec. 3, C, and Sec. 6, C, for duties of the annual conference, relating to care of superannuate preachers.)

¶ 165. Each annual conference is required to organize a conference evangelistic board which shall be authorized to carry on aggressive evangelistic work within its bounds. This board shall have power to raise funds and to employ evangelists, band workers and helpers to labor within the conference bounds, who, with the concurrence of the district superintendents, shall be authorized to establish new societies, provided that it make provision and be responsible for the support of all the laborers which it employs.

¶ 166. Whenever a woman holding an evangelist's or a local preacher's license is recommended by the quarterly conference as a suitable person to be received into the annual conference, she may be received on probation and into full membership and be ordained a deacon, on the same conditions as men, provided always that this ordination of women shall not be regarded as a step toward ordination as elder, and provided further that no woman whose husband is a member of an annual conference either



on probation or in full relation shall be eligible to be received into the conference.

¶ 167. Members of an annual conference may be appointed as evangelists. They shall be entitled to the rights and privileges of those appointed to circuits, and shall be subject to the same rules and regulations, so far as they apply to their circumstances. They shall be subject to the restrictions of Par. 131, Sec. 11, (3). No preacher, however, shall be granted an evangelist's relation to the conference who does not intend to devote three fifths of his time to the work of an evangelist, and if he shall fail to report to his conference the required number of weeks so devoted, he shall not be granted that relation the following year.

¶ 168. 1. Each annual conference shall elect a conference superintendent of the Y. P. M. S. The conference Y. P. M. S. may nominate.

2. Each annual conference shall elect a member of the Y. P. M. S. to the board of conference evangelism.

¶ 169. Each annual conference shall inquire:

1. What are the names of preachers and delegates having a seat in this conference?
2. Who are the stationing committee?
3. What preachers are admitted on probation?
4. Who remain on probation?
5. Who are admitted into full membership?
6. Who are the deacons?
7. Who have been elected and ordained elders this year?
8. Who have located this year?
9. Who are the supernumerary preachers?
10. Who are the superannuated preachers?
11. Who have been received by transfer, and from what conferences? (It is the duty of the conference receiving a preacher by transfer to send notice of his reception to the secretary of the conference from which he has transferred.)
12. Who have withdrawn from the conference this year?
13. Who have been given certificates of good standing with a view to transfer to another conference?
14. Have any been permitted to withdraw under charges or complaints?



15. Have any been expelled?
16. Are all the preachers blameless in life and conversation? Have they, during the past year, discharged their duties to God, themselves, and one another? (See Paragraphs 183-186; 190; and 209, Sec. 23. Let the president call attention to these portions of the DISCIPLINE.)
17. Who have died this year?
18. What is the number of church members?
19. What is the number of ministers on probation and in full membership in this conference?
20. Amount collected for conference claimants? For the bishops? For general missions? For the annual conference missionary fund? For foreign missions? For educational fund?
21. Number of Sunday schools? Of officers and teachers? Of scholars? Of members on the cradle roll? Of members in the home department? Of volumes in library?
22. What has been expended during the year on the circuits for Sunday schools? What has been raised in the Sunday schools for foreign missions and other benevolences?
23. How many copies of the *Free Methodist* are taken?
24. What amounts are recommended for the superannuated preachers and the widows and orphans of preachers?
25. At the last session prior to the General Conference, the question shall be asked, What amount is necessary for us to raise toward defraying the expenses of delegates to the General Conference and the entertainment of the General Conference?
26. What has been collected on the foregoing accounts, and how has it been applied?
27. Where are the preachers stationed this year?
28. Where, and when, shall our next conference be held?

¶ 170. The conference year of each annual conference shall close automatically with the adjournment of that conference.

¶ 171. We recommend that our people observe the Friday preceding each annual conference as a day of fasting and prayer.



¶ 172. It shall be the duty of the general officers, the district superintendents, the pastors, and the evangelists to make financial reports of their receipts from the field to their annual conferences; and the financial reports shall be published in the statistical tables of their conferences.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE QUARTERLY CONFERENCE

¶ 173. 1. The quarterly conference shall be composed of the traveling preachers and the members of the official boards of the district.

2. Four sessions of the quarterly conference shall be held each year, in connection with the general quarterly meetings at such times and places as it may designate, provided, however, that upon the written request of one half of the preachers on the district and an equal number of lay members of the quarterly conference, the district superintendent may call a special session. (For exceptions, see Par. 208, Sec. 4.) A quarterly conference may order a session to be held outside its geographical limits when two or more districts unite in district or conference camp meetings or conventions.

3. The district superintendent shall be president of the quarterly conference, and in his absence and in the absence of an elder whom he may appoint, the quarterly conference shall elect one of its members amenable to the annual conference to preside.

4. A secretary shall be elected by the quarterly conference, who shall keep a faithful record of its proceedings, and shall send the record to the annual conference for examination. The quarterly conference shall also elect a treasurer for the district.

5. The quarterly conference shall have the right to review the records of the official boards of the district at its discretion or on demand of the district superintendent, and to pass upon whatever is not in harmony with the DISCIPLINE or with parliamentary law.

6. The quarterly conference shall

(1) Hear complaints.

(2) Try appeals.

(3) Grant and renew licenses to preach. (See Paragraphs 174, 213, and 220.)



- (4) License band workers.
- (5) Recommend suitable persons to the annual conference for admission on probation as traveling preachers.
- (6) Recommend suitable persons to the annual conference to receive deaconess' license.
- (7) Recommend suitable local preachers to the annual conference to receive ordination as deacons and elders.
- (8) Elect a district superintendent of the Y. P. M. S. The district W. M. S. and the district Y. P. M. S. may nominate.
- (9) In co-operation with the district superintendent, appoint and hold camp meetings as the interests of the cause of God may require.

¶ 174. No person shall be licensed as a local preacher until he has been previously licensed as an exhorter and has been recommended by his official board; has been examined by the quarterly conference or the district superintendent in regard to his soundness in doctrine; has shown evidence of piety, gifts, and usefulness; and has given satisfactory answers to all the questions found in Par. 182: "Of the Examination of Those Who Think They Are Moved by the Holy Ghost to Preach."

#### Order of Business for Quarterly Conference

- ¶ 175. 1. Call to order by district superintendent or, in his absence, by the secretary.
2. Devotional exercises.
  3. Calling of the roll. (At the first session of the year a roll should be made out and then called.)
  4. Election of secretary.
  5. Election of treasurer.
  6. Election of auditor.
  7. Reading of the minutes of previous session.
  8. Financial report of district superintendent.
  9. Report of treasurer.
  10. Report of committees.
  11. Is there any unfinished business?
  12. Is there any new business?
  13. Are there any complaints?



14. Are there any appeals?
15. Shall we hold any camp meetings this year? If so, how many? When? Where?
16. Are there any recommendations for local preacher's license? For evangelist's license For band worker's license?
17. Reports from preachers on condition of their charges, Sunday schools, instruction in Christian living and church membership (see Par. 209, Sec. 23), the number of subscribers to the *Free Methodist*, with statements that the permanent records on their circuits are up to date.
18. Reports of evangelists and deaconesses.
19. Report of district superintendent of the Y. P. M. S.  
(Questions 20 to 28, last session of year only)
20. Are there any licenses to be renewed? (All licenses previously granted should be renewed at the last session of the conference year.) Local preachers'? Evangelists'? Are there any deaconesses to be recommended to the annual conference for renewal of licenses or for permanent licenses?
21. Are there any suitable persons to be recommended to the annual conference for reception on probation?
22. Are there any women evangelists to be recommended for seats in the annual conference?
23. Are there any evangelists to be recommended for annual conference licenses?
24. Are there any women to be recommended to the annual conference for deaconess' license?
25. Are all the local elders, local deacons, evangelists, and deaconesses licensed by the annual conference, blameless in life and faithful and efficient in service? (All preachers, evangelists and deaconesses should retire while their characters or their licenses are under consideration. Evangelists licensed by the annual conference shall make a report of their work to the quarterly conference, and in case of failure to do so, the quarterly conference may recommend to the annual conference that the license be revoked.)
26. Annual report of the district board of trustees.
27. Are the corporate seal, record books and valuable



documents of the district quarterly conference deposited for safe keeping? If so, where?

28. Are there any recommendations to the annual conference for ordination? As elder? As deacon?

29. When, and where, shall our next session be held?

30. Reading and approval of minutes.

31. Adjournment.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE OFFICIAL BOARD

¶ 176. 1. An official meeting, composed of the pastors, local preachers, exhorters, evangelists, deaconesses, stewards, class leaders, Sunday-school superintendents who are members of our church and belong on the circuit, superintendent of the local Y. P. M. S., president of the local W. M. S., and trustees of local church property who are members of our church and belong on the circuit, shall, whenever practicable, be held on each circuit once a month.

2. The preacher in charge shall be chairman of the official meeting, except as provided for in Par. 208, Sec. 5, and in his absence a chairman shall be elected.

3. The official board shall elect a secretary and a treasurer. The secretary shall keep, in a suitable book provided for that purpose, faithful minutes of the proceedings of the official board and of the circuit meetings and shall record all marriages and baptisms. The treasurer shall keep a record of all money raised on the circuit and of the manner in which it is expended, and give a full report of it at the annual circuit meeting.

4. The official board shall look after the spiritual and temporal interests of the circuit.

5. It is recommended that the official board elect from the members of the church a budget or finance committee, of which the pastor and the treasurer shall be members, to prepare for the consideration of the board an estimate of the amount needed for the support of the preachers and for the other expenses of the circuit.

6. The members of the finance committee shall see that each member of the society is solicited for the support of the local work and urged to give regularly (weekly, monthly, or quarterly) according to his means.

7. The official board shall provide a permanent book in which the pastor shall enter the information prescribed in Par. 209, Sec. 7.



## Suggested Order of Business

- ¶ 177. 1. Devotional exercises.
2. Election of a secretary.
  3. Calling of the roll.
  4. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.
  5. Election of a treasurer.
  6. Election of an auditor.
  7. Election of a committee on charities.
  8. Inquire (1) Are there any sick?  
 (2) What is the status of membership?  
 a. Have any been received on probation?  
 b. Are converts and probationers receiving instruction in Christian living and church membership according to Par. 209, Sec. 23?  
 c. Are there any whose probation has expired?  
 d. Have any been received into full connection?  
 e. Have any died?  
 f. Have any been otherwise removed?  
 (3) Are there any violating our rules of church membership who will not be reprovved?  
 (4) Are there any recommendations from the society for exhorter's license? (No person should be licensed to exhort without a recommendation from the society of which he is a member.)  
 (5) Are there any exhorters' licenses to be renewed?  
 (6) Are there any exhorters to be recommended for local preacher's license?  
 (7) Have any been married or baptized?  
 (8) Treasurer's Report:  
 a. Amount raised as ordered by the conference.  
 b. Amount raised for pastoral support.  
 c. Amount raised for district superintendent's claim.  
 d. Report of other money received and disbursed.  
 e. Balance in the treasury.  
 (9) Are there any claims to be presented?  
 (10) Is there any unfinished business, or are there any committees to report?  
 (11) Is there any new business, or are there any committees to be appointed?



- (12) Reports of department heads:
  - a. Report of the Sunday-school superintendent.
  - b. Report of the president of the W. M. S.
  - c. Report of the superintendent of the Y. P. M. S.
- (13) Are there any vacancies in the board of trustees?
- (14) Is the title of the church property secure?
- (15) Are the legal documents for this circuit deposited for safekeeping; and, if so, where? Are the official records of this society being kept, and are the past records in safekeeping?
- (16) Is the church property insured?
- (17) Are the advices and requirements regarding the cultivation of vocal music found in Par. 81 being observed?
9. Reading the minutes.
10. Adjournment.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE CIRCUIT MEETING

¶ 178. 1. Every circuit shall have, within three months of the annual conference, an annual circuit meeting, of which the preacher in charge shall be chairman, without vote, and the secretary of the official board, secretary. The meeting shall be announced in each society at least ten days before it is held.

2. At this meeting the members in full relation on the circuit who are sixteen years of age and over (see Par. 76, Sec. 2) shall elect by ballot delegates to the annual conference according to the provisions in Paragraphs 49 and 152. No person on probation in an annual conference is eligible to election as a delegate.

3. The annual circuit meeting shall decide the number of stewards to be elected upon the circuit and also the number to be elected by each society. Where there is but one society, stewards, Sunday-school superintendents and trustees (when it is not in conflict with the charter or the laws of the state) may be elected by the annual circuit meeting. Vacancies shall be filled by the societies in which they occur.

4. At this meeting the trustees shall present a full report of the church property.

5. The preacher in charge or, in his absence or his refusal to do it, a majority of the official board may call a circuit meeting whenever in their judgment the interests of the church require it.

6. It is improper for the society or circuit to vote upon the return of its pastors.

#### Suggested Order of Business

¶ 179. 1. Devotional exercises.

(Secretary of the official board acts as secretary.)

2. Calling of the roll.



3. Report of treasurer of official board, Par. 176, Sec. 3.
4. Election of tellers.
5. Election of delegates to the annual conference.
6. Election of reserve delegates.
7. Decide the number of stewards for each society on the circuit.
8. Receive the report of the trustees.
9. Miscellaneous business.
10. Approval of the minutes.
11. Adjournment.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE SOCIETY MEETING

¶ 180. 1. The society meeting shall be composed of the members of the society in full relation. Those under sixteen years of age are ineligible to vote. (See Par. 76, Sec. 2.)

2. The preacher in charge shall be chairman of the meeting without vote. A secretary shall be elected to record the proceedings.

3. The society meeting shall recommend suitable persons for exhorter's, evangelist's, and deaconess' licenses and for band workers; elect stewards to the number fixed by the circuit meeting; elect Sunday-school superintendents; elect, when necessary, a committee to try members; decide the propriety of incorporating; elect trustees, subject to the statutes of the territory in which the society is located; and elect (the Y. P. M. S. may nominate) the Y. P. M. S. superintendent.

4. The preacher in charge or, in his absence or his refusal to do it, a majority of the official board may call a meeting of the society whenever in their judgment the interests of the church require it.

#### Suggested Order of Business

¶ 181. 1. Devotional exercises.

2. Roll call.

3. Election of a secretary.

4. Recommendations: (1) For exhorter's license (to the official board). No person should be licensed to exhort without a recommendation from the society of which he is a member. (2) For evangelist's license (to the district quarterly conference). (3) For deaconess' license (to the district quarterly conference). (4) For band worker's license (to the district quarterly conference).

5. Election of tellers.

6. (1) Election of a treasurer. (2) Election of an auditor of the accounts of the church treasurer, the Sunday-school